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House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

PRAYER

Reverend Dr. Jimmy Jackson, Whitesburg Baptist Church, Huntsville, Alabama, offered the following prayer:

O Lord God, You are our eternal hope and our present help. We come before You today as both needy and responsible people. You know us better than we know ourselves. You know the things that weigh heavily upon our hearts this morning—our families, our friends, our Nation, and our world. Nothing is hidden from You, and You care for each of us and our concerns.

You declared, ''Look unto Me and be delivered, all the ends of the Earth; because I am God, and there is no one else.'' We need Your help. Please move upon us and give us a deep longing for Your salvation, Your wisdom, and moral integrity. Let us see ourselves as You see us. Convince us of our utter dependence upon You. Open our eyes to the increasing corruption and blatant evil in our world.

O God, send a great spiritual awakening throughout our land, beginning right here and right now in this room and among these people.

We make our petition in Jesus' name. 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 gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BROOKS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama 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. JIMMY JACKSON

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BROOKS) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, it is with great privilege that I welcome Dr. Jimmy Jackson to the House of Representatives and thank him for serving as today's guest chaplain.

Dr. Jackson is the senior pastor at Whitesburg Baptist Church in Huntsville, Alabama, where he has served since 1978.

He and his wife, Bobbi, have been married for 54 years. They are parents of three children, seven grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

Dr. Jackson has held numerous leadership roles within the Southern Baptist Convention and has served as past president of the Alabama Pastors Conference and past president of the Alabama Baptist Convention.

I have personally known Dr. Jimmy Jackson for almost 35 years and appreciate him, admire him, and thank him for his long commitment to his congregation, to his community, to America, and to the lives of the tens of thousands he has touched during his lifetime of service to God.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. After consultation among the Speaker and the majority and minority leaders, and with their consent, the Chair announces that, when the two Houses meet in joint meeting to hear an address by His Excellency Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan, only the doors immediately opposite the Speaker and those immediately to his left and right will be open.

No one will be allowed on the floor of the House who does not have the privilege of the floor of the House. Due to the large attendance that is anticipated, the rule regarding the privilege of the floor must be strictly enforced. Children of Members will not be permitted on the floor. The cooperation of all Members is requested.

The practice of reserving seats prior to the joint meeting by placard will not be allowed. Members may reserve their seats by physical presence only following the security sweep of the Chamber.

RECESS

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to the order of the House of Monday, April 13, 2015, the House stands in recess subject to the call of the Chair

Accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 4 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

JOINT MEETING TO HEAR AN ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY SHINZO ABE, PRIME MINISTER OF JAPAN

During the recess, the House was called to order by the Speaker at 10 o'clock and 59 minutes a.m.

The Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms, Ms. Kathleen Joyce, announced the Vice President and Members of the U.S. Senate, who entered the Hall of the House of Representatives, the Vice President taking the chair at the right of the Speaker, and the Members of the Senate the seats reserved for them.

The SPEAKER. The joint meeting will come to order.

The Chair appoints as members of the committee on the part of the House to escort His Excellency Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan, into the Chamber:

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The gentleman from California (Mr. MCCARTHY);

The gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE);

The gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS);

The gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN);

The gentleman from Indiana (Mr. MESSER);

The gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX);

The gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN);

The gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN);

The gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. GRANGER);

The gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TIBERI);

The gentleman from California (Mr. NUNES);

The gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SALMON);

The gentleman from Missouri (Mr. LONG);

The gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI);

The gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER);

The gentleman from California (Mr. BECERRA);

The gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY);

The gentlewoman from Maryland (Ms. EDWARDS);

The gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO);

The gentleman from California (Mr. HONDA);

The gentlewoman from California (Ms. MATSUI);

The gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO);

The gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. TAKAI);

The gentlewoman from Colorado (Ms. DEGETTE);

The gentleman from Washington (Mr. MCDERMOTT); and

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. CASTRO).

The VICE PRESIDENT. The President of the Senate, at the direction of that body, appoints the following Senators as members of the committee on the part of the Senate to escort His Excellency Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan, into the House Chamber:

The Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL);

The Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN);

The Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH);

The Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO);

The Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT);

The Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER);

The Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI);

The Senator from Tennessee (Mr. CORKER);

The Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN);

The Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY);

The Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN); and

The Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO);

The Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms announced the Acting Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, H.E. Hersey Kyota, the Ambassador of Palau.

The Acting Dean of the Diplomatic Corps entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and took the seat reserved for him.

The Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms announced the Cabinet of the President of the United States.

The members of the Cabinet of the President of the United States entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and took the seats reserved for them in front of the Speaker's rostrum.

At 11 o'clock and 13 minutes a.m., the Sergeant at Arms, the Honorable Paul D. Irving, announced His Excellency Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan.

The Prime Minister of Japan, escorted by the committee of Senators and Representatives, entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and stood at the Clerk's desk.

(Applause, the Members rising.)

The SPEAKER. Members of Congress, I have the high privilege and the distinct honor of presenting to you His Excellency Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan.

(Applause, the Members rising.)

Prime Minster ABE. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Vice President, distinguished Members of the Senate and the House, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

Back in June 1957, Nobusuke Kishi, my grandfather, standing right here as Prime Minister of Japan, began his address by saying, ''It is because of our strong belief in democratic principles and ideals that Japan associates herself with the free nations of the world.''

Fifty-eight years have passed. Today, I am honored to stand here as the first Japanese Prime Minister ever to address your joint session. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to you for inviting me. I have lots of things to tell you. But I am here with no ability, nor the intention, to filibuster.

As I stand in front of you today, the names of your distinguished colleagues that Japan welcomed as your Ambassadors come back to me: the Honorable Mike Mansfield, Walter Mondale, Tom Foley, and Howard Baker. On behalf of the Japanese people, thank you so very, very much for sending us such shining champions of democracy.

Ambassador Caroline Kennedy also embodies the tradition of American democracy. Thank you. Thank you, Ambassador Kennedy, for all the dynamic work you have done for all of us.

We all miss Senator Inouye, who symbolized the honor and achievements of Japanese Americans.

Ladies and gentlemen, my first encounter with America goes back to my days as a student when I spent a spell in California. A lady named Catherine Del Francia let me live in her house. She was a widow and always spoke of her late husband, saying, ''You know, he was much more handsome than Gary Cooper.'' She meant it. She really did.

In the gallery, you see my wife, Akie, is there. I don't dare ask what she says about me.

Mrs. Del Francia's Italian cooking was simply out of this world. She was cheerful and so kind as to let lots and lots of people stop by at her house. They were so diverse. I was amazed and said to myself, ''America is an awesome country.''

Later, I took a job at a steelmaker, and I was given the chance to work in New York.

Here in the U.S., rank and hierarchy are neither here nor there. People advance based on merit. When you discuss things, you don't pay much attention to who is junior or senior. You just choose the best idea, no matter who the idea was from.

This culture intoxicated me. So much so, after I got elected as a member of the House, some of the old guard in my party would say, ''Hey, you are so cheeky, Abe.''

As for my family name, it is not ''Eighb.'' Some Americans do call me that every now and then, but I don't take offense.

That is because, ladies and gentlemen, the Japanese, ever since they started modernization, have seen the very foundation for democracy in that famous line in the Gettysburg Address. The son of a farmer-carpenter can become the President. The fact that such a country existed woke up the Japanese of the late 19th century to democracy.

For Japan, our encounter with America was also our encounter with democracy, and that was more than 150 years ago, giving us a mature history together.

Before coming over here, I was at the World War II Memorial. It was a place of peace and calm that struck me as a sanctuary. The air was filled with the sound of water breaking in the fountains.

In one corner stands the Freedom Wall. More than 4,000 gold stars shine on the wall. I gasped with surprise to hear that each star represents the lives of 100 fallen soldiers. I believe those gold stars are a proud symbol of the sacrifices in defending freedom; but, in those gold stars, we also find the pain, sorrow, and love for family of young Americans who otherwise would have lived happy lives.

Pearl Harbor, Bataan, Corregidor, Coral Sea, the battles engraved at the memorial crossed my mind, and I reflected upon the lost dreams and lost futures of those young Americans. History is harsh. What is done cannot be undone. With deep repentance in my heart, I stood there in silent prayers for some time.

My dear friends, on behalf of Japan and the Japanese people, I offer with

profound respect my eternal condolences to the souls of all American people that were lost during World War II.

Ladies and gentlemen, in the gallery today is Lieutenant General Lawrence Snowden.

Seventy years ago in February, he landed on Ioto, or the island of Iwo Jima, as a captain in command of a company. In recent years, General Snowden has often participated in the memorial services held jointly by Japan and the U.S. on Ioto.

He said, ''We didn't and don't go to Iwo Jima to celebrate victory, but for the solemn purpose to pay tribute to and honor those who lost their lives on both sides.''

Next to General Snowden sits Diet Member Yoshitaka Shindo, who is a former member of my Cabinet. His grandfather, General Tadamichi Kuribayashi, whose valor we remember even today, was the commander of the Japanese garrison during the Battle of Iwo Jima.

What should we call this, if not a miracle of history? Enemies that had fought each other so fiercely have become friends bonded in spirit.

To General Snowden, I pay tribute to your efforts for reconciliation. Thank you so very much.

Post war, we started out on our path bearing in mind feelings of deep remorse over the war. Our actions brought suffering to the peoples in Asian countries. We must not avert our eyes from that. I will uphold the views expressed by the previous Prime Ministers in this regard.

We must all the more contribute in every respect to the development of Asia. We must spare no effort in working for the peace and prosperity of the region. Reminding ourselves of all that, we have come all this way. I am proud of this path we have taken.

Seventy years ago, Japan had been reduced to ashes. Then came each and every month from the citizens of the United States gifts to Japan, like milk for our children and warm sweaters and even goats. Yes, from America, 2,036 goats came to Japan.

And it was Japan that received the biggest benefit from the very beginning by the postwar economic system that the U.S. had fostered by opening up its own market and calling for a liberal world economy.

Later on, from the 1980s, we saw the rise of the Republic of Korea, Taiwan, the ASEAN countries, and, before long, China as well. This time, Japan too devotedly poured in capital and technologies to support their growths.

Meanwhile, in the U.S., Japan created more employment than any other foreign nation but one, coming second only to the U.K. In this way, prosperity was fostered first by the U.S. and second by Japan. And prosperity is nothing less than the seedbed for peace.

Involving countries in Asia Pacific whose backgrounds vary, the U.S. and Japan must take the lead. We must take the lead to build a market that is fair, dynamic, sustainable, and is also free from the arbitrary intentions of any nation.

In the Pacific market, we cannot overlook sweatshops or burdens on the environment, nor can we simply allow free riders on intellectual property. No. Instead, we can spread our shared values around the world and have them take root: the rule of law, democracy, and freedom. That is exactly what the TPP is all about.

Furthermore, the TPP goes far beyond just economic benefits. It is also about our security. Long term, its strategic value is awesome. We should never forget that.

The TPP covers an area that accounts for 40 percent of the world economy and one-third of global trade. We must turn the area into a region for lasting peace and prosperity. That is for the sake of our children and our children's children.

As for U.S.-Japan negotiations, the goal is near. Let us bring the TPP to a successful conclusion through our joint leadership.

As a matter of fact, I have something I can tell you now. It was about 20 years ago. The GATT negotiations for agriculture were going on. I was much younger and like a ball of fire and opposed to opening Japan's agricultural market. I even joined farmers' representatives in a rally in front of the parliament.

However, Japan's agriculture has gone into decline over these last 20 years. The average age of our farmers has gone up by 10 years and is now more than 66 years old.

Japan's agriculture is at a crossroads. In order for it to survive, it has to change now. We are bringing great reforms toward the agriculture policy that has been in place for decades. We are also bringing sweeping reforms to our agricultural cooperatives that have not been changed in 60 long years.

Corporate governance in Japan is now fully in line with global standards because we made it stronger. Rock-solid regulations are being broken in such sectors as medicine and energy. And I am the spearhead.

To turn around our depopulation, I am determined to do whatever it takes. We are changing some of our old habits to empower women so they can get more actively engaged in all walks of life.

In short, Japan is right in the middle of a quantum leap.

My dear Members of the Congress, please do come and see the new Japan, where we have regained our spirit of reform and our sense of speed. Japan will not run away from any reforms. We keep our eyes only on the road ahead and push forward with structural reforms. That is TINA: There Is No Alternative. And there is no doubt about it whatsoever.

My dear colleagues, the peace and security of the postwar world was not possible without American leadership. Looking back, it makes me happy all the time that Japan of years past made the right decision. As I told you at the outset, citing my grandfather, that decision was to choose a path. That is the path for Japan to ally itself with the U.S. and to go forward as a member of the Western world.

In the end, together with the U.S. and other like-minded democracies, we won the cold war. That is the path that made Japan grow and prosper, and even today, there is no alternative.

My dear colleagues, we support the ''rebalancing'' by the U.S. in order to enhance the peace and security of the Asia-Pacific region, and I will state clearly: we will support the U.S. effort first, last, and throughout.

Japan has deepened its strategic relations with Australia and India. We are enhancing our cooperation across many fields with the countries of ASEAN and the Republic of Korea. Adding those partners to the central pillar that is the U.S.-Japan alliance, our region will get stable remarkably more.

Now, Japan will provide up to $2.8 billion in assistance to help improve U.S. bases in Guam, which will gain strategic significance even more in the future.

As regards the state of Asian waters, let me underscore here my three principles: first, states shall make their claims based on international law; second, they shall not use force or coercion to drive their claims; and, third, to settle disputes—any disputes—they shall do so by peaceful means.

We must make the vast seas stretching from the Pacific to the Indian Oceans seas of peace and freedom, where all follow the rule of law. For that very reason, we must fortify the U.S.-Japan alliance. That is our responsibility.

Now, let me tell you. In Japan, we are working hard to enhance the legislative foundations for our security.

Once in place, Japan will be much more able to provide a seamless response for all levels of crisis. These enhanced legislative foundations should make the cooperation between the U.S. military and Japan's Self-Defense Forces even stronger, and the alliance still more solid, providing credible deterrence for the peace in the region. This reform is the first of its kind and a sweeping one in our postwar history. We will achieve this by this coming summer.

Now, I have something to share with you.

The day before yesterday, Secretaries Kerry and Carter met our Foreign Minister Kishida and Defense Minister Nakatani for consultations. As a result, we now have a new framework, a framework to better put together the forces of the U.S. and Japan, a framework that is in line with the legislative attempts going on in Japan. That is what is necessary to build peace, more reliable peace in the region. And that is, namely, the new defense cooperation guidelines.

Yesterday, President Obama and I fully agreed on the significance of these guidelines. Ladies and gentlemen, we agreed on a document that is historic.

In the early 1990s, in the Persian Gulf, Japan's Self-Defense Forces swept away sea mines. For 10 years, in the Indian Ocean, Japanese Self-Defense Forces supported your operation to stop the flow of terrorists and arms. Meanwhile, in Cambodia, the Golan Heights, Iraq, Haiti, and South Sudan, members of our Self-Defense Forces provided humanitarian support and peacekeeping operations. Their number amounts to 50,000.

Based on this track record, we are resolved to take yet more responsibility for the peace and stability in the world. It is for that purpose we are determined to enact all necessary bills by this coming summer. And we will do exactly that.

We must make sure human security will be preserved in addition to national security. That is our belief, firm and solid.

We must do our best so that every individual gets education, medical support, and an opportunity to rise to be self-reliant. Armed conflicts have always made women suffer the most. In our age, we must realize the kind of world where finally women are free from human rights abuses.

Our servicemen and -women have made substantial accomplishments. So have our aid workers, who have worked so steadily. Their combined sum has given us a new self-identity.

That is why we now hold up high a new banner that is ''proactive contribution to peace based on the principle of international cooperation.'' Let me repeat. ''Proactive contribution to peace based on the principle of international cooperation'' should lead Japan along its road for the future.

Problems we face include terrorism, infectious diseases, natural disasters, and climate change. The time has come for the U.S.-Japan alliance to face up to and jointly tackle those challenges that are new. After all, our alliance has lasted more than a quarter of the entire history of the United States. It is an alliance that is sturdy, bound in trust and friendship, deep between us.

No new concept should ever be necessary for the alliance that connects us, the biggest and the second biggest democratic powers in the free world, in working together. Always, it is an alliance that cherishes our shared values of the rule of law, respect for human rights, and freedom.

When I was young in high school and listened to the radio, there was a song that flew out and shook my heart. It was a song by Carole King.

When you're down and troubled . . . close your eyes and think of me, and I will be there to brighten up even your darkest night.

And that day, March 11, 2011, a big quake, a tsunami, and a nuclear accident hit the northeastern part of Japan. The darkest night fell upon Japan. But it was then we saw the U.S. Armed Forces rushing to Japan to the rescue at a scale never seen or heard before. Lots and lots of people from all corners of the U.S. extended the hand of assistance to the children in the disaster areas. Yes, we have got a friend in you. Together, with the victims, you shed tears. You gave us something, something very, very precious. That was hope, hope for the future.

Ladies and gentlemen, the finest asset the U.S. has to give to the world was hope, is hope, will be and must always be hope.

Distinguished representatives of the citizens of the United States, let us call the U.S.-Japan alliance an alliance of hope. Let the two of us, America and Japan, join our hands together and do our best to make the world a better—a much better—place to live.

Alliance of hope: together, we can make a difference.

Thank you so much.

(Applause, the Members rising.)

At 12 o'clock and 8 minutes p.m., His Excellency Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan, accompanied by the committee of escort, retired from the Hall of the House of Representatives.

The Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms escorted the invited guests from the Chamber in the following order:

The members of the President's Cabinet;

The Acting Dean of the Diplomatic Corps.

JOINT MEETING DISSOLVED

The SPEAKER. The purpose of the joint meeting having been completed, the Chair declares the joint meeting of the two Houses now dissolved.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 9 minutes p.m.), the joint meeting of the two Houses was dissolved.

The Members of the Senate retired to their Chamber.

The SPEAKER. The House will continue in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 1241

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee) at 12 o'clock and 41 minutes p.m.

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, April 29, 2015.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
The Speaker, 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 April 29, 2015 at 11 a.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 304.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

PRINTING OF PROCEEDINGS HAD DURING RECESS

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the proceedings had during the recess be printed in the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2028, ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2016; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2029, MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2016; AND PROVIDING FOR PROCEEDINGS DURING THE PERIOD FROM MAY 4, 2015, THROUGH MAY 11, 2015

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 223 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 223

Resolved, That (a) at any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, 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 any bill specified in section 2 of this resolution. The first reading of each such bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of each such bill are waived. General debate on each such bill shall be confined to that bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations. After general debate each such bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. Points of order against provisions in each such bill for failure to comply with clause 2 of rule XXI are waived.

(b) During consideration of each such bill for amendment—

(1) each amendment, other than amendments provided for in paragraph (2), shall be debatable for 10 minutes equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent and shall not be subject to amendment except as provided in paragraph (2);

(2) no pro forma amendment shall be in order except that the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations or their respective designees may offer up to 10 pro forma amendments each at any point for the purpose of debate; and

(3) the chair of the Committee of the Whole may accord priority in recognition on the basis of whether the Member offering an amendment has caused it to be printed in the portion of the Congressional Record designated for that purpose in clause 8 of rule XVIII. Amendments so printed shall be considered as read.

(c) When the committee rises and reports any such bill back to the House with a recommendation that the bill do pass, the previous question shall be considered as ordered on that bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. The bills referred to in the first section of this resolution are as follows:

(a) The bill (H.R. 2028) making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

(b) The bill (H.R. 2029) making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

SEC. 3. During consideration of H.R. 2028 and H.R. 2029 pursuant to this resolution—

(a) the provisions of House Concurrent Resolution 27, as adopted by the House, shall have force and effect in the House as though Congress has adopted such concurrent resolution; and

(b) the allocations printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution shall be considered for all purposes in the House to be allocations under section 302(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

SEC. 4. On any legislative day during the period from May 4, 2015, through May 11, 2015—

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

□ 1245

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

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to my friend, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), 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. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all 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 Georgia?

There was no objection.

Mr. WOODALL. If Members were listening to the Reading Clerk read this rule, we got into some housekeeping issues at the end. We have got a district workweek coming up next week. We needed to give the Speaker some authorities to continue to conduct the business of the House in a collaborative and a pro forma way. But it was the first part of that rule that is exciting.

I confess, I was talking to the Parliamentarian the other day, and he was telling me about the way the history of the rules had evolved, as folks stand on the House floor during Committee on Rules debate and actually go through line by line explaining to the House what is in the rule. It is not every day that I am excited about doing that, Mr. Speaker.

The Committee on Rules has a tough job. Sometimes the Committee on Rules' job is saying no. Sometimes the Committee on Rules' job is being that gatekeeper to the floor of the House, and we have to deliver some bad news to folks. I don't particularly enjoy reiterating that bad news on the floor of the House.

But today is good news. Today it is all good news for every Member of the House who has any ideas at all about how better to fund the responsibilities of this Nation. They are going to be able to have their voice heard.

Let me read, as the Reading Clerk did. We have two bills in this rule, Mr. Speaker: H.R. 2028 and H.R. 2029. I have them here. H.R. 2029 makes appropriations for military construction, Veterans Affairs, and related agencies. I daresay there is not a single Member on the floor of this House that has not grappled with how to better serve the veterans at home in our districts, that has not grappled with how to provide better accountability to the Veterans Administration that is tasked with providing those services. This rule provides that any Member of this Chamber—Republican or Democrat, senior or junior, freshman or retiring—has an opportunity to have their ideas heard. It is the best of what we do in this Chamber, Mr. Speaker, and we are going to do it on H.R. 2029.

This rule also provides for consideration of H.R. 2028. That is the Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, Mr. Speaker. Again, I daresay that there is anyone, particularly east of the Mississippi, that has a district that is not in some way impacted by the Army Corps of Engineers. The Army Corps of Engineers is funded in this legislation. Individual projects are funded in this legislation.

What this rule provides is that any Member of this Chamber that has an idea about how to better appropriate these dollars—these dollars that belong not to us as individual Members, but to the American taxpayer—how to better be accountable, be effective, be efficient with these tax dollars, Mr. Speaker, they can come to this floor and have their amendments heard.

Mr. Speaker, you have heard it said often that the Senate only has two rules: the unanimous consent and exhaustion. The Committee on Rules prevents us from having to have that structure here, but it is true that you can effectively filibuster in this Chamber as well: you can come down; you can move to strike the last word; you can have debate go on forever. I don't believe that serves us particularly well.

There is obviously an opportunity and a need to have your voice heard, to have your constituents' voices heard; but what this rule does do, which is why we are going to call it a modified open rule instead of a completely open rule, is it restricts what one might call dilatory amendments, what one might call clarifying conversation. It restricts these pro forma amendments, where you are not actually trying to change any language, you just want to come down here and talk, 10 on each side controlled by the subcommittee chairmen.

Mr. Speaker, what is so neat about these two bills that we are going to make in order under this bill is they both passed out of the Committee on Appropriations on a voice vote. As you know, Mr. Speaker, there are some contentious things that we do in this institution and, arguably, appropriating is one of the hardest things that this institution has to do, but passing these bills out of committee on a voice vote tells us about the collaborative way in which these bills were put together.

Now, I can tell you, there are going to be folks on both sides of the aisle, Mr. Speaker, who disagree with the funding levels in these bills. There are going to be Republicans who wish that they funded less, Democrats who wish they funded more; there are going to be Democrats who wish they funded less, and Republicans who wish they funded more.

The funding levels of the total bill, that is not for debate today. That is set in the funding allocations. We call them 302(a) allocations, Mr. Speaker. That is my responsibility on the Committee on the Budget and others who serve on the Committee on the Budget. As you know, Mr. Speaker, we are this close—oh, golly, we are this close—to having conferenced the first balanced budget for the United States of America in over 10 years—in over 10 years. The House and the Senate are about to agree on funding levels for this Nation. It is embarrassing that we don't do it every year, but it is wonderful that we have an opportunity to do it this year, and we will.

Ordinarily, Mr. Speaker, we would have done that first. And candidly, as a member of the House Committee on the Budget, a Member who proudly supported the budget that passed here on the floor of the House, I thought that conference report was going to be ready on Monday of this week. It is not. It is not. So this rule also deems those levels that the House has already passed, those levels that we absolutely expect to be the levels of funding in that conference report, to be the levels of funding for this Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, for this Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, as is appropriate.

We are beginning the appropriations process today, Mr. Speaker, at the earliest point in 40 years. How many of my colleagues are frustrated, disappointed,

disillusioned when this Chamber cannot get its work done?

Oh, the list is long, Mr. Speaker, and there are legitimate reasons why we cannot accomplish some of the goals that we have set out to accomplish, but I promise you, Mr. Speaker, the funding clock waits on no Member. Come September 30 of this year, funding will expire for the entire Federal Government. The earlier we start to solve that issue, the better chance we have of getting it done. And working together, collaboratively, voice votes out of subcommittee, big votes out on the budget bill, we are starting earlier than we have since 1973.

Good processes yield good results, Mr. Speaker; flawed processes yield flawed results. This is the kind of rule that I think every Member of this body wishes we could see more of here on the House floor. This is going to allow for the kind of debate that is not going to predetermine the outcome, but is going to allow Members to come down to the floor and make their case to their colleagues, have the kind of debate the American people expect, and let the chips fall where they may. You get 218 votes, you get to change this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I signed up to be on the Committee on Rules because I knew that we would have the opportunity to unleash this institution, the opportunity to allow every Member who comes from such diverse backgrounds, who have so much to contribute. Mr. Speaker, I just got here 4 years ago with my voting card lent to me by the Seventh District of Georgia. Folks in my class that came in 4 years ago, they are already in the top 50 percent of seniority in this institution. The American people have been turning folks out at record speed, which means we have been bringing in new talent like never before.

Sometimes folks think the system around here is geared towards those who have been here the longest. They think that only after you have achieved a subcommittee chairmanship or a committee chairmanship will you be able to have input on the process. The Committee on Rules says no. The Committee on Appropriations says no. On these bills in this process, every single Member has a chance to have their voice heard, a chance to come down here, make their case, and have an impact on the final product.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be carrying this rule today, and I urge strong support from my colleagues on both sides of the aisle as we consider this bill throughout the afternoon and on final passage.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia, my good friend, for yielding me the customary 30 minutes for debate, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, totally unrelated to my assigned task, I do feel very strongly, as I am sure many Members of the House of Representatives and many American citizens feel, the horror of what transpired in Nepal, and I would just like to say, probably speaking for just about every Member, that our heartfelt condolences are with the Nepalese people, and our hope is that the world will rally to them, as have many, including America, and allow the injured and the homeless to be taken care of.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2029, the Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2016 provides for a total of $76.6 billion in discretionary funding, including overseas contingency operations, as well as $7 billion for military construction and family housing projects, and $163.2 billion for the Department of Veterans Affairs.

H.R. 2028, the Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2016, provides a total allocation of $35.4 billion for energy and water resource projects.

First, I find it important to mention, as did my colleague from Georgia, that this rule is a modified open rule, with time limits set to 10 minutes' debate per amendment, and not an open rule to allow all Members to have a full and robust debate on the House floor.

I commend my colleague from Georgia, who has been a continuing advocate for open rules, and I also recognize his explanation that the, in his words, restriction of time was to avoid what would amount to unnecessary debate.

But as has become custom under Republican leadership, we are once again limiting the amount of deliberation permitted on issues that are critically important to our Nation and our constituents. Nevertheless, I am proud, as is my friend from Georgia, that Republicans and Democrats—the word he used is ''collaborated,'' and I agree—were able to come together to draft H.R. 2029, the legislation that appropriates funds to military construction projects, improves the quality of life for veterans and military families, and allows for the continued operation of the essential functions of our Nation's governing body.

These measures include the implementation of stringent, but effective, reporting requirements for the VistA electronic health records system, as well as the continued efforts to eliminate the veterans' claims backlog by fully funding endeavors to implement digital scanning of health records and improvements to centralized mail.

□ 1300

These commendable provisions bring us another step closer to ensuring that those who have dedicated themselves to defending our Nation will receive the benefits they have rightly earned and deserve.

Despite reaching common ground on several important aspects, the Republican's fiscal year 2016 budget caps will have real and drastic cuts to essential programs that are necessary to support the brave individuals who served our great Nation in combat and who will bear the costs of those wars for decades to come.

As a result of the majority's FY 2016 budget resolution spending caps, political maneuvering, and gimmicks—I remember when I was a child and I first learned about the magical terminology ''hocus-pocus,'' and it comes to mind that we are sort of in imaginary land here, with the political maneuvering and gimmicks—military construction funding stands to be slashed by $1.2 billion, and the Department of Veterans Affairs comes in at $1.4 billion below the amount requested.

Yesterday, in the Rules Committee, we had a lengthy proceeding, and every member on the Rules Committee had an opportunity to speak to this issue. Almost as a collective voice, there was criticism of Veterans Affairs and how it functions and its failures over a protracted period of time.

I raised a question for information about how many people work for VA, total; and I learned for the first time that there are 340,000 people that work in interrelated capacities for VA.

The arguments that were being made were made about people who are flawed and rightly should be criticized, but I don't feel all 340,000 people who work on behalf of veterans, particularly in areas that I am privileged to serve, have seen changes that are positive and helpful, although there is always room for improvement.

There was one measure for Veterans Affairs employees to receive the same 1.3 percent increase in their pay, and this measure disallows that, and I don't think that is right. I believe that many of those persons have rightfully earned what other Federal employees are to receive as a minimal increase in these very troubled economic times.

My Republican colleagues' efforts to shift $532 million to the overseas contingency operations account—which, incidentally, does not count against the budget cap—creates the appearance that we have allocated the robust and necessary funding that our military requires when, in reality, we fail to do so.

Americans who currently serve and have served in our military, along with their families, deserve the very best our Nation has to offer. When it comes to investments in our infrastructure, our military, and our country, we all must recognize that not all spending is bad spending. We can and we must do better.

H.R. 2028, the Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2016, is also an important piece of legislation. This bill provides funding for many critical defense and nondefense areas, from vital water resource projects to essential weapons, naval reactor, and nuclear proliferation funding. All of these funding projects enjoy largely bipartisan support.

That is why it is a shame, in my view, that my Republican friends have

taken this opportunity to poison these bipartisan funding measures by attaching partisan policy riders, and I am sure Members are going to be down here speaking loudly about some of them.

On the one hand, this bill provides very robust funding for the Army Corps of Engineers at $5.6 billion in total. That is an increase of $142 million from fiscal year 2015.

I applaud this strong funding effort. Unfortunately, my friends on the other side have elected to add an amendment to this funding that will allow guns to be carried on all Corps of Engineers land.

I spoke passionately last night about this, and I anticipate that, beginning in the month of May, I will speak more not just about this particular measure, but about the epidemic of gun violence in this society. I did not coin that phrase. The former Surgeon General, Mr. Satcher, pointed that out a decade ago—nearly—and it is as true today as at any other point.

Why would we add an amendment to an important appropriations bill that will allow more guns into recreational areas used by families? I just simply cannot understand that. Does anyone really believe an appropriations bill is the appropriate place to amend our gun laws?

It would appear that reasonable minds do not. Clause 2 of rule XXI prohibits members of the House Rules to legislate on an appropriations measure. Significantly and dangerously, Republicans have granted a waiver of this important rule.

I won't speak more about it. As I indicated, there will be more to come on this business of guns in our society, and I will make it very clear where I am coming from. I feel it is in the interest of society and not in opposition to the Second Amendment.

Here is another example. This bill allocates $1.178 billion for the harbor maintenance trust fund, vital funding needed to help further usher our ports and harbors in the 21st century, but then my friends on the other side of the aisle saw fit to attach an amendment that will prevent the Army Corps of Engineers from taking commonsense steps to clarify which waters are protected by the Clean Water Act.

Why, in one instance, are we going to fully fund an agency as vital as the Army Corps of Engineers and then, in the next breath, tie their hands by preventing them from making commonsense determinations on what is widely acknowledged to be a state of confusion about the scope of the law's pollution control programs? Let the Corps do its job.

Why are my friends on the other side of the aisle trying to weigh down this important funding bill with unnecessary and partisan policy riders?

This bill funds essential nuclear proliferation activities—$1.9 million worth—as well as environmental cleanup efforts. We should not be threatening the funding to stop the spread of nuclear weapons or the preservation of our environment and construction of our harbors just so the Republicans can have a partisan fight over gutting the Clean Water Act or attempting to change our gun laws.

The American people deserve better. The funding of these projects is too important.

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

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, we have an important responsibility in budgeting in this institution—again, one that has not been fulfilled, I would argue, in more than a decade, that will be fulfilled this year for the very first time.

We had a choice in the Budget Committee. I serve on the Budget Committee as well, Mr. Speaker. We had a choice in the Budget Committee about whether or not we were just going to pretend that we could fund at certain levels or whether we were going to actually follow the law.

Mr. Speaker, it may not surprise you that we have those conversations in Washington; but, yes, the conversation goes: Am I just going to do whatever I want to do? Or am I going to follow the law?

It is very striking to me that this conversation occurs at all. I would have said that that is kind of the definition of the law: you don't get whatever you want to do; you have to follow the law. I wish that we could drive that message home across so many different parts of our society. The law is the law.

The President absolutely sent some budget requests to us for these bills, as he will for other appropriations bills, Mr. Speaker.

In the case of the Energy and Water Appropriations bill, the President requested a 5 percent increase in that funding. Now, had we passed that 5 percent increase without changing the law, we are going to roll around to October 1, at the beginning of the fiscal year, and the law is going to snap that 5 percent increase right back down to legally allowed levels.

The choice we had in the Appropriations Committee—and I so admire my friends on the Appropriations Committee, Mr. Speaker—we had a choice of either pretending we were going to spend a lot of money funding all of our priorities, only to have the law snap those down across the board, or we could be honest about how much money was available and make sure we were prioritizing every single dollar as best we could.

In the case of Energy and Water, the President asked for a 5 percent increase. The Appropriations Committee provided a 3 percent increase, as the law allows. In the case of Military Construction and the VA, the President asked for just over an 8 percent increase. The Appropriations Committee provided a 6 percent increase, as the law allows.

I would challenge my friends on the other side of the aisle. I would challenge my friends on this side of the aisle, Mr. Speaker. Thirty years ago, two-thirds of what the Federal Government funded in this country was funded out of this institution. It was funded through the Appropriations Committee. It was this body making decisions and choices based on our constituents' needs and desires about how to use taxpayer dollars—not so today.

Today, it is exactly the opposite; instead of this institution funding two-thirds of the budget and one-third of it being mandatory spending, now, two-thirds is mandatory, and only one-third is available for this body to make decisions about.

I would challenge my colleagues: let's find that agreement that reforms mandatory spending, as every Member of this Chamber knows needs to happen, and let's reallocate those dollars to what was designed in the Budget Control Act of 2011 to allow us to fund these discretionary priorities at a higher level.

Mr. Speaker, I want to build things. I want to build things. For Pete's sake, in this Energy and Water Development bill, we do. We fund the Corps of Engineers in this bill.

We have the Savannah Harbor expansion project in the great State of Georgia. We are the fastest growing container port in the Nation, Mr. Speaker—the fastest growing in the Nation—trying to prepare for the new Panamax ships coming through the new Panama Canal.

The Corps of Engineers tells us that in order to maximize the use of taxpayer dollars, in order to make sure that taxpayers get the best bang for their buck on this project of national importance, we need to build it in 6 years, at the rate of $100 million a year. Six years, $100 million a year, is the way we maximize taxpayer dollars.

This bill funds that project at $21 million. That is $21 million. We are going to string that project out year after year after year, costing the taxpayer more.

Now, I don't blame my friends on the Appropriations Committee, Mr. Speaker. As it turns out, the rules of the House don't allow us to prioritize those projects. That is what the President asked for. The Appropriations Committee wasn't able to ask for any more than the President asked for.

This is the President's funding level, but that is not the right way to appropriate, and if we could work together to reallocate those dollars, I would do it tomorrow.

I challenge my friends to find a mandatory spending reform bill that I will not support. It is critical that we do it. It is critical to our seniors. It is critical to the young people. It is critical to the governance of this Nation.

But to the degree that I have complaints about this bill, my friends have complaints about this bill, with the passage of this rule, we are going to

allow every single Member to come down here and make those improvements known. We will have up-or-down votes. Some amendments will lose; some amendments will win.

We will perfect this bill together. That is the way this bill was written, and that is the way this bill will be passed, and that should make us all very proud.

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

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I so much enjoy the passion of my good friend from Georgia. I am sure he feels the same as me. He kind of has an advantage over me today, in that he is on the Budget Committee. Happily, I would report to him I brought along some people from the Budget Committee that can take up the slack that I might offer.

I am delighted at this time to yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. YARMUTH), my good friend from the Budget Committee.

□ 1315

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my friend being willing to yield.

I rise in opposition to this rule which deems, as if passed, a budget resolution that, at best, is an economic fantasy and, at worst, does serious damage to our country.

The rule before us today is further proof that our Republican colleagues are continuing to rely on faith-based accounting in this budget. They are closing their eyes and praying that it works. But it doesn't work. The numbers don't add up, and this rule makes those shortcomings clear.

The funding levels deemed in this measure do not meet our moral obligation to move our country forward and help the American people. Not only do they fail to meet the needs of the people we represent, they fail to meet a basic standard of honest budgeting.

For example, we know that trickle-down economics doesn't work. We have seen that time and time again, unfortunately, in this century. Yet, this rule puts in place funding levels that are supposedly balanced by the unsupportable belief that tax cuts generate more revenue.

The Republican budget proposals will result in dramatic cuts to education, infrastructure, and innovation, cuts to investments that we know we need to prepare our children and grandchildren to lead the world in the new global economy and to grow our economy.

This deemed budget resolution pretends we can afford more tax cuts for the ultrawealthy who do not need them, while it increases taxes for middle class families that they can't afford.

This rule deems in place funding levels that will continue to use the overseas contingency operations account budget line as a slush fund, abandoning the Republicans' own commitments to maintaining sequester-level spending for our national defense, while cutting nearly every program that helps hard-working Americans get ahead.

At every turn, this measure misses the mark in fulfilling our obligation to adequately fund investments that will allow us to continue our economic recovery. Simply put, this budget falls woefully short.

I urge my colleagues to oppose the funding levels deemed in this rule and ensure that American families will not be forced to work harder and get less.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I enjoy serving on the Budget Committee with my friend from Kentucky. The budget is that first step of any accounting process for the year, and my friend is absolutely right.

If we could have, we would have passed that budget conference report first thing when we got into town this week. Anybody who is reading the newspaper knows it slowed down in the Senate. We have all the numbers worked out. There are some other issues going on. I won't bore folks with those details.

So this rule absolutely does, in the name of getting the people's business done, take those budget levels that have passed in this House, that have passed in the Senate, that are on their way back over here in a conference report, and sets those as the funding levels for this year.

Again, these are the levels that exist in law. That is the fantasy part of some of our funding debates. I could agree with all my colleagues that we need to triple funding on X, Y, or Z project, but the law won't allow it. We will pass that on the floor of the House, but as soon as the beginning of the fiscal year rolls around, the law will sequester those dollars, snap that funding back down.

We have an obligation to prioritize these dollars ourselves. Golly, when we have tough decisions to be made, I don't want to leave those tough decisions to an automatic sequestration process. I don't want to leave those tough decisions to some automatic process of law. I want to take responsibility for those decisions here. I want us to make these decisions together.

If we have to grapple with it, let us grapple together, but let's be honest with folks that there is no free lunch here. If we want it, we have to pay for it.

Now, to my friend from Kentucky's point, we are paying for a lot of it out the overseas contingency operations account. I voted ''no'' on that decision when it came to the House floor, as my friend from Kentucky did as well. We lost.

That is the funny thing about this institution, Mr. Speaker. I told my constituents about all the amazing things I was going to get up here to do, I was going to do them on their behalf. It turns out, if I can't get 217 of my colleagues up to agree with me, I can't do squat.

We tried and we failed on that account. So now we have the numbers that we have; we have the bill that we have; we have the law that we have; and as much as we might want it to be different, it isn't.

That is why this open rule is so important, Mr. Speaker, because we have the bill that we have; we have the law that we have; and now we have a process that allows every Member of this Chamber to come down here and improve it.

We don't know what it is going to look like at the end of the process. It is not a foregone conclusion who has the votes and who doesn't, and I believe in my heart the bill will be better at the end than it was at the beginning because that is what the collective wisdom of this institution brings.

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

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, at this time I am very pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. MOORE), another member of the Budget Committee, a dear friend of mine.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRIES

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, before I start, may I make a parliamentary inquiry, sir.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman will state her parliamentary inquiry.

Ms. MOORE. My inquiry is, has the concurrent budget passed? Is it law?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair cannot respond to a parliamentary inquiry on a non-pending measure.

Ms. MOORE. Well, the rule, Mr. Speaker, is really clear. It says that the provisions of the House Concurrent Resolution 27, as adopted by the House, shall have the force and effect in the House as though Congress has adopted such concurrent resolution. I am hearing that we have adopted it, so have we?

In order to take up these appropriations bills, we are supposed to have passed that. I am on the budget conference committee, and I didn't recall that we had passed it, sir.

So I renew my inquiry as to whether or not we are operating under a passed budget resolution that has passed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman may consult the records of the House for that information.

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this rule because, once again, here we are with all kinds of flowery notions about the law and so forth, and we are actually deeming this budget as passed.

As a member of the Budget Conference Committee, I can tell you that the reason for the delay is not because there was an attempt to reach a bipartisan agreement. Oh, no. The Democratic budget conferees have been completely shut out of the budget negotiation process.

You would think that without these pesky Democrats in the way, it would not have been that hard for the majority-controlled House and the Senate to

come up with an agreement of how best to shred the social safety net, drive more people into poverty, cut our investments in infrastructure, block grant Medicaid, slash SNAP, end the Affordable Care Act and then, of course, keep the money and the savings from the Affordable Care Act, and take 69 percent of nondefense cuts from low-income and moderate-income families. They could have done it.

So instead of the majority party governing, they have resorted to this plan B and deeming the budget as passed.

Now, you know, this Republican budget claims to balance in 10 years, but it doesn't do it. It gets the savings from the Affordable Care Act, which it eliminates. And also, to appease the war hawks in the Republican caucus, they throw this money into the overseas contingency operations, also known as a slush fund.

And in the underlying budget, we see the Republican Party doubling down on the same ''cut our way into prosperity'' approach. That is another charade claiming that block grants are just another form of enabling States to have more flexibility. When you hear the word ''flexibility,'' think massive cuts. It means eviscerating the social safety net.

So I ask my colleagues to reject this rule.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I know the Speaker is constrained to just ruling on parliamentary issues. I have no such constraint here. I can opine on the budget process itself.

And I would say to my friend that I share her frustration. I absolutely do. I have been in this Chamber 4 years. We have had to deem appropriations levels every single year. Not once—not once—have we been able to agree on conference budget numbers in the 4 years that I have served in this House.

Now, for the previous 4 years, I confess, I pointed the finger at the Senate, and I pointed the finger at the Senate's leader who, at that time, was Senator REID from Nevada. Today we have a new Senate leader, and I can't point the finger at the other party. If we can't get this right, it is my leader in the Senate who can't get this right. But I believe we are. Mr. Speaker, I believe we are.

Open up any newspaper, look at any report. It was supposed to be done earlier this week. We have never had a shot at getting it done in the past. We are on the brink of that agreement. So what is happening here today, far from being an unusual circumstance, is the best we have done in 5 years.

Now, candidly, that is what I expect from new leadership in the Senate. I expect us to do better than we did last year; I expect us to do better than we did 2 years ago; and I expect us to be even better next year than we are this year. The first time in more than a decade, the first time in more than a decade we have had a shot at a governing budget document.

But to be fair, Mr. Speaker, I want to distinguish between the budget and the law. A lot of folks believe that the budget of the United States becomes the law of the land. It does not. The President never signs the budget of the United States. It is an agreement between the House and the Senate. That distinguishes it from the budget caps and the Budget Control Act, which are absolutely the law of the land, passed by the House and Senate, signed by President Obama.

So when we talk about what it is that we want to see in funding levels, we can decide anything we want to in this Chamber. But the law of the land is not what we decide in our budget document; it is what was decided back in August of 2011 when the budget caps from the Budget Control Act came into being.

Mr. Speaker, the opportunity to have this conference budget agreement, the opportunity to be working from the same sheet of budgeting music on both sides of the Hill, is amazing. I can't tell you, as a Budget Committee member, how hard we have worked to achieve it and how much I anticipate it. It wasn't yesterday; so far it is not today; but it is going to be soon.

I don't want that to stand in the way of getting the people's business done. We have two great appropriations bills here, again, passed by voice votes out of committee, composed in collaborative ways within the Appropriations Committee. These two bills deserve to be heard on the floor of the House; they deserve to be heard this week; and with passage of this rule, they will be.

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

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida, the great State of Florida (Ms. BROWN), my very, very good friend who is an expert in veterans affairs, among other things.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, Members of the House: dead on arrival. You know, you can fool some of the people some of the time, but you can't fool all of the people all of the time. I rise in strong opposition to this rule and to the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations bill.

After taking a step forward with the new Choice Act program, this Republican budget takes two steps back with its cuts in veterans health care. Just another example of Republicans talking the talk but not walking the walk.

But you don't have to take my word for it. You can ask the veterans service organizations who represent the interests of our veterans. Every last one of them oppose this bill.

□ 1330

The national commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars said the following about the Republicans' veterans bill: ''The VA cannot fulfill its mission without proper funding, but the House, for whatever reason, now wants to ration care, eliminate infrastructure projects, and stop improving upon the programs and services that the VA was created to provide. This bill is bad for veterans, and any vote for it is unconscionable.''

We are going to vote on a Republican budget later this week that provides more money for the Department of Defense than the Pentagon requested, while cutting funds for health care and services for every veteran that is returning from battle.

George Washington, the first President of the United States, said: ''The willingness with which our young people are likely to serve in any war, no matter how justified, shall be directly proportional to how they perceive veterans of earlier wars were treated and appreciated by our Nation.''

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

Mr. HASTINGS. I yield the gentlewoman an additional 1 minute.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Sadly, this bill truly fails the test of appreciation our veterans deserve.

Vote ''no'' on the rule, and vote ''no'' on the Veterans Affairs Appropriations bill, and send this bad legislation back to the drawing board.

Mr. Speaker, this bill will cut 70,000 veterans from health care. I can't imagine any Democrat or any Republican voting for this bill.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

One of the things I love about this institution is the passion with which folks come to the floor of this House, and so often that passion is directed at improving the services for those who have served us.

My friend from Florida is absolutely right when he said in his opening statement that in the Rules Committee last night, the frustration with the VA and in trying to provide accountable services to our veterans was universal. This is not a partisan issue. Serving those who have served us is an issue that comes from the heart, and it comes from every Member of this Chamber.

But I will remind all of my friends, if you are wondering whether or not we are fulfilling that commitment, this is the bill that this institution passed last year with only one dissenting vote. And this bill increases funding over last year by 6 percent.

Mr. Speaker, let no man and no woman question the commitment of our friends on the Veterans' Affairs Committee, our friends doing the Military Construction and VA Appropriations bill. I know the commitment to be universal, which is why in a time of budget cuts, which is why in a time of sequestration, which is why in a time when almost every account of the Federal budget is under strain, this account goes not down but up, and up by 6 percent over what this body passed almost unanimously last year.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I would inquire how much time remains for both sides.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida has 9½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Georgia has 7½ minutes remaining.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I would advise my friend from Georgia that I have no further requests for time, and I am prepared to close.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I am also prepared to close.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I wish to place the Statement of Administration Policy, with reference to both these matters, in the RECORD.

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

H.R. 2029—MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2016

(Rep. Rogers, R–KY, Apr. 28, 2015)

The Administration strongly opposes House passage of H.R. 2029, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes. The bill fails to fully fund critical priorities, including veterans' medical care and military and VA construction. Furthermore, the legislation includes a highly problematic ideological rider that would constrain the President's ability to protect our national security. If the President were presented with H.R. 2029, his senior advisors would recommend that he veto the bill.

Moreover, enacting H.R. 2029 while adhering to the congressional Republican budget's overall spending limits for fiscal year (FY) 2016 would hurt our economy and short-change investments in middle-class priorities. Sequestration was never intended to take effect: rather, it was supposed to threaten such drastic cuts to both defense and non-defense funding that policymakers would be motivated to come to the table and reduce the deficit through smart, balanced reforms. The Republican framework would bring base discretionary funding for both defense and non-defense for FY 2016 to the lowest real levels in a decade. Compared to the President's Budget, the cuts would result in tens of thousands of the Nation's most vulnerable children losing access to Head Start, more than two million fewer workers receiving job training and employment services, and thousands fewer scientific and medical research awards and grants, adversely impacting the pace of discovery and innovation, along with other impacts that would hurt the economy, the middle class, and Americans working hard to reach the middle class.

Maintaining sequestration would also negatively impact programs that provide important services to our Nation's veterans and are funded in appropriations bills where House Republicans propose to make even deeper cuts relative to the President's Budget than in H.R. 2029. For example, American Job Centers serve 1.2 million veterans annually, including 300,000 who receive intensive employment services. Transition assistance provides 200,000 service members each year with employment guidance and information as they prepare to enter the civilian workforce. And hundreds of thousands of veterans rely on a wide range of Department of Housing and Urban Development programs for housing support and homeless assistance each year.

Sequestration levels would also put our national security at unnecessary risk, not only through pressures on defense spending, but also through pressures on State, USAID, Homeland Security, and other non-defense programs that help keep us safe. More broadly, the strength of our economy and the security of our Nation are linked. That is why the President has been clear that he is not willing to lock in sequestration going forward, nor will he accept fixes to defense without also fixing non-defense.

The President's senior advisors would recommend that he veto H.R. 2029 and any other legislation that implements the current Republican budget framework, which blocks the investments we need for our economy to compete in the future. The Administration looks forward to working with the Congress to reverse sequestration for defense and non-defense priorities and to offset the cost with commonsense spending and tax expenditure cuts, as Members of Congress from both parties have urged.

The Administration would like to take this opportunity to share additional views regarding the Committee's version of the bill.

Veterans Affairs Medical Care. The Administration appreciates the Committee's support for our Nation's veterans; however, the Administration objects to the Committee's overall $585 million reduction to the FY 2016 Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Care request. If enacted, this reduction would negatively impact medical care services for tens of thousands of veterans and reduce VA's ability to activate new and replacement facilities with sufficient staff and equipment and to adequately maintain facility infrastructure.

Veterans Affairs Construction. The Administration objects to the Committee's $582 million reduction to the FY 2016 VA major construction request. This reduction would prevent building upgrades and renovations, including necessary expansions to medical facilities and national cemeteries that would improve services to our veterans. The bill would significantly constrain VA's ability to make progress on its highest priority capital projects.

Other Veterans Affairs Reductions. The Administration also objects to the Committee's other reductions to the overall VA request, including $159 million in reductions for employee awards, bonuses, and the President's proposed 1.3 percent pay raise for Federal employees. As VA attempts to enhance staffing to deliver better care to veterans, these reductions will hinder the Department's ability to recruit and retain personnel critical to the provision of benefits and services to veterans The Administration urges the Congress to provide the proposed 1.3 percent pay increase for Federal civilian employees.

Military Construction. The Administration objects to the Committee's underfunding of military construction in the President's FY 2016 base defense budget by $1.3 billion, which will delay or defer projects that serve critical needs for members of our Armed Forces and their families. The projects requested in the FY 2016 Budget reflect the highest priority projects for the Department of Defense, and the Administration requests full funding for each project.

Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) Funds. The Administration strongly objects to the Committee's use of $532 million of OCO funds intended for wars and not subject to the budget caps to pay for long-term infrastructure investments. Shifting long-term defense costs to OCO is bad budget policy and bad defense policy, since it undermines long-term planning. Moreover, the Administration has made clear that it will not accept attempts to fix defense without non-defense by using OCO as a mechanism to evade the defense budget cap.

Detainee Matters. The Administration strongly objects to section 512 of the bill, which prohibits the use of funds to construct, renovate, or expand any facility in the United States to house individuals held in the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay. This provision would constrain the flexibility that the Nation's Armed Forces and counterterrorism professionals need to best protect U.S. national security, intruding upon the Executive Branch's ability to carry out its mission.

The Administration looks forward to working with the Congress as the FY 2016 appropriations process moves forward.

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

H.R. 2028—ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2016

(Rep. Rogers, R–KY, Apr. 28, 2015)

The Administration strongly opposes House passage of H.R. 2028, making appropriations for energy and water development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes. The bill drastically underfunds critical investments that develop American energy sources to build a clean and secure energy future; develop and commercialize the emerging technologies that create high-quality jobs and enhance the Nation's economic competitiveness; and improve resilience against current and ongoing climate impacts that threaten our economy, public health, and natural resources. As a result, it would put at risk U.S. competitiveness in new markets for clean energy industries such as advanced vehicles, advanced manufacturing, energy efficiency for homes and businesses, and domestic renewable energy such as wind, solar, and biomass. It would also harm efforts to implement the President's nuclear strategy and advance counter-proliferation objectives. Furthermore, the legislation includes highly problematic ideological riders, including provisions that threaten to undermine our ability to protect a resource that is essential to America's health: clean water. If the President were presented with H.R. 2028, his senior advisors would recommend that he veto the bill.

In addition, enacting H.R. 2028, while adhering to the congressional Republican budget's overall spending limits for fiscal year (FY) 2016 would hurt our economy and short-change investments in middle-class priorities. Sequestration was never intended to take effect: rather, it was supposed to threaten such drastic cuts to both defense and non-defense funding that policymakers would be motivated to come to the table and reduce the deficit through smart, balanced reforms. The Republican framework would bring base discretionary funding for both defense and non-defense for FY 2016 to the lowest real levels in a decade. Compared to the President's Budget, the cuts would result in tens of thousands of the Nation's most vulnerable children losing access to Head Start, more than two million fewer workers receiving job training and employment services, and thousands fewer scientific and medical research awards and grants, adversely impacting the pace of discovery and innovation, along with other impacts that would hurt the economy, the middle class, and Americans working hard to reach the middle class.

Sequestration levels would also put our national security at unnecessary risk, not only through pressures on defense spending, but also through pressures on State, USAID, Homeland Security, and other non-defense programs that help keep us safe. More broadly, the strength of our economy and the security of our Nation are linked. That is why the President has been clear that he is not willing to lock in sequestration going forward, nor will he accept fixes to defense without also fixing non-defense.

The President's senior advisors would recommend that he veto H.R. 2028 and any other legislation that implements the current Republican budget framework, which blocks the investments needed for our economy to compete in the future. The Administration looks forward to working with the Congress to reverse sequestration for defense and nondefense priorities and offset the cost with commonsense spending and tax expenditure cuts, as Members of Congress from both parties have urged.

The Administration would like to take this opportunity to share additional views regarding the Committee's version of the bill.

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY (DOE)

Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy. The Administration strongly objects to the $1.6 billion provided in the bill for the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy. Overall this level is $1.1 billion below the FY 2016 Budget request. Relative to the FY 2016 Budget request, the bill reduces funding for renewable energy by 49 percent, sustainable transportation by 35 percent, and energy efficiency by 40 percent. The proposed reductions significantly underfund critical activities that support the development and commercialization of clean energy technologies. At this funding level, the number of research, development, and demonstration projects supported in cooperation with industry, universities, and the national labs would be reduced, limiting innovation and technological advancement, curtailing solutions to cut U.S. dependence on oil and reduce energy waste, and undermining the Nation's industrial competitiveness in the future global clean energy economy. The Congress is urged to fully fund the FY 2016 Budget request of $2.7 billion. The Administration is also disappointed that the bill does not include transfer language necessary to support joint efforts with the Navy and the Department of Agriculture to develop advanced drop-in biofuels for military applications, a provision included in the FY 2015 enacted bill.

Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy (ARPA-E). The Administration objects to the $280 million provided in the bill for ARPA-E, which is $45 million below the FY 2016 Budget request. This funding reduction would impact investments and delay improvements in technologies that reduce energy-related emissions, increase energy efficiency across multiple economic sectors, and reduce energy imports.

Fossil Energy and Nuclear Energy. The Administration notes that the bill includes funding above the FY 2016 Budget request in some areas that are already well established in the market, including for nuclear and fossil energy, and yet makes drastic reductions in those that are most crucial to the Nation's clean energy future and continued U.S. technology leadership. The Administration encourages the Congress to fund DOE's energy programs at the requested level, as this balances the portfolio among items of short, medium, and long-term progress and promotes U.S. leadership in these technology areas.

Office of Science. While the Administration appreciates the Committee's support for the Office of Science, the level of funding provided, which is $240 million below the FY 2016 Budget request, is insufficient to maintain U.S. leadership in high performance computing as the United States moves into capable exascale systems to support discovery science, national security, and economic competitiveness.

Disposition of Weapons-Usable Plutonium. The Administration objects to language in the bill that requires the Secretary of Energy to continue construction of the Mixed Oxide Fuel Fabrication Facility. This language is unnecessarily restrictive and would preclude alternative, and potentially more cost-effective, approaches to implementing U.S. commitments in the 2000 Plutonium Management and Disposition Agreement and its 2010 annex to dispose of excess weapons plutonium. DOE contracted for an independent validation of costs for plutonium disposition alternatives in accordance with congressional mandates. The results of that analysis will inform the Administration's approach to plutonium disposition. Information on the first phase of that analysis was provided to the Congress on April 21st.

Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR). The Administration opposes the $212 million level provided for SPR. In addition to base program activities, the FY 2016 Budget request of $257 million includes resources to fund timely replacement of equipment and physical systems, to begin to address the backlog of deferred maintenance activities, and to enhance distribution flexibility and reliability.

Energy Information Administration (EIA). The Administration urges the Congress to fully fund the FY 2016 Budget request of $131 million for EIA to support expanded domestic energy data and analysis, address critical energy data gaps (including monthly movements of crude oil by rail), and increase integration of EIA energy data with Canada and Mexico.

Yucca Mountain. The Administration objects to the funding provided in the bill for Yucca Mountain and is disappointed with the rejection of the practical solutions proposed in the President's nuclear waste strategy. As reflected in the FY 2016 Budget request, this strategy incorporates important and workable elements, such as consent-based siting, interim storage of waste, and program funding reforms that are essential to the success of a Nuclear Waste Program.

Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Yucca Mountain. The Administration objects to the funding provided in the bill for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to continue adjudication of the Yucca Mountain license application.

Office of the Federal Coordinator (OFC) for Alaska Natural Gas Transportation Projects. The Administration appreciates full funding for the OFC at the level of the FY 2016 Budget request, but is disappointed that the statutory amendment proposed in the FY 2016 Budget request is not included. The amendment is critical to the OFC's ability to fulfill its mission under current market conditions, which have changed the nature of projects being proposed.

CORPS OF ENGINEERS—CIVIL WORKS (CORPS)

Overall Funding. The bill provides nearly $5.6 billion for the Corps civil works program. The Administration believes the more appropriate overall funding levels proposed in the FY 2016 Budget request would limit wasteful spending on projects that provide a low or marginal return to the Nation and would avoid reductions in other priority areas, such as protecting the Nation's water resources and important investments in clean energy technologies.

Corps Regulatory Program. The Administration encourages the Congress to fund the Corps regulatory program at the requested level. A $5 million reduction in funding would inhibit the Corps' ability to issue permits in a timely manner and to protect important aquatic resources, while undertaking needed programmatic improvements, including implementation of the pending Clean Water rulemaking.

Clean Water Act (C WA). The Administration believes that the CWA riders in the bill undermine efforts to protect America's clean water resources, which are critical to American families and businesses. The Administration strongly objects to section 105 of the bill in particular, which would disrupt the Administration's current efforts to clarify the scope of CWA, hamstring future regulatory efforts, and create significant ambiguity regarding existing regulations and guidance.

Firearms Policy. The Administration objects to section 107 of the bill, which prohibits the Corps from enforcing its ban on firearms at a water resources development project. If enacted, this provision would prevent the Secretary of the Army from using the discretion now provided in law to enforce or revise the current Corps policy, based on considerations such as the security of critical infrastructure, public and employee safety, and the manner in which the firearm is carried (e.g., open vs. concealed). Corps rangers are not authorized to carry firearms and do not have full Federal law enforcement authority.

National Ocean Policy. The Administration objects to section 505 of the bill, which prohibits any funding provided in the bill from being used to implement the marine planning components of the National Ocean Policy. This rider would prohibit DOE and the Corps from participating in marine and coastal planning efforts, a process to better determine how the ocean, the Nation's coasts, and the Great Lakes are managed in an efficient manner.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BUREAU OF RECLAMATION AND CENTRAL UTAH PROJECT

Overall Funding. The bill provides nearly $1.1 billion for the Bureau of Reclamation and $9.9 million for the Central Utah Project. The Administration appreciates the Committee's support for the Bureau of Reclamation water resources program.

The Administration looks forward to working with the Congress as the FY 2016 appropriations process moves forward.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, while I am pleased with the level of support provided in these pieces of legislation for essential military, veterans, defense, and water resources programs, they should not serve as vehicles to make substantive policy changes to our Nation's gun laws or gut important environmental protections; nor should we stand idly by while Republicans in Congress slash funding for critically important veterans and military services under the guise of a spending increase.

Now, Mr. Speaker, one of the things that I talked about last night, I offered an amendment that would self-execute to the rule that would strike section 107 from the Energy and Water Appropriations bill. This is one of the riders in H.R. 2028 that would allow guns to be carried on Army Corps land.

If enacted in its current form, this legislation would strip the Secretary of the Army from using the discretion currently provided to enforce or revise the Corps' policy prohibiting firearms on Corps land.

Removing the discretionary powers from law enforcement officials that allow them to determine what is best for the security of our Nation's infrastructure and the safety of public employees, in my judgment, is dangerous and wrong.

Substantive changes to our gun laws do not belong in an appropriations bill.

And that could not have happened but for a waiver, which my friends tend to do for a variety of measures, and they wind up being poison pills in substantive legislation.

While I believe in the right of Americans to own firearms, last night I made it very clear: I own a gun. When I was a child, at age 7, I had a BB gun. When I was 12 years old, I had a single-shot rifle. And I was taught, as were all of my friends, to not point those guns at people unless you intended to do them harm.

We, as boys, had the same kinds of fights that I imagine occur at any of our institutions. But not one of us would run home and get a gun or carry a gun. To proliferate this society with the variety of gun laws that exist, where people can carry guns openly on Corps land or concealed in certain other States, that is just plain crazy.

Last night, I referenced a statement by then-Surgeon General Satcher that I used again today: ''Youth violence is an epidemic.'' He delivered that in response to a report he commissioned in the year 2002. At the time, his study revealed that 13 children each day died as a result of guns.

Indeed, the gun violence epidemic that plagues our Nation has not diminished in recent years. In Riviera Beach last week, a child 2 years old was shot. In the same constituency that I am privileged to serve, a mother was fatally shot by her 3-year-old that got her gun from her purse.

People, we need to pay attention to what is going on. And I intend in May to raise this issue in this body and around this Nation so that people can learn just how many people are dying in this way.

I want to make it very, very clear. The National Rifle Association does not control this body nor the Florida Legislature nor any other body. As I said, I don't mind arguing for the Second Amendment. But to carry it to the extent that it has gone is just plain wrong. Everybody in our society knows that, and I am going to try to make sure that they continue to know that.

Now, there is another thing about this bill. It locks in sequestration. The administration speaks to that subject in their Statement of Administration Policy.

The Republican framework would bring base discretionary funding for both defense and nondefense to the lowest levels in a decade. Compared to the President's budget, the cuts would result in tens of thousands of the Nation's most vulnerable children losing access to Head Start; more than 2 million fewer workers receiving job training and employment services; and thousands fewer scientific and medical research awards and grants, adversely impacting the pace of discovery, any innovation, along with other impacts that would hurt the economy, the middle class, and Americans working hard to reach the middle class.

Sequestration levels were never meant to put us in this unnecessary risk, and I would urge that we not go forward in this manner.

I would say to my good friend from Georgia that we may be on the brink of what excites him—and it would excite me as well—if we got ourselves a balanced budget, but a part of that has gimmickry in it as well. It is done on the reconciliation because the great majority of people over in the other body may not have the same sentiment as some who serve on the relevant committee at this point in time in the U.S. Senate.

Cliche allows that Yogi Berra be utilized here; that is, ''It ain't over 'til it's over.''

I was told last week that we were going to pass this thing, that it was going to come back from the Senate on Wednesday. Last time I looked, this was Wednesday. Or as my daddy used to say, It is Wednesday all day long unless it rains. I never did know what would happen if it rained. I guess it would just be a rainy Wednesday.

But it ain't here Wednesday. And now I am hearing from my good friend from Georgia that they are close. That is what happened when we set up this thing with this special committee, superpeople, supercommittee that was supposed to bring us back a budget, and then missed out on opportunities with Erskine Bowles and brought us back this sequestration that has this body hamstrung and has us in the position of allowing that authorizers and appropriators are locked into the position that they are in because of sequestration.

We need to get rid of that. We need to return to earmarks. We need to do a number of things that will allow for this body—and not for the bureaucracy—to control many aspects of what is the implementation of policy that is made here.

Mr. Speaker, I oppose this rule. I have stated a number of reasons. I will not go into every one of the riders. There are others, and I am sure people are going to speak about them. But I urge a ''no'' vote on the rule.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, my friend from Florida says, It's not over 'til it's over.

I say to my friend, it is only just beginning. It is only just beginning with this rule today. With the passage of this rule today, Mr. Speaker, we are beginning the 2016 appropriations process. And we are doing it in ways that we have not done before since I received a voting card in this body.

Number one, we are beginning at the earliest date in 40 years. Not since 1973 has this Chamber gotten about the people's business as early as we are this year. The people deserve it. The people have earned it. And we are delivering on it today. I am proud of that fact.

Number two, Mr. Speaker, we are, in fact, on the brink of the first balanced budget conference report this body has seen since 2003. It is too long coming. We have had to deem appropriations levels year after year after year, not on just two bills, as we are today, but on the entire package. That report could be filed as early as this afternoon, and there is no question but that it is going to pass both of these bodies. It is good work from this institution and the Senate across the Hill.

But, Mr. Speaker, as you could hear in the passion in my friend from Florida's voice, not everyone is going to be happy with every line in these two bills.

□ 1345

I don't have to just look to the Democratic side of the aisle. I can look to the Republican side of the aisle. Not everyone is going to be happy with every line of this bill; but do you know what, any Member can come and change any line.

The Rules Committee protected no language in this bill. Any Member can come and change any line. Any Member can come and make these bills better. Any Member can come and have their district's voice heard. All you have to do is find 217 of your friends to agree with you; we will pass it, and we will send it to the United States Senate for consideration.

Mr. Speaker, that is the way it ought to be. These are going to be some long nights we are going to have; these are going to be some lengthy amendment debates we are going to have; these are going to be some vote-a-ramas we are going to have, but America is going to be the better for it because the laws of the land that we pass are going to be better for it.

I have the Statement of Administration Policy here, Mr. Speaker. I have one for each one of the bills that this rule makes in order. The President has said in these Statements of Administration Policy that his senior advisers are going to recommend that he veto these bills. Why? It is because these bills and other legislation implement the current Republican budget framework which blocks the needed investments for our economy to compete in the future.

Mr. Speaker, it is not the Republican budget framework. It is called the law of the land as signed by President Barack Obama. We can pretend the law doesn't exist, or we can confront the law as it exists. That is what these bills do, a 6 percent increase in veterans funding and a 3 percent increase in our energy and water investment. In a time of austere budgets, we are plussing up those accounts that are so important to our constituents back home.

Mr. Speaker, I urge strong support for this rule, I urge strong support for the underlying bills, and I urge strong support for beginning the process where every single Member will be able to have his or her voice heard.

It is the way this institution ought to be, and it is the way this institution will be if we pass this rule today.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

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.

Mr. HASTINGS. 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, this 15-minute vote on adoption of the resolution will be followed by a 5-minute vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 651.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 240, nays 186, not voting 5, as follows:

[Roll No. 176]

YEAS—240

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Russell
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—186

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
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)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—5

Chaffetz
Cleaver
Cummings
Engel
Royce

□ 1415

Messrs. PETERSON, MOULTON, and Ms. KAPTUR changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama 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.

□ 1415

MOMENT OF SILENCE FOR THE VICTIMS OF THE NEPAL EARTHQUAKE

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

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, on Saturday, April 25, a 7.8 magnitude earthquake hit Nepal—the most powerful earthquake in the region in nearly a century. Estimates are that 5,000 people have perished and that thousands more are injured or are missing.

This week, here in Washington, the House Democracy Partnership is hosting a multilateral conference, which includes a delegation of parliamentary staff from Nepal.

On behalf of Congressman PRICE, who leads the House Democracy Partnership with me, and Congressman CRENSHAW and Congressman POLIS, who chair the Congressional Nepal Caucus, we wish to extend the condolences of the House to the people of Nepal and pledge our continued support and cooperation as they embark on the long road of rebuilding and recovery.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that Members of the House now rise and observe a moment of silence in solidarity with the people of Nepal.

SISTER ANN KEEFE POST OFFICE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, 5-minute voting will continue.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 651) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 820 Elmwood Avenue in Providence, Rhode Island, as the ''Sister Ann Keefe Post Office'', 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 Georgia (JODY B. HICE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 423, nays 0, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 177]

YEAS—423

Abraham
Adams
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Ashford
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Benishek
Bera
Beyer
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Bost
Boustany
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot

Chaffetz
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clawson (FL)
Clay
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Conyers
Cook
Cooper
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Graham
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck (NV)
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins
Hill
Himes
Hinojosa
Holding
Honda
Hoyer
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huffman
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Israel
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kaptur
Katko
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline
Knight
Kuster
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lummis
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore
Moulton
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nolan
Norcross
Nugent
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Pascrell
Paulsen
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (NC)
Price, Tom
Rangel
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Russell
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sanford
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (WA)
Speier
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOT VOTING—8

Bishop (GA)
Cleaver
Engel
Griffith
Loebsack
Quigley
Royce
Smith (TX)

□ 1425

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON S. CON. RES. 11, CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET, FISCAL YEAR 2016

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia submitted the following conference report and statement on the concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 11) setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2016 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2017 through 2025:

CONFERENCE REPORT (H. REPT. 114–96)

The committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the House to the concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 11), setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2016 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2017 through 2025, having met, after full and free conference, have agreed to recommend and do recommend to their respective Houses as follows:

That the Senate recede from its disagreement to the amendment of the House and agree to the same with an amendment as follows:

In lieu of the matter proposed to be inserted by the House amendment, insert the following:

SECTION 1. CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016.

(a) DECLARATION.—Congress declares that this concurrent resolution is the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2016 and that this concurrent resolution sets forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2017 through 2025.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this concurrent resolution is as follows:

Sec. 1. Concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2016.

TITLE I—RECOMMENDED LEVELS AND AMOUNTS

Subtitle A—Budgetary Levels in Both Houses

Sec. 1101. Recommended levels and amounts.
Sec. 1102. Major functional categories.

Subtitle B—Levels and Amounts in the Senate

Sec. 1201. Social Security in the Senate.
Sec. 1202. Postal Service discretionary administrative expenses in the Senate.

TITLE II—RECONCILIATION

Sec. 2001. Reconciliation in the Senate.
Sec. 2002. Reconciliation in the House of Representatives.

TITLE III—BUDGET ENFORCEMENT

Subtitle A—Budget Enforcement in Both Houses

Sec. 3101. Point of order against increasing long-term deficits or direct spending.
Sec. 3102. Allocation for Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism.
Sec. 3103. Point of order against certain changes in mandatory programs.
Sec. 3104. Point of order against provisions that constitute changes in mandatory programs affecting the Crime Victims Fund.
Sec. 3105. Fair-value credit estimates.
Sec. 3106. Scoring rule for currency modernization.
Sec. 3107. Long-term scoring of changes in spending limits and extension of highway programs.
Sec. 3108. Requiring clearer reporting of projected Federal spending and deficits.
Sec. 3109. Congressional Budget Office estimates of measures with significant outlay effects.
Sec. 3110. Prohibiting the use of guarantee fees as an offset.
Sec. 3111. Information for Congress and the public about projected Federal outlays, revenues, and deficits.
Sec. 3112. Honest accounting: cost estimates for major legislation to incorporate macroeconomic effects.

Subtitle B—Budget Enforcement in the Senate

Sec. 3201. Extension of enforcement of budgetary points of order in the Senate.
Sec. 3202. Point of order against advance appropriations in the Senate.
Sec. 3203. Supermajority enforcement of unfunded mandates in the Senate.
Sec. 3204. Repeal of Senate point of order against certain reconciliation legislation.
Sec. 3205. Prohibition on agreeing to legislation without a score in the Senate.
Sec. 3206. Protecting the savings in reported reconciliation bills in the Senate.
Sec. 3207. Scoring rule for certain energy contracts in the Senate.
Sec. 3208. Adjustment for wildfire suppression funding in the Senate.

Subtitle C—Budget Enforcement in the House of Representatives

Sec. 3301. Limitation on measures affecting Social Security solvency in the House of Representatives.
Sec. 3302. Limitation on transfers from the general fund of the Treasury to the Highway Trust Fund in the House of Representatives.
Sec. 3303. Adjustments for improved control of budgetary resources in the House of Representatives.
Sec. 3304. Limitation on advance appropriations in the House of Representatives.
Sec. 3305. Certain energy contracts in the House of Representatives.

Subtitle D—Other Provisions

Sec. 3401. Submission of findings for the elimination of waste, fraud, and abuse.

Sec. 3402. Budgetary treatment of administrative expenses.
Sec. 3403. Application and effect of changes in allocations and aggregates.
Sec. 3404. Adjustments to reflect changes in concepts and definitions.
Sec. 3405. Exercise of rulemaking powers.

TITLE IV—RESERVE FUNDS

Subtitle A—Reserve Funds in Both Houses

Sec. 4101. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to reduce poverty and increase opportunity and upward mobility for struggling Americans.

Subtitle B—Reserve Funds in the Senate

Sec. 4301. Spending-neutral reserve fund to increase the pace of economic growth and private sector job creation in the United States.
Sec. 4302. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to strengthen America's priorities.
Sec. 4303. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to protect flexible and affordable health care choices for all.
Sec. 4304. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for improving access to the State Children's Health Insurance Program.
Sec. 4305. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for other health reforms.
Sec. 4306. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for child welfare.
Sec. 4307. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for veterans and servicemembers.
Sec. 4308. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for tax reform and administration.
Sec. 4309. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to invest in the infrastructure in America.
Sec. 4310. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for air transportation.
Sec. 4311. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to promote jobs in the United States through international trade.
Sec. 4312. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to increase employment opportunities for disabled workers.
Sec. 4313. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for Higher Education Act reform.
Sec. 4314. Spending-neutral reserve fund for energy legislation.
Sec. 4315. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to reform environmental statutes.
Sec. 4316. Spending-neutral reserve fund for water resources legislation.
Sec. 4317. Spending-neutral reserve fund on mineral security and mineral rights.
Sec. 4318. Spending-neutral reserve fund to reform the abandoned mine lands program.
Sec. 4319. Spending-neutral reserve fund to improve forest health.
Sec. 4320. Spending-neutral reserve fund to reauthorize funding for payments in lieu of taxes to counties and other units of local government.
Sec. 4321. Spending-neutral reserve fund for financial regulatory system reform.
Sec. 4322. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to improve Federal program administration.
Sec. 4323. Spending-neutral reserve fund to implement agreements with freely associated states.
Sec. 4324. Spending-neutral reserve fund to protect payments to rural hospitals and create sustainable access for rural communities.
Sec. 4325. Spending-neutral reserve fund to encourage State medicaid demonstration programs to promote independent living and integrated work for the disabled.
Sec. 4326. Spending-neutral reserve fund to allow pharmacists to be paid for the provision of services under Medicare.
Sec. 4327. Spending-neutral reserve fund to improve our Nation's community health centers.
Sec. 4328. Spending-neutral reserve fund relating to the funding of independent agencies, which may include subjecting the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to the regular appropriations process.
Sec. 4329. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to reform, improve, and enhance 529 college savings plans.
Sec. 4330. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to securing overseas diplomatic facilities of the United States.
Sec. 4331. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to expanding, enhancing, or otherwise improving science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.
Sec. 4332. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to promoting manufacturing in the United States.
Sec. 4333. Spending-neutral reserve fund to prohibit aliens without legal status in the United States from qualifying for a refundable tax credit.
Sec. 4334. Deficit-reduction reserve fund for report elimination or modification.
Sec. 4335. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to address heroin, methamphetamine, and prescription opioid abuse.
Sec. 4336. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to strengthen our Department of Defense civilian workforce.
Sec. 4337. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for Department of Defense reform.
Sec. 4338. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to improve Federal workforce development, job training, and reemployment programs.
Sec. 4339. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to provide energy assistance and invest in energy efficiency and conservation.
Sec. 4340. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to end Operation Choke Point and protect the Second Amendment.
Sec. 4341. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to prevent the use of Federal funds for the bailout of improvident State and local governments.
Sec. 4342. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to improve health outcomes and lower the costs of caring for medically complex children in Medicaid.
Sec. 4343. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to maintain and enhance access, choice, and accountability in veterans care through the Veterans Choice Card program.
Sec. 4344. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to promoting equal pay.
Sec. 4345. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to legislation submitted to Congress by the President of the United States to protect and strengthen Social Security.
Sec. 4346. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to a simplified income-driven student loan repayment option.
Sec. 4347. Spending-neutral reserve fund relating to keeping the Federal Water Pollution Control Act focused on the protection of water quality.
Sec. 4348. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to supporting Israel.
Sec. 4349. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to family and medical leave.
Sec. 4350. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to providing health care to veterans who have geographic inaccessibility to care.
Sec. 4351. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to increasing access to higher education for low-income Americans through the Federal Pell Grant program.
Sec. 4352. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to transparency in health premium billing.
Sec. 4353. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to carbon emissions.
Sec. 4354. Spending-neutral reserve fund relating to requiring the Federal Government to allow states to opt out of Common Core without penalty.
Sec. 4355. Spending-neutral reserve fund relating to the disposal of certain Federal land.
Sec. 4356. Spending-neutral reserve fund relating to prohibiting funding of international organizations during the implementation of the United Nations Arms Trade Treaty prior to Senate ratification and adoption of implementing legislation.
Sec. 4357. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to reimposing waived sanctions and imposing new sanctions against Iran for violations of the Joint Plan of Action or a comprehensive nuclear agreement.
Sec. 4358. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to supporting United States citizens held hostage in the United States embassy in Tehran, Iran, between November 3, 1979, and January 20, 1981.
Sec. 4359. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to reasonable accommodations for pregnant workers.
Sec. 4360. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to permanently eliminate the Federal estate tax.
Sec. 4361. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to regulation by the Environmental Protection Agency of greenhouse gas emissions.
Sec. 4362. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to protecting privately held water rights and permits.
Sec. 4363. Spending-neutral reserve fund relating to prohibiting awarding of construction contracts based on awardees entering or not entering into agreements with labor organizations.
Sec. 4364. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to prevent American jobs from being moved overseas by reducing the corporate income tax rate.
Sec. 4365. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to increase wages for American workers.
Sec. 4366. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to deterring the migration of unaccompanied children from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras.
Sec. 4367. Spending-neutral reserve fund relating to ensuring proper economic consideration in designation of critical habitat.
Sec. 4368. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to end ''too big to fail'' bailouts for Wall Street mega-banks (over $500 billion in total assets).
Sec. 4369. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to ending Washington's illegal exemption from the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.
Sec. 4370. Spending-neutral reserve fund relating to increasing funding for the relocation of the United States Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.
Sec. 4371. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to promoting the return of children who have been legally adopted by United States citizens from the Democratic Republic of the Congo.
Sec. 4372. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to development of a new nuclear-capable cruise missile by the Department of Defense and the National Nuclear Security Administration.

Sec. 4373. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to provide equity in the tax treatment of public safety officer death benefits.
Sec. 4374. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to eliminating the backlog of sexual assault evidence kits.
Sec. 4375. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to mixed oxide fuel fabrication.
Sec. 4376. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to reforming Offices of Inspectors General and preventing extended vacancies.
Sec. 4377. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to improving retirement security.
Sec. 4378. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to improve the competitiveness of the United States.
Sec. 4379. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to ensuring that the conservation of northern long-eared bat populations and local economic development are compatible.
Sec. 4380. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to improve cybersecurity.
Sec. 4381. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to allow the Drug Enforcement Administration and Federal Bureau of Investigation to enter into joint task forces with tribal and local law enforcement agencies.
Sec. 4382. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to encouraging cost savings in office space used by Federal agencies.
Sec. 4383. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to providing technical assistance to small businesses and aspiring entrepreneurs through small business development centers.
Sec. 4384. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to ensuring that medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs meet the needs of women veterans.
Sec. 4385. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to supporting efficient resourcing for the Asia rebalance policy.
Sec. 4386. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to preventing access to marijuana edibles by children in States that have decriminalized marijuana.
Sec. 4387. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to providing mortgage lending to rural areas.
Sec. 4388. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to the construction of Arctic polar icebreakers.
Sec. 4389. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to researching health conditions of the descendants of veterans exposed to toxic substances during service in the Armed Forces.
Sec. 4390. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to raising the Family of Funds limit of the Small Business Investment Company Program.
Sec. 4391. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to detection, investigation, and prosecution of the owners and operators of websites who knowingly allow such websites to be used to advertise commercial sex with children over the Internet.
Sec. 4392. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to protecting the reliability of the electricity grid.
Sec. 4393. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to preserve and protect the open Internet.
Sec. 4394. Spending-neutral reserve fund relating to reforming the Federal regulatory process.
Sec. 4395. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to providing coverage of virtual colonoscopies as a colorectal cancer screening test under the Medicare program.
Sec. 4396. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to the modernization of the nuclear command, control, and communications architecture of the United States.
Sec. 4397. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to BARDA and the BioShield Special Reserve Fund.
Sec. 4398. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to improving the nuclear forces and missions of the Air Force.
Sec. 4399. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to promoting economic growth and job creation for small businesses and full funding for at-sea and dockside monitoring for certain fisheries.
Sec. 4400. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to the definition of full-time employee.
Sec. 4401. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the Federal regulatory process.
Sec. 4402. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to expedite awards under the Internal Revenue Service whistleblower program.
Sec. 4403. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to encouraging the increased use of performance contracting in Federal facilities.
Sec. 4404. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to improving information sharing by the Inspector General of the Department of Veterans Affairs with respect to investigations relating to substandard health care, delayed and denied health care, patient deaths, other findings that directly relate to patient care, and other management issues of the Department.
Sec. 4405. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to address the disproportionate regulatory burdens on community banks and credit unions.
Sec. 4406. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to protect the Corporation for National and Community Service.
Sec. 4407. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to ensuring that Department of Justice attorneys comply with disclosure obligations in criminal prosecutions.
Sec. 4408. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to promote biomedical research.
Sec. 4409. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to providing access to necessary equipment for Medicare beneficiaries.
Sec. 4410. Spending-neutral reserve fund relating to prioritizing the construction of infrastructure projects that are of national and regional significance and projects in high priority corridors.
Sec. 4411. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to encouraging the United States' NATO allies to reverse declines in defense spending and bear a more proportionate burden for ensuring the security of NATO.
Sec. 4412. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to the investigation and recovery of missing weapons and military equipment provided to the Government of Yemen by the United States Government.
Sec. 4413. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to improving higher education data and transparency.
Sec. 4414. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to Native children.
Sec. 4415. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to provide additional funding for international strategic communications.
Sec. 4416. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for elementary and secondary education.
Sec. 4417. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to support research.
Sec. 4418. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to support for Ukraine.
Sec. 4419. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to underground and surface mining safety research.
Sec. 4420. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to saving Medicare.

Subtitle C—Reserve Funds in the House of Representatives

Sec. 4501. Reserve fund for the repeal of the President's health care law.
Sec. 4502. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for promoting real health care reform.
Sec. 4503. Deficit-neutral reserve fund related to the Medicare provisions of the President's health care law.
Sec. 4504. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for the State Children's Health Insurance Program.
Sec. 4505. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for graduate medical education.
Sec. 4506. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for trade agreements.
Sec. 4507. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for reforming the tax code.
Sec. 4508. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for revenue measures.
Sec. 4509. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for transportation.
Sec. 4510. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for Federal retirement reform.
Sec. 4511. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for national defense.

TITLE V—ESTIMATES OF DIRECT SPENDING IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Sec. 5001. Direct spending.

TITLE VI—POLICY STATEMENTS

Subtitle A—Policy Statements in Both Houses

Sec. 6101. Policy statement on balanced budget amendment.
Sec. 6102. Policy statement on Social Security.

Subtitle B—Policy Statement in the House of Representatives

Sec. 6201. Policy statement on budget process and baseline reform.
Sec. 6202. Policy statement on economic growth and job creation.
Sec. 6203. Policy statement on tax reform.
Sec. 6204. Policy statement on trade.
Sec. 6205. Policy statement on repealing the President's health care law and promoting real health care reform.
Sec. 6206. Policy statement on Medicare.
Sec. 6207. Policy statement on medical discovery, development, delivery and innovation.
Sec. 6208. Policy statement on Federal regulatory reform.
Sec. 6209. Policy statement on higher education and workforce development opportunity.
Sec. 6210. Policy statement on Department of Veterans Affairs.
Sec. 6211. Policy statement on Federal accounting methodologies.
Sec. 6212. Policy statement on reducing unnecessary, wasteful, and unauthorized spending.
Sec. 6213. Policy statement on deficit reduction through the cancellation of unobligated balances.
Sec. 6214. Policy statement on agency fees and spending.
Sec. 6215. Policy statement on responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars.
Sec. 6216. Policy statement on ''No Budget, No Pay''.
Sec. 6217. Policy statement on national security funding.

TITLE I—RECOMMENDED LEVELS AND AMOUNTS

Subtitle A—Budgetary Levels in Both Houses

SEC. 1101. RECOMMENDED LEVELS AND AMOUNTS.

The following budgetary levels are appropriate for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2025:

(1) FEDERAL REVENUES.—For purposes of the enforcement of this concurrent resolution:

(A) The recommended levels of Federal revenues are as follows:

Fiscal year 2016: $2,676,733,000,000.
Fiscal year 2017: $2,776,156,000,000.
Fiscal year 2018: $2,870,206,000,000.
Fiscal year 2019: $2,982,310,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020: $3,107,111,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021: $3,247,391,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022: $3,392,968,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023: $3,554,412,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024: $3,723,973,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025: $3,906,111,000,000.

(B) The amounts by which the aggregate levels of Federal revenues should be changed are as follows:

Fiscal year 2016: $0.
Fiscal year 2017: $0.
Fiscal year 2018: $0.
Fiscal year 2019: $0.
Fiscal year 2020: $0.
Fiscal year 2021: $0.
Fiscal year 2022: $0.
Fiscal year 2023: $0.
Fiscal year 2024: $0.
Fiscal year 2025: $0.

(2) NEW BUDGET AUTHORITY.—For purposes of the enforcement of this concurrent resolution, the appropriate levels of total new budget authority are as follows:

Fiscal year 2016: $3,039,215,000,000.
Fiscal year 2017: $2,956,581,000,000.
Fiscal year 2018: $2,970,682,000,000.
Fiscal year 2019: $3,107,123,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020: $3,234,011,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021: $3,313,719,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022: $3,420,057,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023: $3,484,446,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024: $3,504,239,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025: $3,634,452,000,000.

(3) BUDGET OUTLAYS.—For purposes of the enforcement of this concurrent resolution, the appropriate levels of total budget outlays are as follows:

Fiscal year 2016: $3,091,442,000,000.
Fiscal year 2017: $2,982,215,000,000.
Fiscal year 2018: $2,963,926,000,000.
Fiscal year 2019: $3,086,454,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020: $3,205,304,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021: $3,291,249,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022: $3,434,709,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023: $3,470,642,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024: $3,466,541,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025: $3,610,342,000,000.

(4) DEFICITS.—For purposes of the enforcement of this concurrent resolution, the amounts of the deficits are as follows:

Fiscal year 2016: $414,709,000,000.
Fiscal year 2017: $206,059,000,000.
Fiscal year 2018: $93,720,000,000.
Fiscal year 2019: $104,144,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020: $98,193,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021: $43,858,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022: $41,741,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023: −$83,770,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024: −$257,432,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025: −$295,769,000,000.

(5) PUBLIC DEBT.—Pursuant to section 301(a)(5) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the appropriate levels of the public debt are as follows:

Fiscal year 2016: $19,059,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2017: $19,490,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2018: $19,826,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2019: $20,164,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020: $20,494,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021: $20,773,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022: $21,033,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023: $21,188,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024: $21,194,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025: $21,149,000,000,000.

(6) DEBT HELD BY THE PUBLIC.—The appropriate levels of debt held by the public are as follows:

Fiscal year 2016: $13,842,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2017: $14,124,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2018: $14,307,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2019: $14,523,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020: $14,757,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021: $14,965,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022: $15,204,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023: $15,354,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024: $15,374,000,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025: $15,405,000,000,000.

SEC. 1102. MAJOR FUNCTIONAL CATEGORIES.

Congress determines and declares that the appropriate levels of new budget authority and outlays for fiscal years 2016 through 2025 for each major functional category are:

(1) National Defense (050):
Fiscal year 2016:
(A) New budget authority, $531,306,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $564,325,000,000.
Fiscal year 2017:
(A) New budget authority, $544,515,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $549,357,000,000.
Fiscal year 2018:
(A) New budget authority, $557,764,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $548,021,000,000.
Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, $571,039,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $560,439,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, $585,330,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $572,493,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021:
(A) New budget authority, $599,646,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $585,628,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022:
(A) New budget authority, $632,804,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $615,907,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023:
(A) New budget authority, $646,039,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $628,518,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024:
(A) New budget authority, $659,310,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $638,235,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025:
(A) New budget authority, $673,490,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $658,011,000,000.

(2) International Affairs (150):
Fiscal year 2016:
(A) New budget authority, $40,202,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $46,028,000,000.
Fiscal year 2017:
(A) New budget authority, $40,246,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $43,086,000,000.
Fiscal year 2018:
(A) New budget authority, $41,176,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $41,818,000,000.
Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, $42,100,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $41,391,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, $43,092,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $41,518,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021:
(A) New budget authority, $44,085,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $42,005,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022:
(A) New budget authority, $45,333,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $42,749,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023:
(A) New budget authority, $46,348,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $43,510,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024:
(A) New budget authority, $47,408,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $44,367,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025:
(A) New budget authority, $48,485,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $45,266,000,000.

(3) General Science, Space, and Technology (250):
Fiscal year 2016:
(A) New budget authority, $29,187,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $29,555,000,000.
Fiscal year 2017:
(A) New budget authority, $29,771,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $29,707,000,000.
Fiscal year 2018:
(A) New budget authority, $30,432,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $30,162,000,000.
Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, $31,104,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $30,647,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, $31,805,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $31,283,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021:
(A) New budget authority, $32,508,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $31,875,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022:
(A) New budget authority, $33,242,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $32,579,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023:
(A) New budget authority, $33,978,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $33,306,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024:
(A) New budget authority, $34,743,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $34,053,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025:
(A) New budget authority, $35,517,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $34,815,000,000.

(4) Energy (270):
Fiscal year 2016:
(A) New budget authority, −$3,201,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $1,412,000,000.
Fiscal year 2017:
(A) New budget authority, $1,962,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $1,095,000,000.
Fiscal year 2018:
(A) New budget authority, −$746,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$2,111,000,000.
Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, −$856,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$1,936,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, −$884,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$1,811,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021:
(A) New budget authority, −$948,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$1,657,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022:
(A) New budget authority, −$1,030,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$1,651,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023:
(A) New budget authority, −$1,098,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$1,643,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024:
(A) New budget authority, −$1,144,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$1,614,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025:
(A) New budget authority, −$1,153,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$1,589,000,000.

(5) Natural Resources and Environment (300):
Fiscal year 2016:
(A) New budget authority, $36,374,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $39,499,000,000.
Fiscal year 2017:
(A) New budget authority, $37,654,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $40,016,000,000.
Fiscal year 2018:
(A) New budget authority, $38,325,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $39,595,000,000.
Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, $38,923,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $39,465,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, $40,388,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $40,563,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021:
(A) New budget authority, $41,191,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $41,461,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022:
(A) New budget authority, $41,650,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $41,770,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023:
(A) New budget authority, $42,496,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $42,726,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024:
(A) New budget authority, $43,935,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $43,453,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025:
(A) New budget authority, $45,039,000,000.

(B) Outlays, $44,409,000,000.
(6) Agriculture (350):
Fiscal year 2016:
(A) New budget authority, $19,098,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $21,572,000,000.
Fiscal year 2017:
(A) New budget authority, $22,846,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $22,376,000,000.
Fiscal year 2018:
(A) New budget authority, $21,964,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $20,853,000,000.
Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, $20,652,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $19,875,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, $19,681,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $19,132,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021:
(A) New budget authority, $19,545,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $19,025,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022:
(A) New budget authority, $19,509,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $18,979,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023:
(A) New budget authority, $20,119,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $19,590,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024:
(A) New budget authority, $20,253,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $19,699,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025:
(A) New budget authority, $20,540,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $20,028,000,000.
(7) Commerce and Housing Credit (370):
Fiscal year 2016:
(A) New budget authority, −$997,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$10,566,000,000.
Fiscal year 2017:
(A) New budget authority, −$8,697,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$21,748,000,000.
Fiscal year 2018:
(A) New budget authority, −$8,277,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$25,173,000,000.
Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, −$7,401,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$26,866,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, −$5,156,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$22,499,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021:
(A) New budget authority, −$4,806,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$19,423,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022:
(A) New budget authority, −$4,250,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$20,716,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023:
(A) New budget authority, −$3,613,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$21,520,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024:
(A) New budget authority, −$2,754,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$21,962,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025:
(A) New budget authority, −$2,278,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$22,335,000,000.
(8) Transportation (400):
Fiscal year 2016:
(A) New budget authority, $72,055,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $87,153,000,000.
Fiscal year 2017:
(A) New budget authority, $72,715,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $82,838,000,000.
Fiscal year 2018:
(A) New budget authority, $73,262,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $79,648,000,000.
Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, $73,696,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $78,845,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, $74,070,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $78,268,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021:
(A) New budget authority, $74,409,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $77,871,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022:
(A) New budget authority, $55,154,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $73,378,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023:
(A) New budget authority, $56,254,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $66,074,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024:
(A) New budget authority, $56,798,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $62,874,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025:
(A) New budget authority, $57,190,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $61,710,000,000.
(9) Community and Regional Development (450):
Fiscal year 2016:
(A) New budget authority, $15,486,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $20,692,000,000.
Fiscal year 2017:
(A) New budget authority, $16,344,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $19,144,000,000.
Fiscal year 2018:
(A) New budget authority, $16,737,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $19,692,000,000.
Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, $16,973,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $20,450,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, $16,984,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $20,702,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021:
(A) New budget authority, $16,903,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $20,682,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022:
(A) New budget authority, $9,965,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $19,034,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023:
(A) New budget authority, $9,947,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $15,892,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024:
(A) New budget authority, $9,993,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $13,220,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025:
(A) New budget authority, $10,077,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $11,515,000,000.
(10) Education, Training, Employment, and Social Services (500):
Fiscal year 2016:
(A) New budget authority, $83,315,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $93,293,000,000.
Fiscal year 2017:
(A) New budget authority, $89,084,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $92,888,000,000.
Fiscal year 2018:
(A) New budget authority, $91,432,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $91,193,000,000.
Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, $90,189,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $89,369,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, $92,597,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $91,891,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021:
(A) New budget authority, $93,900,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $93,562,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022:
(A) New budget authority, $95,502,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $95,022,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023:
(A) New budget authority, $96,984,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $96,608,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024:
(A) New budget authority, $98,820,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $98,336,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025:
(A) New budget authority, $100,785,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $100,297,000,000.
(11) Health (550):
Fiscal year 2016:
(A) New budget authority, $433,064,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $430,917,000,000.
Fiscal year 2017:
(A) New budget authority, $397,209,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $394,211,000,000.
Fiscal year 2018:
(A) New budget authority, $387,638,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $397,302,000,000.
Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, $398,203,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $399,888,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, $420,326,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $411,116,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021:
(A) New budget authority, $426,184,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $426,218,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022:
(A) New budget authority, $442,681,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $442,701,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023:
(A) New budget authority, $461,378,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $461,378,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024:
(A) New budget authority, $476,599,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $476,631,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025:
(A) New budget authority, $493,913,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $494,059,000,000.
(12) Medicare (570):
Fiscal year 2016:
(A) New budget authority, $579,430,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $579,361,000,000.
Fiscal year 2017:
(A) New budget authority, $571,876,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $571,830,000,000.
Fiscal year 2018:
(A) New budget authority, $566,754,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $566,656,000,000.
Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, $628,736,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $628,652,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, $667,036,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $666,951,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021:
(A) New budget authority, $711,198,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $711,111,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022:
(A) New budget authority, $800,458,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $800,363,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023:
(A) New budget authority, $812,590,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $812,496,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024:
(A) New budget authority, $815,240,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $815,139,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025:
(A) New budget authority, $923,187,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $923,082,000,000.
(13) Income Security (600):
Fiscal year 2016:
(A) New budget authority, $523,086,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $523,645,000,000.
Fiscal year 2017:
(A) New budget authority, $496,233,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $492,511,000,000.
Fiscal year 2018:
(A) New budget authority, $485,055,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $476,530,000,000.
Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, $476,663,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $471,357,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, $484,015,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $478,199,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021:
(A) New budget authority, $489,999,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $484,318,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022:
(A) New budget authority, $498,503,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $497,869,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023:
(A) New budget authority, $503,364,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $499,521,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024:
(A) New budget authority, $510,872,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $501,192,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025:
(A) New budget authority, $517,417,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $511,441,000,000.
(14) Social Security Retirement and Disability (650):
Fiscal year 2016:
(A) New budget authority, $33,885,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $33,928,000,000.
Fiscal year 2017:
(A) New budget authority, $36,535,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $36,563,000,000.
Fiscal year 2018:
(A) New budget authority, $39,407,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $39,424,000,000.
Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, $42,634,000,000.

(B) Outlays, $42,634,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, $46,104,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $46,104,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021:
(A) New budget authority, $49,712,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $49,712,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022:
(A) New budget authority, $53,547,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $53,547,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023:
(A) New budget authority, $57,455,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $57,455,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024:
(A) New budget authority, $61,546,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $61,546,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025:
(A) New budget authority, $65,751,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $65,751,000,000.
(15) Veterans Benefits and Services (700):
Fiscal year 2016:
(A) New budget authority, $166,261,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $171,862,000,000.
Fiscal year 2017:
(A) New budget authority, $164,546,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $168,559,000,000.
Fiscal year 2018:
(A) New budget authority, $162,740,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $162,753,000,000.
Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, $174,599,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $173,869,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, $179,485,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $178,581,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021:
(A) New budget authority, $183,721,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $182,821,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022:
(A) New budget authority, $196,041,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $195,056,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023:
(A) New budget authority, $192,637,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $191,640,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024:
(A) New budget authority, $189,442,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $188,356,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025:
(A) New budget authority, $203,290,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $202,189,000,000.
(16) Administration of Justice (750):
Fiscal year 2016:
(A) New budget authority, $50,976,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $56,455,000,000.
Fiscal year 2017:
(A) New budget authority, $57,639,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $56,693,000,000.
Fiscal year 2018:
(A) New budget authority, $55,885,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $54,562,000,000.
Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, $57,582,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $56,699,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, $59,324,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $61,755,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021:
(A) New budget authority, $61,247,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $62,635,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022:
(A) New budget authority, $63,791,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $63,748,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023:
(A) New budget authority, $65,688,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $65,589,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024:
(A) New budget authority, $67,626,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $67,266,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025:
(A) New budget authority, $69,425,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $68,892,000,000.
(17) General Government (800):
Fiscal year 2016:
(A) New budget authority, $23,151,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $22,981,000,000.
Fiscal year 2017:
(A) New budget authority, $23,194,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $23,289,000,000.
Fiscal year 2018:
(A) New budget authority, $23,426,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $23,371,000,000.
Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, $24,000,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $23,685,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, $24,703,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $24,290,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021:
(A) New budget authority, $25,202,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $24,878,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022:
(A) New budget authority, $25,962,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $25,562,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023:
(A) New budget authority, $26,698,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $26,272,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024:
(A) New budget authority, $27,130,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $26,766,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025:
(A) New budget authority, $27,881,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $27,435,000,000.
(18) Net Interest (900):
Fiscal year 2016:
(A) New budget authority, $367,542,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $367,542,000,000.
Fiscal year 2017:
(A) New budget authority, $416,418,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $416,418,000,000.
Fiscal year 2018:
(A) New budget authority, $479,446,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $479,446,000,000.
Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, $533,121,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $533,121,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, $579,344,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $579,344,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021:
(A) New budget authority, $611,558,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $611,558,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022:
(A) New budget authority, $642,888,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $642,888,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023:
(A) New budget authority, $669,066,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $669,066,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024:
(A) New budget authority, $687,195,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $687,195,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025:
(A) New budget authority, $694,215,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $694,215,000,000.
(19) Allowances (920):
Fiscal year 2016:
(A) New budget authority, $25,256,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $45,538,000,000.
Fiscal year 2017:
(A) New budget authority, −$21,661,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$5,856,000,000.
Fiscal year 2018:
(A) New budget authority, −$50,890,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$40,133,000,000.
Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, −$60,624,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$53,987,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, −$72,620,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$65,480,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021:
(A) New budget authority, −$104,010,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$98,128,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022:
(A) New budget authority, −$119,157,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$111,033,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023:
(A) New budget authority, −$131,418,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$122,924,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024:
(A) New budget authority, −$168,306,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$160,427,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025:
(A) New budget authority, −$204,728,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$186,150,000,000.
(20) Undistributed Offsetting Receipts (950):
Fiscal year 2016:
(A) New budget authority, −$82,548,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$82,548,000,000.
Fiscal year 2017:
(A) New budget authority, −$96,446,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$96,446,000,000.
Fiscal year 2018:
(A) New budget authority, −$103,441,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$103,441,000,000.
Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, −$101,796,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$101,796,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, −$101,191,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$101,191,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021:
(A) New budget authority, −$105,094,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$105,094,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022:
(A) New budget authority, −$112,536,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$112,536,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023:
(A) New budget authority, −$120,466,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$120,466,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024:
(A) New budget authority, −$130,467,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$130,467,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025:
(A) New budget authority, −$143,591,000,000.
(B) Outlays, −$143,591,000,000.
(21) Overseas Contingency Operations (970):
Fiscal year 2016:
(A) New budget authority, $96,287,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $48,798,000,000.
Fiscal year 2017:
(A) New budget authority, $64,598,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $65,684,000,000.
Fiscal year 2018:
(A) New budget authority, $62,593,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $63,758,000,000.
Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, $57,586,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $60,653,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, $49,578,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $54,095,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021:
(A) New budget authority, $47,569,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $50,191,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022:
(A) New budget authority, $0.
(B) Outlays, $19,493,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023:
(A) New budget authority, $0.
(B) Outlays, $7,554,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024:
(A) New budget authority, $0.
(B) Outlays, $2,683,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025:
(A) New budget authority, $0.
(B) Outlays, $892,000,000.

Subtitle B—Levels and Amounts in the Senate

SEC. 1201. SOCIAL SECURITY IN THE SENATE.

(a) SOCIAL SECURITY REVENUES.—For purposes of Senate enforcement under sections 302 and 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the amounts of revenues of the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund are as follows:

Fiscal year 2016: $793,987,000,000.
Fiscal year 2017: $826,098,000,000.
Fiscal year 2018: $858,899,000,000.
Fiscal year 2019: $892,421,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020: $927,413,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021: $963,896,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022: $1,002,225,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023: $1,041,673,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024: $1,082,208,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025: $1,124,298,000,000.

(b) SOCIAL SECURITY OUTLAYS.—For purposes of Senate enforcement under sections 302 and 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the amounts of outlays of the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund are as follows:

Fiscal year 2016: $777,085,000,000.

Fiscal year 2017: $822,772,000,000.
Fiscal year 2018: $878,895,000,000.
Fiscal year 2019: $937,383,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020: $1,002,161,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021: $1,070,556,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022: $1,143,375,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023: $1,221,800,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024: $1,305,195,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025: $1,393,212,000,000.

(c) SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—In the Senate, the amounts of new budget authority and budget outlays of the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund for administrative expenses are as follows:

Fiscal year 2016:
(A) New budget authority, $5,146,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $5,205,000,000.
Fiscal year 2017:
(A) New budget authority, $5,296,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $5,296,000,000.
Fiscal year 2018:
(A) New budget authority, $5,469,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $5,440,000,000.
Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, $5,645,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $5,614,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, $5,827,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $5,795,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021:
(A) New budget authority, $6,012,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $5,980,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022:
(A) New budget authority, $6,205,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $6,172,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023:
(A) New budget authority, $6,399,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $6,365,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024:
(A) New budget authority, $6,600,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $6,565,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025:
(A) New budget authority, $6,805,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $6,769,000,000.

SEC. 1202. POSTAL SERVICE DISCRETIONARY ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES IN THE SENATE.

In the Senate, the amounts of new budget authority and budget outlays of the Postal Service for discretionary administrative expenses are as follows:

Fiscal year 2016:
(A) New budget authority, $266,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $265,000,000.
Fiscal year 2017:
(A) New budget authority, $277,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $277,000,000.
Fiscal year 2018:
(A) New budget authority, $288,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $288,000,000.
Fiscal year 2019:
(A) New budget authority, $299,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $298,000,000.
Fiscal year 2020:
(A) New budget authority, $310,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $310,000,000.
Fiscal year 2021:
(A) New budget authority, $321,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $320,000,000.
Fiscal year 2022:
(A) New budget authority, $334,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $333,000,000.
Fiscal year 2023:
(A) New budget authority, $346,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $345,000,000.
Fiscal year 2024:
(A) New budget authority, $358,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $357,000,000.
Fiscal year 2025:
(A) New budget authority, $371,000,000.
(B) Outlays, $370,000,000.

TITLE II—RECONCILIATION

SEC. 2001. RECONCILIATION IN THE SENATE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) COMMITTEE ON FINANCE.—The Committee on Finance of the Senate shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction to reduce the deficit by not less than $1,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

(2) COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS.—The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate shall report changes in laws within its jurisdiction to reduce the deficit by not less than $1,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

(3) SUBMISSIONS.—In the Senate, not later than July 24, 2015, the Senate Committees named in paragraphs (1) and (2) shall submit their recommendations to the Committee on the Budget of the Senate. Upon receiving all such recommendations, the Committee on the Budget of the Senate shall report to the Senate a reconciliation bill carrying out all such recommendations without any substantive revision.

(b) LIMIT ON SENATE CONSIDERATION OF RECONCILIATION.—

(1) POINT OF ORDER.—It shall not be in order in the Senate to consider a bill or joint resolution reported pursuant to subsection (a), or an amendment to, conference report on, or amendment between the Houses in relation to such a bill or joint resolution, which would increase the public debt limit under section 3101 of title 31, United States Code, during the period of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

(2) WAIVER.—This subsection may be waived or suspended in the Senate only by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Members, duly chosen and sworn.

(3) APPEALS.—An affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Members of the Senate, duly chosen and sworn, shall be required to sustain an appeal of the ruling of the Chair on the point of order raised under this subsection.

SEC. 2002. RECONCILIATION IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE.—The Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives shall submit changes in laws within its jurisdiction to reduce the deficit by not less than $1,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

(2) COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE.—The Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives shall submit changes in laws within its jurisdiction to reduce the deficit by not less than $1,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

(3) COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS.—The Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives shall submit changes in laws within its jurisdiction to reduce the deficit by not less than $1,000,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

(4) SUBMISSION PROVIDING FOR DEFICIT REDUCTION.—In the House of Representatives, not later than July 24, 2015, the committees named in paragraphs (1), (2), and (3) shall submit their recommendations to the Committee on the Budget of the House of Representatives to carry out this section.

(b) RECONCILIATION PROCEDURES.—

(1) ESTIMATING ASSUMPTIONS.—

(A) ASSUMPTIONS.—In the House of Representatives, for purposes of titles III and IV of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 631 et seq. and 651 et seq.), the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the House of Representatives shall use the baseline underlying the Congressional Budget Office's March 2015 update to the Budget and Economic Outlook: 2015 to 2025 (January 2015) when making estimates of any bill or joint resolution, or any amendment thereto, amendment between the Houses in relation thereto, or conference report thereon. If adjustments to the baseline are made subsequent to the adoption of this concurrent resolution, then such Chairman shall determine whether to use any of these adjustments when making such estimates.

(B) INTENT.—The authority set forth in subparagraph (A) should only be exercised if the estimates used to determine the compliance of such measures with the budgetary requirements included in this concurrent resolution are inaccurate because adjustments made to the baseline are inconsistent with the assumptions underlying the budgetary levels set forth in this concurrent resolution. Such inaccurate adjustments made after the adoption of this concurrent resolution may include selected adjustments for rulemaking, judicial actions, adjudication, and interpretative rules that have major budgetary effects and are inconsistent with the assumptions underlying the budgetary levels set forth in this concurrent resolution.

(C) CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE ESTIMATES.—Upon the request of the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the House of Representatives, the Congressional Budget Office shall prepare for any measure an estimate based on the baseline determination made by such Chairman pursuant to subparagraph (A).

(2) REPEAL OF THE PRESIDENT'S HEALTH CARE LAW THROUGH RECONCILIATION.—In the House of Representatives, in preparing their submissions under subsection (a) to the Committee on the Budget of the House of Representatives, the committees named in subsection (a) shall—

(A) note the policies discussed in title VI that repeal the Affordable Care Act and the health care related provisions of the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010; and

(B) determine the most effective methods by which the health care laws referred to in subparagraph (A) shall be repealed in their entirety.

(3) REVISION OF BUDGETARY LEVELS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Upon the submission of a reconciliation recommendation to the House of Representatives or the Committee on the Budget of the House of Representatives or the submission of a conference report to the House of Representatives pursuant to this section, in which a committee is deemed to have complied with its directive by virtue of section 310(c) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 641(c)), the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the House of Representatives may file with the House of Representatives appropriately revised allocations, aggregates, and functional levels.

(B) REVISION.—Allocations and aggregates revised pursuant to this paragraph shall be considered to be allocations and aggregates established by this concurrent resolution on the budget pursuant to section 301 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 632).

TITLE III—BUDGET ENFORCEMENT

Subtitle A—Budget Enforcement in Both Houses

SEC. 3101. POINT OF ORDER AGAINST INCREASING LONG-TERM DEFICITS OR DIRECT SPENDING.

(a) CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE ANALYSIS OF PROPOSALS.—The Director of the Congressional Budget Office shall, to the extent practicable, prepare an estimate of whether a measure would cause, relative to current law, a net increase in on-budget deficits in the Senate, and a net increase in direct spending in the House, in excess of $5,000,000,000 in any of the 4 consecutive 10-fiscal year periods beginning with the first fiscal year that is 10 fiscal years after the budget year provided for in the most recently adopted concurrent resolution on the budget—

(1) in the Senate, for each bill and joint resolution reported by a committee, other than the Committee on Appropriations, and amendments thereto, amendments between the Houses in relation thereto, conference reports thereon, and motions thereon; and

(2) in the House of Representatives, for each bill and joint resolution reported by a committee, other than the Committee on Appropriations, and amendments thereto and conference reports thereon.

(b) POINT OF ORDER.—It shall not be in order—

(1) in the Senate to consider any bill, joint resolution, amendment, amendment between the Houses, conference report, or motion that would cause a net increase in on-budget deficits in excess of $5,000,000,000 in any of the 4 consecutive 10-fiscal year periods described in subsection (a); and

(2) in the House of Representatives to consider any bill or joint resolution, or amendment thereto or conference report thereon, that would cause a net increase in direct spending in excess of $5,000,000,000 in any of the 4 consecutive 10-fiscal year periods described in subsection (a).

(c) SUPERMAJORITY WAIVER AND APPEAL IN THE SENATE.—

(1) WAIVER.—In the Senate, subsection (b) may be waived or suspended only by the affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members, duly chosen and sworn.

(2) APPEAL.—In the Senate, an affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members, duly chosen and sworn, shall be required to sustain an appeal of the ruling of the Chair on a point of order raised under subsection (b).

(d) LIMITATION.—The provisions of this section shall not apply to—

(1) in the Senate, any bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, conference reports, or motions for which the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate has made adjustments to the allocations, levels, or limits contained in this concurrent resolution pursuant to section 4303(1); and

(2) in the House of Representatives, any bills or joint resolutions, or amendments thereto or conference reports thereon, for which the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of House of Representatives has made adjustments to the allocations, levels, or limits contained in this concurrent resolution pursuant to section 4501, 4502, or 4503.

(e) DETERMINATIONS OF BUDGET LEVELS.—For purposes of this section—

(1) the levels of net increases in deficits shall be determined on the basis of estimates provided by the Committee on the Budget of the Senate; and

(2) the levels of net increases in direct spending shall be determined on the basis of estimates provided by the Committee on the Budget of the House of Representatives.

(f) REPEAL IN THE SENATE.—In the Senate, section 311 of S. Con. Res. 70 (110th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2009, shall no longer apply.

(g) SUNSET IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.—In the House of Representatives, this section shall remain in effect through September 30, 2017.

SEC. 3102. ALLOCATION FOR OVERSEAS CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS/GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM.

(a) SEPARATE OVERSEAS CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS/GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM ALLOCATION.—In the Senate and the House of Representatives, there shall be a separate allocation of new budget authority and outlays provided to the Committee on Appropriations for the purposes of Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism, which shall be deemed an allocation under section 302(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 633(a)). Section 302(a)(3) of such Act shall not apply to such separate allocation.

(b) 302 ALLOCATIONS.—The separate allocation referred to in subsection (a) shall be the exclusive allocation for Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism under section 302(b) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 633(b)). The Committee on Appropriations of the applicable House of Congress may provide suballocations of such separate allocation under such section 302(b).

(c) APPLICATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of enforcing the separate allocation referred to in subsection (a) under section 302(f) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 633(f)), the ''first fiscal year'' and the ''total of fiscal years'' shall be deemed to refer to fiscal year 2016. Section 302(c) of such Act (2 U.S.C. 633(c)) shall not apply to such separate allocation.

(2) ADDITIONAL SENATE ENFORCEMENT.—In the Senate, section 302(f)(2)(A) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 633(f)(2)(A)) shall apply with respect to the separate allocation to the Committee on Appropriations referred to in subsection (a).

(d) DESIGNATIONS.—New budget authority or outlays shall only be counted toward the allocation referred to in subsection (a) if they are designated pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(ii) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(b)(2)(B)(A)(ii)).

(e) ADJUSTMENTS.—For purposes of subsection (a) for fiscal year 2016, no adjustment shall be made under section 314(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 if any adjustment would be made under section 251(b)(2)(A)(ii) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(b)(2)(B)(A)(ii)).

(f) ADJUSTMENTS TO FUND OVERSEAS CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS/GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM.—The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the applicable House of Congress may adjust the allocations, aggregates, and other appropriate budgetary levels related to Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism or the allocation under section 302(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 633(a)) to the Committee on Appropriations set forth in the joint statement of managers accompanying this concurrent resolution to account for new information.

SEC. 3103. POINT OF ORDER AGAINST CERTAIN CHANGES IN MANDATORY PROGRAMS.

(a) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ''CHIMP'' means a provision that—

(1) would have been estimated as affecting direct spending or receipts under section 252 of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 902) (as in effect prior to September 30, 2002) if the provision was included in legislation other than appropriation Acts; and

(2) results in a net decrease in budget authority in the budget year, but does not result in a net decrease in outlays over the period of the total of the current year, the budget year, and all fiscal years covered under the most recently adopted concurrent resolution on the budget.

(b) POINTS OF ORDER.—

(1) IN THE SENATE.—It shall not be in order in the Senate to consider a bill or joint resolution making appropriations for a full fiscal year, or an amendment thereto, amendment between the Houses in relation thereto, conference report thereon, or motion thereon, that includes a CHIMP that, if enacted, would cause the absolute value of the total budget authority of all such CHIMPs enacted in relation to a full fiscal year to be more than the amount specified in paragraph (3).

(2) IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—A provision in a bill or joint resolution making appropriations for a full fiscal year that proposes a CHIMP that, if enacted, would cause the absolute value of the total budget authority of all such CHIMPs enacted in relation to a full fiscal year to be more than the amount specified in paragraph (3), shall not be in order in the House of Representatives.

(B) AMENDMENTS AND CONFERENCE REPORTS.—It shall not be in order in the House of Representatives to consider an amendment to, or a conference report on, a bill or joint resolution making appropriations for a full fiscal year if such amendment thereto or conference report thereon proposes a CHIMP that, if enacted, would cause the absolute value of the total budget authority of all such CHIMPs enacted in relation to a full fiscal year to be more than the amount specified in paragraph (3).

(3) AMOUNT.—The amount specified in this paragraph is—

(A) for fiscal year 2016, $19,100,000,000;

(B) for fiscal year 2017, $19,100,000,000;

(C) for fiscal year 2018, $17,000,000,000; and

(D) for fiscal year 2019, $15,000,000,000.

(c) DETERMINATION.—For purposes of this section, budgetary levels shall be determined on the basis of estimates provided by the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the applicable House of Congress.

(d) SUPERMAJORITY WAIVER AND APPEAL IN THE SENATE.—In the Senate, subsection (b) may be waived or suspended only by an affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members, duly chosen and sworn. An affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members of the Senate, duly chosen and sworn, shall be required to sustain an appeal of the ruling of the Chair on a point of order raised under subsection (b).

(e) REPEAL.—In the Senate, section 314 of S. Con. Res. 70 (110th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2009, shall no longer apply.

SEC. 3104. POINT OF ORDER AGAINST PROVISIONS THAT CONSTITUTE CHANGES IN MANDATORY PROGRAMS AFFECTING THE CRIME VICTIMS FUND.

(a) DEFINITION.—In this section—

(1) the term ''CHIMP'' has the meaning given such term in section 3103(a); and

(2) the term ''Crime Victims Fund'' means the Crime Victims Fund established under section 1402 of the Victims of Crime Act of 1984 (42 U.S.C. 10601).

(b) POINT OF ORDER IN THE SENATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—When the Senate is considering a bill or joint resolution making full-year appropriations for fiscal year 2016, or an amendment thereto, amendment between the Houses in relation thereto, conference report thereon, or motion thereon, if a point of order is made by a Senator against a provision containing a CHIMP affecting the Crime Victims Fund that, if enacted, would cause the absolute value of the total budget authority of all CHIMPs affecting the Crime Victims Fund in relation to fiscal year 2016 to be more than $10,800,000,000, and the point of order is sustained by the Chair, that provision shall be stricken from the measure and may not be offered as an amendment from the floor.

(2) FORM OF THE POINT OF ORDER.—A point of order under paragraph (1) may be raised by a Senator as provided in section 313(e) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 644(e)).

(3) CONFERENCE REPORTS.—When the Senate is considering a conference report on, or an amendment between the Houses in relation to, a bill or joint resolution, upon a point of order being made by any Senator pursuant to paragraph (1), and such point of order being sustained, such material contained in such conference report or House amendment shall be stricken, and the Senate shall proceed to consider the question of whether the Senate shall recede from its amendment and concur with a further amendment, or concur in the House amendment with a further amendment, as the case may be, which further amendment shall consist of only that portion of the conference report or House amendment, as the case may be, not so stricken. Any such motion in the Senate shall be debatable. In any case in which such point of order is sustained against a conference report (or Senate amendment derived from such conference report by operation of this subsection), no further amendment shall be in order.

(4) SUPERMAJORITY WAIVER AND APPEAL.—In the Senate, this subsection may be waived or suspended only by an affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members, duly chose and sworn. An affirmative vote of three-fifths of Members of the Senate, duly chosen and sworn shall be required to sustain an appeal of the ruling of the Chair on a point of order raised under this subsection.

(5) DETERMINATION.—For purposes of this subsection, budgetary levels shall be determined

on the basis of estimates provided by the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate.

(c) POINTS OF ORDER IN THE HOUSE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A provision in a bill or joint resolution making full-year appropriations for fiscal year 2016 that proposes a CHIMP affecting the Crime Victims Fund that, if enacted, would cause the absolute value of the total budget authority of all CHIMPs affecting the Crime Victims Fund in relation to fiscal year 2016 to be more than $10,800,000,000, shall not be in order in the House of Representatives.

(2) AMENDMENTS AND CONFERENCE REPORTS.—It shall not be in order in the House of Representatives to consider an amendment to, or a conference report on, a bill or joint resolution making full-year appropriations for fiscal year 2016 if such amendment thereto or conference report thereon proposes a CHIMP affecting the Crime Victims Fund that, if enacted, would cause the absolute value of the total budget authority of all CHIMPs affecting the Crime Victims Fund in relation to fiscal year 2016 to be more than $10,800,000,000.

(3) DETERMINATION.—For purposes of this subsection, budgetary levels shall be determined on the basis of estimates provided by the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the House of Representatives.

(d) REVIEW OF PROCEDURES REGARDING CHIMPS.—The Committee on the Budget and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the Committee on the Budget and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives shall review existing budget enforcement procedures regarding CHIMPs included in appropriations legislation. These committees of jurisdiction should consult with other relevant committees of jurisdiction and other interested parties to review such procedures, including for Crime Victims Fund spending, and include any agreed upon recommendations in subsequent concurrent resolutions on the budget.

SEC. 3105. FAIR-VALUE CREDIT ESTIMATES.

(a) FAIR-VALUE ESTIMATES.—Upon the request of the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate or the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the House of Representatives, any estimate prepared by the Congressional Budget Office under title V of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 661 et seq.) of the cost of a measure shall include, when practicable, an additional estimate of the cost, measured on a fair-value basis—

(1) in the Senate, for any bill, joint resolution, amendment, amendment between the Houses, conference report, or motion; and

(2) in the House of Representatives, for any bill or joint resolution, or amendment thereto or conference report thereon.

(b) ESTIMATES FOR HOUSING AND STUDENT LOAN PROGRAMS.—Any estimate prepared by the Congressional Budget Office under title V of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 661 et seq.) of the cost of a provision in a measure relating to a housing, residential mortgage, or student loan program shall include an additional estimate of the cost, measured on a fair-value basis—

(1) in the Senate, for any bill, joint resolution, amendment, amendment between the Houses, conference report, or motion; and

(2) in the House of Representatives, for any bill or joint resolution, or amendment thereto or conference report thereon.

(c) ENFORCEMENT IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.—If the Director of the Congressional Budget Office provides an estimate pursuant to subsection (a) or (b), the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the House of Representatives may use such estimate to determine compliance with the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 621 et seq.) and other budgetary enforcement controls.

SEC. 3106. SCORING RULE FOR CURRENCY MODERNIZATION.

In the Senate and the House of Representatives, for purposes of determining points of order under the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 621 et seq.) or any concurrent resolution on the budget, any provision contained in a measure relating to a transition from the $1 note to a $1 coin shall—

(1) in the Senate, for each bill, joint resolution, amendment, amendment between the Houses, conference report, or motion—

(A) record the changes in budget authority, outlays, and revenues of the provision in the first year in which the provision takes effect;

(B) determine the changes in budget authority, outlays, and revenues of the provision based on a net present value estimate of the changes in budget authority, outlays, and revenues of the provision over a 30-year period; and

(C) incorporate the changes in budget authority, outlays, and revenues of the provision due to behavioral changes; and

(2) in the House of Representatives, for each bill or joint resolution, or amendment thereto or conference report thereon—

(A) record the changes in budget authority, outlays, and revenues of the provision in the first year in which the provision takes effect;

(B) determine the changes in budget authority, outlays, and revenues of the provision based on a net present value estimate of the changes in budget authority, outlays, and revenues of the provision over a 30-year period; and

(C) incorporate the changes in budget authority, outlays, and revenues of the provision due to behavioral changes.

SEC. 3107. LONG-TERM SCORING OF CHANGES IN SPENDING LIMITS AND EXTENSION OF HIGHWAY PROGRAMS.

(a) SCORING OF LEGISLATION INCREASING THE DISCRETIONARY SPENDING LIMITS.—Any estimate provided by the Congressional Budget Office shall provide, in addition to such estimate, an estimate of the changes in budget authority, outlays, and revenues under the legislation over the period of fiscal year 2016 through fiscal year 2045—

(1) in the Senate, for any bill, joint resolution, amendment, amendment between the Houses, conference report, or motion that increases the discretionary spending limits under section 251(c) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(c)); and

(2) in the House of Representatives, for any bill or joint resolution, or amendment thereto or conference report thereon, that increases the discretionary spending limits under section 251(c) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(c)).

(b) SCORING OF LEGISLATION RELATING TO THE HIGHWAY TRUST FUND.—Any estimate provided by the Congressional Budget Office shall provide, in addition to such estimate, an estimate of the changes in budget authority, outlays, and revenues under the legislation over the period of fiscal year 2016 through fiscal year 2045—

(1) in the Senate, for any bill, joint resolution, amendment, amendment between the Houses, conference report, or motion that transfers amounts from the general fund of the Treasury to the Highway Trust Fund; and

(2) in the House of Representatives, for any bill or joint resolution, or amendment thereto or conference report thereon, that transfers amounts from the general fund of the Treasury to the Highway Trust Fund.

SEC. 3108. REQUIRING CLEARER REPORTING OF PROJECTED FEDERAL SPENDING AND DEFICITS.

When the Congressional Budget Office releases its annual update to the Budget and Economic Outlook, the Congressional Budget Office shall provide a projection of Federal revenues, outlays, and deficits for the 30-year period beginning with the budget year, expressed in terms of dollars and as a percent of gross domestic product, as part of its annual update required under the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 621 et seq.).

SEC. 3109. CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE ESTIMATES OF MEASURES WITH SIGNIFICANT OUTLAY EFFECTS.

The Congressional Budget Office shall prepare, to the extent practicable, an estimate of the outlay changes during the second and third decade of enactment for any spending legislative provision—

(1) which proposes a change or changes to law that the Congressional Budget Office determines has an outlay impact in excess of 0.25 percent of the gross domestic product of the United States during the first decade or in the tenth year; or

(2) with respect to which the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate or the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the House of Representatives has requested such an estimate.

SEC. 3110. PROHIBITING THE USE OF GUARANTEE FEES AS AN OFFSET.

In the Senate and the House of Representatives, for purposes of determining points of order under the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 621 et seq.) or any concurrent resolution on the budget, any provision that increases, or extends the increase of, any guarantee fees of the Federal National Mortgage Association or the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation shall not be counted in estimating the level of budget authority, outlays, or revenues—

(1) in the Senate, for any bill, joint resolution, amendment, amendment between the Houses, conference report, or motion; and

(2) in the House of Representatives, for any bill or joint resolution, or amendment thereto or conference report thereon.

SEC. 3111. INFORMATION FOR CONGRESS AND THE PUBLIC ABOUT PROJECTED FEDERAL OUTLAYS, REVENUES, AND DEFICITS.

As part of the annual update to the Budget and Economic Outlook required under section 202(e) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 602(e)), and at any other time the Congressional Budget Office releases projections of Federal deficits over any term of years, the Congressional Budget Office shall publish with its projection a 1-page statement—

(1) summarizing and categorizing total outlays, receipts, surpluses, and deficits of the Federal Government on a unified basis for that same prospective time period; and

(2) categorizing and subtotaling separately—

(A) outlays for mandatory programs and for discretionary programs;

(B) outlays, payroll tax revenue, and offsetting receipts for Social Security and for Medicare;

(C) the surplus or deficit of revenues over outlays for Social Security and for Medicare; and

(D) revenues.

SEC. 3112. HONEST ACCOUNTING: COST ESTIMATES FOR MAJOR LEGISLATION TO INCORPORATE MACROECONOMIC EFFECTS.

(a) CBO AND JCT ESTIMATES.—During the 114th Congress, any estimate provided by the Congressional Budget Office under section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 653) or by the Joint Committee on Taxation to the Congressional Budget Office under section 201(f) of such Act (2 U.S.C. 601(f)) for major legislation considered in the House of Representatives or the Senate shall, to the greatest extent practicable, incorporate the budgetary effects of changes in economic output, employment, capital stock, and other macroeconomic variables resulting from such major legislation.

(b) CONTENTS.—Any estimate referred to in subsection (a) shall, to the extent practicable, include—

(1) a qualitative assessment of the budgetary effects (including macroeconomic variables described in subsection (a)) of the major legislation in the 20-fiscal year period beginning after the

last fiscal year of the most recently agreed to concurrent resolution on the budget that sets forth budgetary levels required under section 301 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 632); and

(2) an identification of the critical assumptions and the source of data underlying that estimate.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) MAJOR LEGISLATION.—The term ''major legislation'' means—

(A) in the Senate, a bill, joint resolution, conference report, amendment, amendment between the Houses, or treaty—

(i) for which an estimate is required to be prepared pursuant to section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 653) and that causes a gross budgetary effect (before incorporating macroeconomic effects and not including timing shifts) in a fiscal year in the period of years of the most recently agreed to concurrent resolution on the budget equal to or greater than—

(I) 0.25 percent of the current projected gross domestic product of the United States for that fiscal year; or

(II) for a treaty, equal to or greater than $15,000,000,000 for that fiscal year; or

(ii) designated as such by—

(I) the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate for all direct spending and revenue legislation; or

(II) the Senator who is Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Joint Committee on Taxation for revenue legislation; and

(B) in the House of Representatives, a bill or joint resolution, or amendment thereto or conference report thereon—

(i) for which an estimate is required to be prepared pursuant to section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 653) and that causes a gross budgetary effect (before incorporating macroeconomic effects and not including timing shifts) in a fiscal year in the period of years of the most recently agreed to concurrent resolution on the budget equal to or greater than 0.25 percent of the current projected gross domestic product of the United States for that fiscal year; or

(ii) designated as such by—

(I) the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the House of Representatives for all direct spending and revenue legislation; or

(II) the Member who is Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Joint Committee on Taxation for revenue legislation.

(2) BUDGETARY EFFECTS.—The term ''budgetary effects'' means changes in revenues, direct spending outlays, and deficits.

(3) TIMING SHIFTS.—The term ''timing shifts'' means—

(A) provisions that cause a delay of the date on which outlays flowing from direct spending would otherwise occur from one fiscal year to the next fiscal year; or

(B) provisions that cause an acceleration of the date on which revenues would otherwise occur from one fiscal year to the prior fiscal year.

Subtitle B—Budget Enforcement in the Senate

SEC. 3201. EXTENSION OF ENFORCEMENT OF BUDGETARY POINTS OF ORDER IN THE SENATE.

(a) EXTENSION OF CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET ACT OF 1974 POINTS OF ORDER.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any provision of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 621 et seq.), subsections (c)(2) and (d)(3) of section 904 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 621 note) shall remain in effect for purposes of Senate enforcement through September 30, 2025.

(2) REPEAL.—In the Senate, section 205 of S. Con. Res. 21 (110th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2008, shall no longer apply.

(b) OTHER POINTS OF ORDER.—

(1) PAY-AS-YOU-GO.—Section 201(d) of S. Con. Res. 21 (110th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2008, is repealed.

(2) SHORT-TERM DEFICITS.—Section 404(e) of S. Con. Res. 13 (111th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2010, is repealed.

SEC. 3202. POINT OF ORDER AGAINST ADVANCE APPROPRIATIONS IN THE SENATE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) POINT OF ORDER.—Except as provided in subsection (b), it shall not be in order in the Senate to consider any bill, joint resolution, motion, amendment, amendment between the Houses, or conference report that would provide an advance appropriation for a discretionary account.

(2) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ''advance appropriation'' means any new budget authority provided in a bill or joint resolution making appropriations for fiscal year 2016 that first becomes available for any fiscal year after 2016, or any new budget authority provided in a bill or joint resolution making general appropriations or continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2017, that first becomes available for any fiscal year after 2017.

(b) EXCEPTIONS.—Advance appropriations may be provided—

(1) for fiscal years 2017 and 2018 for programs, projects, activities, or accounts identified in the joint explanatory statement of managers accompanying this concurrent resolution under the heading ''Accounts Identified for Advance Appropriations'' in an aggregate amount not to exceed $28,852,000,000 in new budget authority in each fiscal year;

(2) for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting; and

(3) for the Department of Veterans Affairs for the Medical Services, Medical Support and Compliance, and Medical Facilities accounts of the Veterans Health Administration.

(c) SUPERMAJORITY WAIVER AND APPEAL.—

(1) WAIVER.—In the Senate, subsection (a) may be waived or suspended only by an affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members, duly chosen and sworn.

(2) APPEAL.—An affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members of the Senate, duly chosen and sworn, shall be required to sustain an appeal of the ruling of the Chair on a point of order raised under subsection (a).

(d) FORM OF POINT OF ORDER.—A point of order under subsection (a) may be raised by a Senator as provided in section 313(e) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 644(e)).

(e) CONFERENCE REPORTS.—When the Senate is considering a conference report on, or an amendment between the Houses in relation to, a bill or joint resolution, upon a point of order being made by any Senator pursuant to this section, and such point of order being sustained, such material contained in such conference report or House amendment shall be stricken, and the Senate shall proceed to consider the question of whether the Senate shall recede from its amendment and concur with a further amendment, or concur in the House amendment with a further amendment, as the case may be, which further amendment shall consist of only that portion of the conference report or House amendment, as the case may be, not so stricken. Any such motion in the Senate shall be debatable. In any case in which such point of order is sustained against a conference report (or Senate amendment derived from such conference report by operation of this subsection), no further amendment shall be in order.

SEC. 3203. SUPERMAJORITY ENFORCEMENT OF UNFUNDED MANDATES IN THE SENATE.

Paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 425(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 658d(a)) shall be subject to the waiver and appeal requirements of subsections (c)(2) and (d)(3), respectively, of section 904 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 621 note).

SEC. 3204. REPEAL OF SENATE POINT OF ORDER AGAINST CERTAIN RECONCILIATION LEGISLATION.

Section 202 of S. Con. Res. 21 (110th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2008, shall no longer apply in the Senate.

SEC. 3205. PROHIBITION ON AGREEING TO LEGISLATION WITHOUT A SCORE IN THE SENATE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In the Senate, it shall not be in order to vote on passage of matter that requires an estimate under section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 653), unless such estimate was made publicly available on the website of the Congressional Budget Office not later than 28 hours before the time the vote commences.

(b) SUPERMAJORITY WAIVER AND APPEAL.—

(1) WAIVER.—In the Senate, subsection (a) may be waived or suspended only by an affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members, duly chosen and sworn.

(2) APPEAL.—An affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members of the Senate, duly chosen and sworn, shall be required to sustain an appeal of the ruling of the Chair on a point of order raised under subsection (a).

SEC. 3206. PROTECTING THE SAVINGS IN REPORTED RECONCILIATION BILLS IN THE SENATE.

In the Senate, section 310(d)(1) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 641(d)(1)) shall apply and may be waived in accordance with the procedures applicable to a point of order raised under section 310(d)(2) of such Act.

SEC. 3207. SCORING RULE FOR CERTAIN ENERGY CONTRACTS IN THE SENATE.

(a) ESTIMATES.—In the Senate, for purposes of determining points of order established under the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 621 et seq.) or any concurrent resolution on the budget, any estimate by the Congressional Budget Office of a provision in a bill, joint resolution, amendment, conference report, or amendment between the Houses that directly or indirectly modifies the use of the authority to enter covered energy savings contracts shall—

(1) record in the first year in which the provision would become effective, the changes in budget authority, outlays, and revenues (as estimated in accordance with paragraph (2)) of any modifications to the use of the authority to enter the covered energy savings contracts;

(2) in estimating the changes in budget authority, outlays, and revenues of the legislation, calculate the costs and savings arising from covered energy savings contracts, including required payments under the covered energy savings contracts, anticipated savings from reductions in energy use, and other anticipated costs and reductions in spending associated with the covered energy savings contracts, on a net present value basis; and

(3) classify the effects of the provision to be changes in spending subject to the availability of appropriations.

(b) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in subsection (a) shall be construed to modify the methodology for estimating the changes in budget authority, outlays, and revenues of a provision that—

(1) does not relate to covered energy savings contracts in a bill, joint resolution, amendment, conference report, or amendment between the Houses that contains a provision described in subsection (a); or

(2) provides appropriations.

(c) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ''covered energy savings contract'' means—

(1) an energy savings performance contract authorized under section 801 of the National Energy Conservation Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 8287); and

(2) a utility energy service contract, as described in the Office of Management and Budget

Memorandum on Federal use of energy savings performance contracting, dated July 25, 1998 (M–98–13), and the Office of Management and Budget Memorandum on the Federal use of energy saving performance contracts and utility energy service contracts, dated September 28, 2012 (M–12–21), or any successor to either memorandum.

SEC. 3208. ADJUSTMENT FOR WILDFIRE SUPPRESSION FUNDING IN THE SENATE.

If a measure becomes law that amends the adjustments to discretionary spending limits established under section 251(b) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(b)) for wildfire suppression funding, which may include criteria for making such an adjustment, the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may adjust the allocation called for in section 302(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 633(a)) to the appropriate committee or committees of the Senate, and may adjust all other budgetary aggregates, allocations, levels, and limits contained in this concurrent resolution, as necessary, consistent with such measure.

Subtitle C—Budget Enforcement in the House of Representatives

SEC. 3301. LIMITATION ON MEASURES AFFECTING SOCIAL SECURITY SOLVENCY IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of the enforcement of this concurrent resolution, upon its adoption until the end of fiscal year 2016, it shall not be in order to consider in the House of Representatives a bill or joint resolution, or an amendment thereto or conference report thereon, that reduces the actuarial balance by at least 0.01 percent of the present value of future taxable payroll of the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund established under section 201(a) of the Social Security Act for the 75-year period utilized in the most recent annual report of the Board of Trustees provided pursuant to section 201(c)(2) of the Social Security Act.

(b) EXCEPTION.—Subsection (a) shall not apply to a measure that would improve the actuarial balance of the combined balance in the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund for the 75-year period utilized in the most recent annual report of the Board of Trustees provided pursuant to section 201(c)(2) of the Social Security Act.

SEC. 3302. LIMITATION ON TRANSFERS FROM THE GENERAL FUND OF THE TREASURY TO THE HIGHWAY TRUST FUND IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

In the House of Representatives, for purposes of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 621 et seq.), the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 900 et seq.), and the rules or orders of the House of Representatives, a bill or joint resolution, or an amendment thereto or conference report thereon, that transfers funds from the general fund of the Treasury to the Highway Trust Fund, amounts transferred shall be counted as new budget authority and outlays equal to the amount of the transfer in the fiscal year the transfer occurs.

SEC. 3303. ADJUSTMENTS FOR IMPROVED CONTROL OF BUDGETARY RESOURCES IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

(a) ADJUSTMENTS OF DISCRETIONARY AND DIRECT SPENDING LEVELS.—In the House of Representatives, if a committee (other than the Committee on Appropriations) reports a bill or joint resolution, or any amendment thereto is offered or any conference report thereon is submitted, providing for a decrease in direct spending (budget authority and outlays flowing therefrom) for any fiscal year and also provides for an authorization of appropriations for the same purpose, upon the enactment of such measure, the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the House of Representatives may decrease the allocation to such committee and increase the allocation of discretionary spending (budget authority and outlays flowing therefrom) to the Committee on Appropriations for fiscal year 2016 by an amount equal to the new budget authority (and outlays flowing therefrom) provided for in a bill or joint resolution making appropriations for the same purpose.

(b) DETERMINATIONS.—In the House of Representatives, for the purpose of enforcing this concurrent resolution, the allocations and aggregate levels of new budget authority, outlays, direct spending, new entitlement authority, revenues, deficits, and surpluses for fiscal year 2016 and the period of fiscal years 2016 through fiscal year 2025 shall be determined on the basis of estimates made by the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the House of Representatives and such Chairman may adjust applicable levels of this concurrent resolution.

SEC. 3304. LIMITATION ON ADVANCE APPROPRIATIONS IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In the House of Representatives, except as provided for in subsection (b), any bill or joint resolution, or amendment thereto or conference report thereon, making a general appropriation or continuing appropriation may not provide for advance appropriations.

(b) EXCEPTIONS.—An advance appropriation may be provided for programs, projects, activities, or accounts identified in the report to accompany this concurrent resolution or the joint explanatory statement of managers to accompany this concurrent resolution under the heading—

(1) GENERAL.—''Accounts Identified for Advance Appropriations''.

(2) VETERANS.—''Veterans Accounts Identified for Advance Appropriations''.

(c) LIMITATIONS.—The aggregate level of advance appropriations shall not exceed—

(1) GENERAL.—$28,852,000,000 in new budget authority for all programs identified pursuant to subsection (b)(1).

(2) VETERANS.—$63,271,000,000 in new budget authority for programs in the Department of Veterans Affairs identified pursuant to subsection (b)(2).

(d) DEFINITION.—The term ''advance appropriation'' means any new discretionary budget authority provided in a bill or joint resolution, or any amendment thereto or conference report thereon, making general appropriations or continuing appropriations, for the fiscal year following fiscal year 2016.

SEC. 3305. CERTAIN ENERGY CONTRACTS IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

The House of Representatives shall assess the implementation of section 3207 of this concurrent resolution through a collaborative assessment with the Senate and the Congressional Budget Office of the appropriate scorekeeping methodology for evaluating the budgetary effects of energy savings performance contracts authorized under section 801 of the National Energy Conservation Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 8287).

Subtitle D—Other Provisions

SEC. 3401. SUBMISSION OF FINDINGS FOR THE ELIMINATION OF WASTE, FRAUD, AND ABUSE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In the Senate and the House of Representatives, all committees are directed to review programs within their jurisdiction to identify waste, fraud, abuse, or duplication, and increase the use of performance data to inform committee work.

(b) REVIEW.—Committees are also directed to review the applicable matters for congressional consideration identified in the Office of Inspector General semiannual reports and the Office of Inspector General's list of unimplemented recommendations and on the Government Accountability Office's High Risk list and the annual report to reduce program duplication.

(c) REPORT.—After completing the oversight and performance reviews of programs within their jurisdiction under subsections (a) and (b), the committees are directed to include recommendations for improved governmental performance in their annual views and estimates reports submitted by the committees to the Committees on the Budget of the applicable House of Congress under section 301(d) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 632(d)).

SEC. 3402. BUDGETARY TREATMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding section 302(a)(1) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 633(a)(1)), section 13301 of the Budget Enforcement Act of 1990 (2 U.S.C. 632 note), and section 2009a of title 39, United States Code, the report accompanying this concurrent resolution on the budget or the joint explanatory statement accompanying the conference report on any concurrent resolution on the budget shall include in its allocation under section 302(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 to the Committee on Appropriations of the applicable House of Congress amounts for the discretionary administrative expenses of the Social Security Administration and the United States Postal Service.

(b) SPECIAL RULE.—In the Senate and the House of Representatives, for purposes of enforcing sections 302(f) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 633(f)), estimates of the level of total new budget authority and total outlays provided by a measure shall include any discretionary amounts described in subsection (a).

SEC. 3403. APPLICATION AND EFFECT OF CHANGES IN ALLOCATIONS AND AGGREGATES.

(a) APPLICATION.—Any adjustments of allocations and aggregates made pursuant to this concurrent resolution shall—

(1) apply while that measure is under consideration;

(2) take effect upon the enactment of that measure; and

(3) be published in the Congressional Record as soon as practicable.

(b) EFFECT OF CHANGED ALLOCATIONS AND AGGREGATES.—Revised allocations and aggregates resulting from these adjustments shall be considered for the purposes of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 621 et seq.) as allocations and aggregates contained in this concurrent resolution.

(c) BUDGET COMMITTEE DETERMINATIONS.—For purposes of this concurrent resolution the levels of new budget authority, outlays, direct spending, new entitlement authority, revenues, deficits, and surpluses for a fiscal year or period of fiscal years shall be determined on the basis of estimates made by the Committee on the Budget of the applicable House of Congress.

(d) AGGREGATES, ALLOCATIONS AND APPLICATION.—In the House of Representatives, for purposes of this concurrent resolution and budget enforcement, the consideration of any bill or joint resolution, or amendment thereto or conference report thereon, for which the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the House of Representatives makes adjustments or revisions in the allocations, aggregates, and other budgetary levels of this concurrent resolution shall not be subject to the points of order set forth in clause 10 of rule XXI of the Rules of the House of Representatives or section 3101 of this concurrent resolution.

SEC. 3404. ADJUSTMENTS TO REFLECT CHANGES IN CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS.

Upon the enactment of a bill or joint resolution providing for a change in concepts or definitions, the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the applicable House of Congress may make adjustments to the levels and allocations in this concurrent resolution in accordance with section 251(b) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(b)).

SEC. 3405. EXERCISE OF RULEMAKING POWERS.

Congress adopts the provisions of this title—

(1) as an exercise of the rulemaking power of the Senate and the House of Representatives, respectively, and as such they shall be considered as part of the rules of each House or of that House to which they specifically apply, and such rules shall supersede other rules only to the extent that they are inconsistent with such other rules; and

(2) with full recognition of the constitutional right of either the Senate or the House of Representatives to change those rules (insofar as they relate to that House) at any time, in the same manner, and to the same extent as is the case of any other rule of the Senate or House of Representatives.

TITLE IV—RESERVE FUNDS

Subtitle A—Reserve Funds in Both Houses

SEC. 4101. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO REDUCE POVERTY AND INCREASE OPPORTUNITY AND UPWARD MOBILITY FOR STRUGGLING AMERICANS.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate and the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the House of Representatives may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution—

(1) in the Senate, for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, conference reports, or motions relating to programs or policies designed to reduce poverty and increase opportunity and upward mobility for struggling Americans on the road to personal and financial independence by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would neither adversely impact job creation nor increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025; and

(2) in the House of Representatives, for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, or conference reports relating to programs or policies designed to reduce poverty and increase opportunity and upward mobility for struggling Americans on the road to personal and financial independence by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would neither adversely impact job creation nor increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

Subtitle B—Reserve Funds in the Senate

SEC. 4301. SPENDING-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO INCREASE THE PACE OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND PRIVATE SECTOR JOB CREATION IN THE UNITED STATES.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to—

(1) growing the economy;

(2) lowering the after-tax costs of investment, savings, and work;

(3) reducing the costs to business and individuals from the Internal Revenue Code of 1986;

(4) reducing the costs borne by economic activity in the United States stemming from Federal regulations, including the costs incurred by individuals in complying with Federal law when starting a business;

(5) reducing the costs of frivolous lawsuits;

(6) creating a more competitive financial sector to support economic growth and job creation while enhancing the credit worthiness of lending institutions; or

(7) improving the ability of policy makers to estimate the economic effects of policy change through the enhanced use of economic models and data in scoring legislation;

without raising new revenue, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4302. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO STRENGTHEN AMERICA'S PRIORITIES.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to enhanced funding for national security or domestic discretionary programs by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4303. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO PROTECT FLEXIBLE AND AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE CHOICES FOR ALL.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution, and make adjustments to the pay-as-you-go ledger that are deficit-neutral over 11 years, for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to—

(1) full repeal of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Public Law 111–148; 124 Stat. 119) and the health care related provisions of the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010 (Public Law 111–152; 124 Stat. 1029); or

(2) replacing the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Public Law 111–148; 124 Stat. 119) or the health care related provisions of the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010 (Public Law 111–152; 124 Stat. 1029);

by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4304. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND FOR IMPROVING ACCESS TO THE STATE CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to improving access to affordable health care for low-income children, including the State Children's Health Insurance Program, by the amounts provided in such legislation for that purpose, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4305. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND FOR OTHER HEALTH REFORMS.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to—

(1) the requirement to individually purchase, or jointly provide, health insurance;

(2) extending expiring health care provisions;

(3) the September 11th terrorism attacks at the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and the Shanksville Crash site, which may include legislation that extends medical monitoring and treatment services and compensation for first responders, survivors, and their families;

(4) improvements in medical research, innovation and safety; or

(5) strengthening program integrity initiatives to reduce fraud, waste, and abuse in Federal health care programs;

by the amounts provided in such legislation for that purpose, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4306. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND FOR CHILD WELFARE.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to—

(1) child nutrition programs;

(2) replacing ineffective policies and programs with evidence-based alternative that improve the welfare of vulnerable children; or

(3) policies that protect children from sexual predators in our schools or communities;

by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4307. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND FOR VETERANS AND SERVICEMEMBERS.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to the improvement of the delivery of benefits and services to veterans and servicemembers by the amounts provided in such legislation for that purpose, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4308. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND FOR TAX REFORM AND ADMINISTRATION.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to—

(1) reforming the Internal Revenue Code of 1986;

(2) amending the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend certain expiring tax relief provisions;

(3) innovation and high quality manufacturing jobs, including the repeal of the 2.3 percent excise tax on medical device manufacturers; or

(4) operations and administration of the Department of the Treasury;

by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4309. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO INVEST IN THE INFRASTRUCTURE IN AMERICA.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to Federal investment in the infrastructure of the United States, including programs that expedite the deployment of broadband to rural areas by the

amounts provided in such legislation for that purpose, provided that such legislation shall not include transfers from other trust funds but may include transfers from the general fund of the Treasury that are offset, provided further that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4310. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND FOR AIR TRANSPORTATION.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to Federal spending on civil air traffic control services, which may include air traffic management at airport towers across the United States or at facilities of the Federal Aviation Administration, by the amounts provided in such legislation for that purpose, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4311. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO PROMOTE JOBS IN THE UNITED STATES THROUGH INTERNATIONAL TRADE.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to—

(1) suspending or reducing tariffs on miscellaneous imports;

(2) reauthorization of trade related Federal agencies;

(3) implementing international trade agreements;

(4) reauthorizing or extending trade adjustment assistance programs;

(5) reauthorizing preference programs; or

(6) enhancing the protection of United States intellectual property rights at the border and abroad;

by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4312. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO INCREASE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR DISABLED WORKERS.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to the administration of disability benefits and the improved employment of disabled workers by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4313. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND FOR HIGHER EDUCATION ACT REFORM.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports that amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.) by the amounts provided in such legislation for that purpose, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4314. SPENDING-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND FOR ENERGY LEGISLATION.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to—

(1) reform of the management of civilian and defense nuclear waste;

(2) reform and reauthorization of programs at the Department of Energy related to research and development of alternative or renewable forms of energy, fossil fuel exploration and use, clean coal technologies (including carbon capture and sequestration), nuclear energy, or the electricity grid;

(3) expansion of North American energy production; or

(4) reform of the permitting and siting processes for energy infrastructure;

without raising new revenue, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4315. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO REFORM ENVIRONMENTAL STATUTES.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to reform of environmental statutes to promote job growth by the amounts provided in such legislation for that purpose, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4316. SPENDING-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND FOR WATER RESOURCES LEGISLATION.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to improving flood control, expanding opportunities for commercial navigation, and improving the environmental restoration of the nation's waterways, assisting the States in carrying out drought prevention plans, strengthening waterborne commerce in the Nation's ports and harbors, or relating to the authority of the Secretary of the Interior to designate funds for rural water projects and Indian irrigation and water settlement projects, without raising new revenue, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4317. SPENDING-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND ON MINERAL SECURITY AND MINERAL RIGHTS.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to—

(1) reducing reliance on mineral imports; or

(2) the authority to deduct certain amounts from mineral revenues payable to States;

without raising new revenue, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4318. SPENDING-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO REFORM THE ABANDONED MINE LANDS PROGRAM.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (30 U.S.C. 1201 et seq.) without raising new revenue, by the amounts provided in such legislation for that purpose, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4319. SPENDING-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO IMPROVE FOREST HEALTH.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to—

(1) increasing timber production from Federal lands and providing bridge funding to counties and other units of local government until timber production levels increase;

(2) decreasing forest hazardous fuel loads;

(3) improving stewardship contracting; or

(4) reform of the process of budgeting for wildfire suppression operations;

without raising new revenue, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4320. SPENDING-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO REAUTHORIZE FUNDING FOR PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF TAXES TO COUNTIES AND OTHER UNITS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to Payments In Lieu of Taxes (PILT), which may include funding the payments in lieu of taxes program at levels roughly equivalent to lost tax revenues due to the presence of Federal land without raising new revenue, by the amounts provided in such legislation for that purpose, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4321. SPENDING-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND FOR FINANCIAL REGULATORY SYSTEM REFORM.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to regulatory relief for small financial firms, improvements in the effectiveness of the financial regulatory framework, enhancements in oversight and accountability of the Federal Reserve System, and expansions in access to capital markets without raising new revenue, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided

that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4322. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO IMPROVE FEDERAL PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to improving the processing of earnings reports for the Supplemental Security Income and Social Security Disability Insurance programs by the amounts provided in such legislation for that purpose, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4323. SPENDING-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO IMPLEMENT AGREEMENTS WITH FREELY ASSOCIATED STATES.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to the implementation of agreements between the United States and nations with whom it maintains a Compact of Free Association without raising new revenue, by the amounts provided in such legislation for that purpose, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4324. SPENDING-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO PROTECT PAYMENTS TO RURAL HOSPITALS AND CREATE SUSTAINABLE ACCESS FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to protecting payments to rural hospitals and creating sustainable access for rural communities without raising new revenue, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4325. SPENDING-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO ENCOURAGE STATE MEDICAID DEMONSTRATION PROGRAMS TO PROMOTE INDEPENDENT LIVING AND INTEGRATED WORK FOR THE DISABLED.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to encouraging State Medicaid demonstration programs to promote independent living and integrated work for the disabled without raising new revenue, by the amounts provided in such legislation for that purpose, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4326. SPENDING-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO ALLOW PHARMACISTS TO BE PAID FOR THE PROVISION OF SERVICES UNDER MEDICARE.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to payments to pharmacists for the provision of services under Medicare without raising new revenue, by the amounts provided in such legislation for that purpose, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4327. SPENDING-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO IMPROVE OUR NATION'S COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to supporting and improving community health centers without raising new revenue, by the amounts provided in such legislation for that purpose, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4328. SPENDING-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO THE FUNDING OF INDEPENDENT AGENCIES, WHICH MAY INCLUDE SUBJECTING THE CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION BUREAU TO THE REGULAR APPROPRIATIONS PROCESS.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to the funding of independent agencies, which may include subjecting the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to the regular appropriations process without raising new revenue, by the amounts provided in such legislation for that purpose, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4329. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO REFORM, IMPROVE, AND ENHANCE 529 COLLEGE SAVINGS PLANS.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to reforms, improvements, and enhancements of 529 college savings plans by the amounts provided in such legislation for that purpose, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4330. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO SECURING OVERSEAS DIPLOMATIC FACILITIES OF THE UNITED STATES.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to the security of the overseas diplomatic facilities of the United States by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4331. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO EXPANDING, ENHANCING, OR OTHERWISE IMPROVING SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, AND MATHEMATICS.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to expanding, enhancing, or otherwise improving science, technology, engineering, and mathematics by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4332. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO PROMOTING MANUFACTURING IN THE UNITED STATES.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to investment in the manufacturing sector in the United States, which may include educational or research and development initiatives, public-private partnerships, or other programs, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4333. SPENDING-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO PROHIBIT ALIENS WITHOUT LEGAL STATUS IN THE UNITED STATES FROM QUALIFYING FOR A REFUNDABLE TAX CREDIT.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to benefits for aliens without legal status in the United States, which may include prohibiting qualification for certain tax benefits without raising new revenue, by the amounts provided in such legislation for that purpose, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4334. DEFICIT-REDUCTION RESERVE FUND FOR REPORT ELIMINATION OR MODIFICATION.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports that achieve savings through the elimination, modification, or the reduction in frequency of congressionally mandated reports from Federal agencies, and reduce the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2021 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025. The Chairman may also make adjustments to the pay-as-you-go ledger over 6 and 11 years to ensure that the deficit reduction achieved is used for deficit reduction only. The adjustments authorized under this section shall be of the amount of deficit reduction achieved.

SEC. 4335. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO ADDRESS HEROIN, METHAMPHETAMINE, AND PRESCRIPTION OPIOID ABUSE.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other

appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to addressing efforts to combat heroin, methamphetamine, and prescription opioid abuse by the amounts provided in such legislation for that purpose, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4336. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO STRENGTHEN OUR DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE CIVILIAN WORKFORCE.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to strengthening our civilian workforce by the amounts provided in such legislation for that purpose, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over the period of either the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4337. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND FOR DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE REFORM.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to improving Department of Defense financial management, which may include achieving full auditability or eliminating waste, fraud, and abuse, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4338. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO IMPROVE FEDERAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, JOB TRAINING, AND REEMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to reducing inefficient overlap, improving access, and enhancing outcomes with Federal workforce development, job training, and reemployment programs by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4339. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO PROVIDE ENERGY ASSISTANCE AND INVEST IN ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND CONSERVATION.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to—

(1) energy efficiency, which may include weatherization and energy efficiency retrofit programs for low-income individuals;

(2) the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, which may include seasonal assistance and crisis fuel assistance to low-income individuals;

(3) Federal programs for land and water conservation, including the Land and Water Conservation Fund; or

(4) the reduction of duplicative Federal green building programs;

by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4340. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO END OPERATION CHOKE POINT AND PROTECT THE SECOND AMENDMENT.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to the Department of Justice, which may include ending the Operation Choke Point program, by the amounts provided in such legislation for that purpose, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4341. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO PREVENT THE USE OF FEDERAL FUNDS FOR THE BAILOUT OF IMPROVIDENT STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to a prohibition, except in the case of Federal assistance provided in response to a natural disaster, on any entity of the Federal Government providing funds to State and local governments to prevent receivership or to facilitate exit from receivership or to prevent default on its obligations by a State government by the amounts provided in such legislation for that purpose, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4342. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO IMPROVE HEALTH OUTCOMES AND LOWER THE COSTS OF CARING FOR MEDICALLY COMPLEX CHILDREN IN MEDICAID.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to improving the health outcomes and lowering the costs of caring for medically complex children in Medicaid, which may include creating or expanding integrated delivery models or improving care coordination, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4343. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE ACCESS, CHOICE, AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN VETERANS CARE THROUGH THE VETERANS CHOICE CARD PROGRAM.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to maintaining and enhancing access, choice, and accountability in veterans care through the Veterans Choice Card program by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4344. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO PROMOTING EQUAL PAY.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to promoting equal pay, which may include preventing discrimination on the basis of sex and preventing retaliation against employees for seeking or discussing wage information, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4345. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO LEGISLATION SUBMITTED TO CONGRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES TO PROTECT AND STRENGTHEN SOCIAL SECURITY.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to legislation submitted to Congress by the President of the United States to protect current beneficiaries of the Social Security program and prevent the insolvency of the program by the amounts provided in such legislation for such purpose, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4346. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO A SIMPLIFIED INCOME-DRIVEN STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT OPTION.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to addressing student loan debt, which may include reducing overlapping student loan repayment programs and creating a simplified income-driven student loan repayment option, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4347. SPENDING-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO KEEPING THE FEDERAL WATER POLLUTION CONTROL ACT FOCUSED ON THE PROTECTION OF WATER QUALITY.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to ensuring that Federal jurisdiction under the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.) is focused on water quality, which may include limiting jurisdiction based on the movement of birds, mammals, or insects through the air or over the land, the movement of water through the ground, or the movement of rainwater or snowmelt over the land, or limiting jurisdiction over puddles, isolated ponds, roadside ditches, irrigation ditches, stormwater systems, wastewater systems, or water delivery, reuse, or reclamation systems, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not raise new revenue and would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016

through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4348. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO SUPPORTING ISRAEL.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to United States policy toward Israel and the prevention of anti-Semitism in Europe, which may include preventing the United Nations and other international institutions, including human rights organizations, from taking unfair or discriminatory action against Israel, and supporting efforts to prevent anti-Semitism in Europe, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4349. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to efforts to improve workplace benefits and reduce health care costs, which may include tax credits for employers providing paid family and medical leave, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4350. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO PROVIDING HEALTH CARE TO VETERANS WHO HAVE GEOGRAPHIC INACCESSIBILITY TO CARE.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to providing health care to veterans who reside more than 40 miles driving distance from the closest medical facility of the Department of Veterans Affairs that provides the care sought by the veteran by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4351. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO INCREASING ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION FOR LOW-INCOME AMERICANS THROUGH THE FEDERAL PELL GRANT PROGRAM.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to increasing access to higher education for low-income Americans through the Federal Pell Grant program, which may include allowing for 1 or more additional payment periods during the same award year, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4352. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO TRANSPARENCY IN HEALTH PREMIUM BILLING.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to increased disclosure of any Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Public Law 111–148) tax in health insurance monthly premium statements by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4353. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO CARBON EMISSIONS.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports related to carbon emissions, which may include prohibitions on Federal taxes or fees imposed on carbon emissions from any product or entity that is a direct or indirect source of emissions, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4354. SPENDING-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO REQUIRING THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO ALLOW STATES TO OPT OUT OF COMMON CORE WITHOUT PENALTY.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to prohibiting the Federal Government from mandating, incentivizing, or coercing States to adopt the Common Core State Standards or any other specific academic standards, instructional content, curricula, assessments, or programs of instruction and allowing States to opt out of the Common Core State Standards without penalty by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not raise new revenue and would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4355. SPENDING-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO THE DISPOSAL OF CERTAIN FEDERAL LAND.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to initiatives to sell or transfer to, or exchange with, a State or local government any Federal land that is not within the boundaries of a National Park, National Preserve, or National Monument by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not raise new revenue and would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4356. SPENDING-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO PROHIBITING FUNDING OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS DURING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS ARMS TRADE TREATY PRIOR TO SENATE RATIFICATION AND ADOPTION OF IMPLEMENTING LEGISLATION.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to funding, which may include prohibiting funding for the United Nations Arms Trade Treaty Secretariat or any international organizations created to support the implementation of the United Nations Arms Trade Treaty prior to Senate ratification and adoption of implementing legislation, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not raise new revenue and would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4357. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO REIMPOSING WAIVED SANCTIONS AND IMPOSING NEW SANCTIONS AGAINST IRAN FOR VIOLATIONS OF THE JOINT PLAN OF ACTION OR A COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR AGREEMENT.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to Iran, which may include efforts to immediately reimpose waived sanctions and impose new sanctions against the Government of Iran if the President cannot make a determination and certify that Iran is complying with the Joint Plan of Action or a comprehensive agreement on Iran's nuclear program, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4358. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO SUPPORTING UNITED STATES CITIZENS HELD HOSTAGE IN THE UNITED STATES EMBASSY IN TEHRAN, IRAN, BETWEEN NOVEMBER 3, 1979, AND JANUARY 20, 1981.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to supporting citizens of the United States held hostage in the United States embassy in Tehran, Iran, between November 3, 1979, and January 20, 1981, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4359. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS FOR PREGNANT WORKERS.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to efforts to increase employment opportunities and prevent employment discrimination, which may include measures to prevent employment discrimination against pregnant workers, to provide pregnant

workers with a right to workplace accommodations, and to ensure that employers comply with requirements regarding such workplace accommodations for pregnant workers, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4360. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO PERMANENTLY ELIMINATE THE FEDERAL ESTATE TAX.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to changes in the Federal income tax laws, which may include eliminating the Federal estate tax, by the amounts provided in such legislation for that purpose, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4361. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO REGULATION BY THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY OF GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to the regulation by the Environmental Protection Agency of greenhouse gas emissions, which may include a prohibition on withholding highway funds from States that refuse to submit State Implementation Plans required under the Clean Power Plan of the Agency, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4362. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO PROTECTING PRIVATELY HELD WATER RIGHTS AND PERMITS.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to protecting communities, businesses, recreationists, farmers, ranchers, or other groups that rely on privately held water rights and permits from Federal takings by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4363. SPENDING-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO PROHIBITING AWARDING OF CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS BASED ON AWARDEES ENTERING OR NOT ENTERING INTO AGREEMENTS WITH LABOR ORGANIZATIONS.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to a prohibition on the awarding of construction contracts on behalf of the Government based upon any solicitations, bid specifications, project agreements, or other controlling documents that require or prohibit bidders, offerors, contractors, or subcontractors to enter into or adhere to agreements with one or more labor organizations or discriminate against or give preference to such bidders, offerors, contractors, or subcontractors based on their entering or refusing to enter into such agreements by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not raise new revenue and would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4364. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO PREVENT AMERICAN JOBS FROM BEING MOVED OVERSEAS BY REDUCING THE CORPORATE INCOME TAX RATE.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to preventing American jobs from being moved overseas, which may include a reduction in the corporate income tax rate, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4365. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO INCREASE WAGES FOR AMERICAN WORKERS.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to reaffirming the ability of States to adopt minimum wages higher than the Federal minimum wage level commensurate with the cost of living in the State, which may include the adoption of pro-employment and wage-increasing policies by providing pro-growth tax relief and eliminating excessive government mandates, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4366. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO DETERRING THE MIGRATION OF UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN FROM EL SALVADOR, GUATEMALA, AND HONDURAS.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to deterring the attempted migration of unaccompanied children from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras into the United States, which may include the expedited removal of unlawful entrants from noncontiguous countries, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4367. SPENDING-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO ENSURING PROPER ECONOMIC CONSIDERATION IN DESIGNATION OF CRITICAL HABITAT.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to critical habitat designations, which may include requirements that the United States Fish and Wildlife Service examine the cumulative economic effects of the designation, such as on land or property uses or values, regional employment, or revenue impacts on States and units of local government, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not raise new revenue and would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4368. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO END "TOO BIG TO FAIL" BAILOUTS FOR WALL STREET MEGA-BANKS (OVER $500 BILLION IN TOTAL ASSETS).

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to any bank holding companies with over $500,000,000,000 in total assets to better protect taxpayers, including such measures as capital or leverage requirements, restrictions on the growth, activities, or operations of a company, or divestiture of assets or operations of any company that is unable to present a credible plan to facilitate an orderly bankruptcy or resolution, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4369. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO ENDING WASHINGTON'S ILLEGAL EXEMPTION FROM THE PATIENT PROTECTION AND AFFORDABLE CARE ACT.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to developing methods that ensure that all Members of Congress, the President, the Vice President, and all political appointees of the Administration procure their health insurance on the individual exchange in the same way as Americans at the same income level by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4370. SPENDING-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO INCREASING FUNDING FOR THE RELOCATION OF THE UNITED STATES EMBASSY IN ISRAEL FROM TEL AVIV TO JERUSALEM.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to increasing funding for United States embassies, which may include the relocation of the United States Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not raise new revenue and would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4371. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO PROMOTING THE RETURN OF CHILDREN WHO HAVE BEEN LEGALLY ADOPTED BY UNITED STATES CITIZENS FROM THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a

committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to promoting the return of children who have been legally adopted by United States citizens from the Democratic Republic of the Congo by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4372. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW NUCLEAR-CAPABLE CRUISE MISSILE BY THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AND THE NATIONAL NUCLEAR SECURITY ADMINISTRATION.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to the development of a new nuclear-capable cruise missile by the Department of Defense and the National Nuclear Security Administration by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4373. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO PROVIDE EQUITY IN THE TAX TREATMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICER DEATH BENEFITS.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to providing tax equity for death benefits paid to the families of public safety officers who lose their lives in the line of duty by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4374. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO ELIMINATING THE BACKLOG OF SEXUAL ASSAULT EVIDENCE KITS.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to eliminating the backlog of sexual assault evidence kits, which may include auditing the hidden backlog of untested sexual assault kits and ensuring that the collection and processing of DNA evidence by law enforcement agencies from crimes is carried out in an appropriate and timely manner, by the amounts provided in such legislation for that purpose, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4375. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO MIXED OXIDE FUEL FABRICATION.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to mixed oxide fuel fabrication by the amounts provided in such legislation for that purpose, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4376. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO REFORMING OFFICES OF INSPECTORS GENERAL AND PREVENTING EXTENDED VACANCIES.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to strengthening and reforming Federal Offices of Inspectors General, reducing vacancies in such Offices, and providing for improvements in the overall economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of Inspectors General by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4377. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO IMPROVING RETIREMENT SECURITY.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to improving retirement security by making it easier for small businesses to provide retirement plans for their employees by easing the administrative burden and by encouraging individuals to increase their savings by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4378. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO IMPROVE THE COMPETITIVENESS OF THE UNITED STATES.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to improving basic science research and development programs in the United States by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4379. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO ENSURING THAT THE CONSERVATION OF NORTHERN LONG-EARED BAT POPULATIONS AND LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ARE COMPATIBLE.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), which may include requirements that State conservation plans relating to the northern long-eared bat are given maximum flexibility to be successful so as to preserve and protect local and rural economies before any Federal listing decision is made with respect to the northern long-eared bat, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4380. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO IMPROVE CYBERSECURITY.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to increased sharing of cybersecurity threat information while protecting individual privacy and civil liberties interests by the amounts provided in such legislation for that purpose, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4381. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO ALLOW THE DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION AND FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION TO ENTER INTO JOINT TASK FORCES WITH TRIBAL AND LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to the Drug Enforcement Administration and Federal Bureau of Investigation entering into joint task forces with tribal and local law enforcement agencies by the amounts provided in such legislation for that purpose, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4382. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO ENCOURAGING COST SAVINGS IN OFFICE SPACE USED BY FEDERAL AGENCIES.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to encouraging cost savings in office space used by Federal agencies, which may include encouraging Federal agencies to utilize office space unused by the Federal Government before purchasing or renting additional space, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4383. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO PROVIDING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO SMALL BUSINESSES AND ASPIRING ENTREPRENEURS THROUGH SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTERS.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to providing technical assistance to small businesses and aspiring entrepreneurs through small business development centers by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4384. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO ENSURING THAT MEDICAL FACILITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEET THE NEEDS OF WOMEN VETERANS.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a

committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to ensuring that medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs meet the needs of women veterans by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4385. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO SUPPORTING EFFICIENT RESOURCING FOR THE ASIA REBALANCE POLICY.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to providing funding related to supporting efficient resourcing for the Asia rebalance policy by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4386. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO PREVENTING ACCESS TO MARIJUANA EDIBLES BY CHILDREN IN STATES THAT HAVE DECRIMINALIZED MARIJUANA.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to preventing access to edible marijuana products by children in States that have decriminalized marijuana by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4387. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO PROVIDING MORTGAGE LENDING TO RURAL AREAS.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to providing mortgage lending to rural areas by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4388. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF ARCTIC POLAR ICEBREAKERS.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to the construction of Arctic polar icebreakers by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4389. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO RESEARCHING HEALTH CONDITIONS OF THE DESCENDANTS OF VETERANS EXPOSED TO TOXIC SUBSTANCES DURING SERVICE IN THE ARMED FORCES.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to researching health conditions of the descendants of veterans exposed to toxic substances during service in the Armed Forces by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4390. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO RAISING THE FAMILY OF FUNDS LIMIT OF THE SMALL BUSINESS INVESTMENT COMPANY PROGRAM.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to the Small Business Investment Company Program of the Small Business Administration, which may include raising the Family of Funds limit of the Small Business Investment Company Program, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4391. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO DETECTION, INVESTIGATION, AND PROSECUTION OF THE OWNERS AND OPERATORS OF WEBSITES WHO KNOWINGLY ALLOW SUCH WEBSITES TO BE USED TO ADVERTISE COMMERCIAL SEX WITH CHILDREN OVER THE INTERNET.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to online child sex trafficking, which may include the detection, investigation, and prosecution of the owners and operators of websites who knowingly allow such websites to be used to advertise commercial sex with children over the Internet, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4392. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO PROTECTING THE RELIABILITY OF THE ELECTRICITY GRID.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to prohibiting the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency from proposing, finalizing, or issuing any regulation that would reduce the reliability of the electricity grid by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4393. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO PRESERVE AND PROTECT THE OPEN INTERNET.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to protecting the open Internet and promoting further innovation and investment in Internet services, content, infrastructure, and technologies by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4394. SPENDING-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO REFORMING THE FEDERAL REGULATORY PROCESS.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to—

(1) creating an effective mechanism for the review of the existing Federal regulatory burden to identify rules for repeal or modification that—

(A) impose paperwork burdens that could be reduced substantially without significantly diminishing regulatory effectiveness;

(B) impose disproportionately high costs on small businesses;

(C) could be strengthened in their effectiveness while reducing regulatory costs;

(D) have been rendered obsolete by technological or market changes;

(E) have achieved their goals and can be repealed without target problems recurring;

(F) impose the greatest opportunity costs in terms of economic growth;

(G) are ineffective;

(H) overlap, duplicate, or conflict with other Federal regulations or with State or local regulations; or

(I) impose costs that are not justified by benefits produced for society within the United States;

(2) reforming the process by which new regulations are made by Federal agencies, including independent agencies, for the purposes of—

(A) prioritizing early public outreach in the rulemaking process;

(B) ensuring the use of the best available scientific, economic, and technical data;

(C) preventing the misuse of guidance documents to skirt public input;

(D) ensuring the use of best practices for regulatory analysis, including cost-benefit analysis, into each step of the rulemaking process;

(E) facilitating the adoption by Federal agencies of the least costly regulatory alternative that would achieve the goals of the statutory authorization;

(F) ensuring more careful consideration of proposed high-cost rules;

(G) ensuring effective oversight of the Federal regulatory program, including independent regulatory commissions, by the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs;

(H) improving the consideration of adverse impacts on small businesses;

(I) providing greater transparency in the rulemaking process; and

(J) improving compliance with section 515 of the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2001 (Public Law 106–554; 114 Stat. 2736A–153) (commonly known as the ''Information Quality Act''), the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1501 et seq.), and chapter 6 of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the ''Regulatory Flexibility Act'');

(3) enhancing accountability by facilitating fair and effective judicial review of agency actions; and

(4) ensuring that Congress can effectively exercise its appropriate role in the regulatory process through legislation and oversight;

by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not raise new revenue and would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4395. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO PROVIDING COVERAGE OF VIRTUAL COLONOSCOPIES AS A COLORECTAL CANCER SCREENING TEST UNDER THE MEDICARE PROGRAM.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to providing coverage of virtual colonoscopies as a colorectal cancer screening test under the Medicare program by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4396. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO THE MODERNIZATION OF THE NUCLEAR COMMAND, CONTROL, AND COMMUNICATIONS ARCHITECTURE OF THE UNITED STATES.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to modernizing the triad of strategic nuclear delivery systems, the nuclear command and control system, and the nuclear weapons stockpile, and supporting related infrastructure, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4397. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO BARDA AND THE BIOSHIELD SPECIAL RESERVE FUND.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to strengthening our national security, which may include fully funding the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority and the BioShield Special Reserve Fund, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4398. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO IMPROVING THE NUCLEAR FORCES AND MISSIONS OF THE AIR FORCE.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to the nuclear force improvement program of the Air Force by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4399. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO PROMOTING ECONOMIC GROWTH AND JOB CREATION FOR SMALL BUSINESSES AND FULL FUNDING FOR AT-SEA AND DOCKSIDE MONITORING FOR CERTAIN FISHERIES.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to promoting economic growth and job creation by making it easier for small businesses to plan their capital investments and reducing the uncertainty of taxation, and supporting at-sea and dockside monitoring for fisheries that have received economic disaster assistance, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4400. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO THE DEFINITION OF FULL-TIME EMPLOYEE.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports related to the employer penalties under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Public Law 111–148), which may include changes to the definition of ''full time employee'' under that Act, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4401. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY OF THE FEDERAL REGULATORY PROCESS.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the Federal regulatory process by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4402. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO EXPEDITE AWARDS UNDER THE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE WHISTLEBLOWER PROGRAM.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to the processing of award submissions, which may include the Internal Revenue Service whistleblower program, by the amounts provided in such legislation for that purpose, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4403. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO ENCOURAGING THE INCREASED USE OF PERFORMANCE CONTRACTING IN FEDERAL FACILITIES.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to encouraging the increased use of performance contracting in Federal facilities by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4404. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO IMPROVING INFORMATION SHARING BY THE INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS WITH RESPECT TO INVESTIGATIONS RELATING TO SUBSTANDARD HEALTH CARE, DELAYED AND DENIED HEALTH CARE, PATIENT DEATHS, OTHER FINDINGS THAT DIRECTLY RELATE TO PATIENT CARE, AND OTHER MANAGEMENT ISSUES OF THE DEPARTMENT.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to improving information sharing by the Inspector General of the Department of Veterans Affairs with respect to investigations relating to substandard health care, delayed and denied health care, patient deaths, other findings that directly relate to patient care, and other management issues of the Department by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4405. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO ADDRESS THE DISPROPORTIONATE REGULATORY BURDENS ON COMMUNITY BANKS AND CREDIT UNIONS.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to alleviating disproportionate regulatory burdens on community banks and credit unions by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4406. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO PROTECT THE CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to the Corporation for National and Community Service by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4407. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO ENSURING THAT DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE ATTORNEYS COMPLY WITH DISCLOSURE OBLIGATIONS IN CRIMINAL PROSECUTIONS.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to ensuring that all Department of Justice attorneys comply with all legal and ethical obligations in criminal prosecutions, which may include legislation that ensures the disclosure to the defendant in a timely manner of all information known to the Government that tends to negate the guilt of the defendant, mitigate the offense charged or the sentence imposed, or impeach the Government's witnesses or evidence, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4408. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO PROMOTE BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to Federal investments in precision medicine and biomedical research, which may include increasing funding to account for inflation, to support finding ways to prevent, treat, and cure diseases or conditions like Alzheimer's and other life-threatening or chronic illnesses, and to provide long-term cost savings to the Federal Government, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4409. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO PROVIDING ACCESS TO NECESSARY EQUIPMENT FOR MEDICARE BENEFICIARIES.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to developing methods that ensure that Medicare beneficiaries have access to equipment like eye tracking accessories for speech generating devices and speech generating devices by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4410. SPENDING-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO PRIORITIZING THE CONSTRUCTION OF INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS THAT ARE OF NATIONAL AND REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE AND PROJECTS IN HIGH PRIORITY CORRIDORS.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to the prioritization of the Federal investment in the infrastructure of the United States on projects that are of national and regional significance and projects in high priority corridors of the National Highway System by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not raise new revenue and would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4411. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO ENCOURAGING THE UNITED STATES' NATO ALLIES TO REVERSE DECLINES IN DEFENSE SPENDING AND BEAR A MORE PROPORTIONATE BURDEN FOR ENSURING THE SECURITY OF NATO.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to encouraging the United States' NATO allies to reverse declines in defense spending and bear a more proportionate burden for ensuring the security of NATO by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4412. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO THE INVESTIGATION AND RECOVERY OF MISSING WEAPONS AND MILITARY EQUIPMENT PROVIDED TO THE GOVERNMENT OF YEMEN BY THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to the investigation and to the extent practicable the recovery of missing weapons and military equipment provided to the Government of Yemen by the United States Government to ensure that such items are not in the possession of or used by radical extremist groups operating in the country by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4413. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO IMPROVING HIGHER EDUCATION DATA AND TRANSPARENCY.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to improving higher education data and transparency by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4414. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO NATIVE CHILDREN.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to Native children or the construction of Bureau of Indian Education schools, which may include replacement school construction, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4415. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR INTERNATIONAL STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to funding for international counter-propaganda communications in order to combat misinformation, undermine ideologies of violence and hatred, and ensure moderate voices are heard by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4416. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND FOR ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to reforming and strengthening elementary and secondary education by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4417. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND TO SUPPORT RESEARCH.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to Federal investments in scientific research and development, which may include supporting biomedical research to find ways to prevent, treat, and cure diseases or conditions like Alzheimer's and other life-threatening or chronic illnesses, providing long-term cost savings to the Federal Government, and supporting national security, basic energy research, innovative solutions, and American competitiveness, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4418. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO SUPPORT FOR UKRAINE.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to providing support to the Government of Ukraine, which may include the provision of lethal defensive articles, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4419. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO UNDERGROUND AND SURFACE MINING SAFETY RESEARCH.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to underground and

surface mining safety research by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4420. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATING TO SAVING MEDICARE.

The Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate may revise the allocations of a committee or committees, aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, motions, or conference reports relating to extending the life of the Federal Hospital Insurance Trust Fund, which may include the creation of a point of order against legislation that accelerates the insolvency of such Trust Fund, by the amounts provided in such legislation for those purposes, provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

Subtitle C—Reserve Funds in the House of Representatives

SEC. 4501. RESERVE FUND FOR THE REPEAL OF THE PRESIDENT'S HEALTH CARE LAW.

In the House of Representatives, the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations, aggregates, and other budgetary levels in this concurrent resolution for the budgetary effects of any bill or joint resolution, or amendment thereto or conference report thereon, that consists solely of the full repeal of the Affordable Care Act and the health care related provisions of the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010.

SEC. 4502. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND FOR PROMOTING REAL HEALTH CARE REFORM.

In the House of Representatives, the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations, aggregates, and other budgetary levels in this concurrent resolution for the budgetary effects of any bill or joint resolution, or amendment thereto or conference report thereon, that promotes real health care reform, if such measure would not increase the deficit for the period of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4503. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND RELATED TO THE MEDICARE PROVISIONS OF THE PRESIDENT'S HEALTH CARE LAW.

In the House of Representatives, the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations, aggregates, and other budgetary levels in this concurrent resolution for the budgetary effects of any bill or joint resolution, or amendment thereto or conference report thereon, that repeals all or part of the decreases in Medicare spending included in the Affordable Care Act or the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010, if such measure would not increase the deficit for the period of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4504. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND FOR THE STATE CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM.

In the House of Representatives, the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations, aggregates, and other budgetary levels in this concurrent resolution for any bill or joint resolution, or amendment thereto or conference report thereon, if such measure extends the State Children's Health Insurance Program, but only if such measure would not increase the deficit over the period of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4505. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND FOR GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION.

In the House of Representatives, the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations, aggregates, and other budgetary levels in this concurrent resolution for any bill or joint resolution, or amendment thereto or conference report thereon, if such measure reforms, expands access to, and improves, as determined by such Chairman, graduate medical education programs, but only if such measure would not increase the deficit over the period of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4506. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND FOR TRADE AGREEMENTS.

In the House of Representatives, the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations, aggregates, and other budgetary levels in this concurrent resolution for the budgetary effects of any bill or joint resolution reported by the Committee on Ways and Means, or amendment thereto or conference report thereon, that implements a trade agreement, but only if such measure would not increase the deficit for the period of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4507. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND FOR REFORMING THE TAX CODE.

In the House of Representatives, if the Committee on Ways and Means reports a bill or joint resolution that reforms the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations, aggregates, and other budgetary levels in this concurrent resolution for the budgetary effects of any such bill or joint resolution, or amendment thereto or conference report thereon, if such measure would not increase the deficit for the period of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4508. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND FOR REVENUE MEASURES.

In the House of Representatives, the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations, aggregates, and other budgetary levels in this concurrent resolution for the budgetary effects of any bill or joint resolution reported by the Committee on Ways and Means, or amendment thereto or conference report thereon, that decreases revenue, but only if such measure would not increase the deficit for the period of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4509. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND FOR TRANSPORTATION.

In the House of Representatives, the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations, aggregates, and other budgetary levels in this concurrent resolution for any bill or joint resolution, or amendment thereto or conference report thereon, if such measure maintains the solvency of the Highway Trust Fund, but only if such measure would not increase the deficit over the period of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4510. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND FOR FEDERAL RETIREMENT REFORM.

In the House of Representatives, the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations, aggregates, and other budgetary levels in this concurrent resolution for any bill or joint resolution, or amendment thereto or conference report thereon, if such measure reforms, improves and updates the Federal retirement system, as determined by such Chairman, but only if such measure would not increase the deficit over the period of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

SEC. 4511. DEFICIT-NEUTRAL RESERVE FUND FOR NATIONAL DEFENSE.

In the House of Representatives, the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget may revise the allocations, aggregates, and other budgetary levels in this concurrent resolution for any bill or joint resolution, or amendment thereto or conference report thereon, if such measure supports the following activities: Department of Defense training and maintenance associated with combat readiness, modernization of equipment, auditability of financial statements, or military compensation and benefit reforms, by the amount provided for these purposes, but only if such measure would not increase the deficit (without counting any net revenue increases in that measure) over the period of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

TITLE V—ESTIMATES OF DIRECT SPENDING IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEC. 5001. DIRECT SPENDING.

(a) MEANS-TESTED DIRECT SPENDING.—

(1) FINDINGS.—The House of Representatives finds the following:

(A) For means-tested direct spending, the average rate of growth in the total level of outlays during the 10-year period preceding fiscal year 2016 is 6.8 percent.

(B) For means-tested direct spending, the estimated average rate of growth in the total level of outlays during the 10-year period beginning with fiscal year 2016 is 4.6 percent under current law.

(2) PROPOSED REFORMS.—The following reforms are proposed under this concurrent resolution by the House of Representatives for means-tested direct spending:

(A) In 1996, a Republican Congress and a Democratic President reformed welfare by limiting the duration of benefits, giving States more control over the program, and helping recipients find work. In the 5 years following passage, child-poverty rates fell, welfare caseloads fell, and workers' wages increased. This budget assumes the enactment of proposals to reduce poverty and increase opportunity and upward mobility for struggling Americans on the road to personal and financial independence. Based on the successful welfare reforms of the 1990s, these proposals would improve work requirements and provide flexible funding for States to help those most in need find gainful employment, escape poverty, and move up the economic ladder.

(B) For Medicaid, this budget is predicated on a framework proposed by the chairmen of the committees of jurisdiction of the House of Representatives and the Senate, to modernize and improve the program while increasing State flexibility and protecting the most vulnerable populations. This budget also assumes the repeal of the Medicaid expansions in the President's health care law.

(b) NONMEANS-TESTED DIRECT SPENDING.—

(1) FINDINGS.—The House of Representatives finds the following:

(A) For nonmeans-tested direct spending, the average rate of growth in the total level of outlays during the 10-year period preceding fiscal year 2016 is 5.4 percent.

(B) For nonmeans-tested direct spending, the estimated average rate of growth in the total level of outlays during the 10-year period beginning with fiscal year 2016 is 5.5 percent under current law.

(2) MEDICARE REFORMS.—For Medicare, this budget advances policies to put seniors, not the Federal Government, in control of their health care decisions. Putting seniors in charge of how their health care dollars are spent will encourage providers to compete against each other on price and quality. Improvements to Medicare are necessary to extend the life of the Federal Hospital Insurance Trust Fund and protect the program for future generations.

TITLE VI—POLICY STATEMENTS

Subtitle A—Policy Statements in Both Houses

SEC. 6101. POLICY STATEMENT ON BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT.

It is the policy of this concurrent resolution that Congress should pass, and send to the States for their approval, a joint resolution amending the Constitution of the United States to require an annual balanced Federal budget.

SEC. 6102. POLICY STATEMENT ON SOCIAL SECURITY.

It is the policy of this concurrent resolution that the President and Congress should work together on a bipartisan basis to preserve Social Security for current and future generations. To achieve that goal—

(1) Congress should enact legislation to prevent the near-term insolvency of the Disability Insurance program, improve the administration

and coordination of benefits, and increase employment opportunities for disabled workers; and

(2) the President should submit legislation to Congress addressing the long-term insolvency of both the Old-Age and Survivors Insurance program and the Disability Insurance program, and such legislation should achieve a sustainable annual cash-flow balance between taxes and benefits over the foreseeable future, rather than temporarily increasing and then depleting the balance of Government securities held by each program's trust fund.

Subtitle B—Policy Statement in the House of Representatives

SEC. 6201. POLICY STATEMENT ON BUDGET PROCESS AND BASELINE REFORM.

(a) FINDINGS.—

(1) In 1974, after more than 50 years of executive dominance over fiscal policy, Congress acted to reassert its ''power of the purse'', and passed the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act.

(2) The measure explicitly sought to establish congressional control over the budget process, to provide for annual congressional determination of the appropriate level of taxes and spending, to set important national budget priorities, and to find ways in which Members of Congress could have access to the most accurate, objective, and highest quality information to assist them in discharging their duties.

(3) Far from achieving its intended purpose, however, the process has instituted a bias toward higher spending and larger government. The behemoth of the Federal Government has largely been financed through either borrowing or taking ever greater amounts of the national income through high taxation.

(4) The process does not treat programs and policies consistently and shows a bias toward higher spending and higher taxes.

(5) It assumes extension of spending programs (of more than $50 million per year) scheduled to expire.

(6) Yet it does not assume the extension of tax policies in the same way. consequently, extending existing tax policies that may be scheduled to expire is characterized as a new tax reduction, requiring offsets to ''pay for'' merely keeping tax policy the same even though estimating conventions would not require similar treatment of spending programs.

(7) The original goals set for the congressional process are admirable in their intent, but because the essential mechanisms of the process have remained the same, and ''reforms'' enacted over the past 40 years have largely taken the form of layering greater levels of legal complexity without reforming or reassessing the very fundamental nature of the process.

(b) POLICY STATEMENT.—It is the policy of this concurrent resolution on the budget that as the primary branch of Government, Congress must:

(1) Restructure the fundamental procedures of budget decision making.

(2) Reassert Congress's ''power of the purse'', and reinforce the balance of powers between Congress and the President, as the 1974 Act intended.

(3) Create greater incentives for lawmakers to do budgeting as intended by the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, especially adopting a budget resolution every year.

(4) Encourage more effective control over spending, especially currently uncontrolled direct spending.

(5) Consider innovative fiscal tools such as: zero based budgeting, which would require a department or agency to justify its budget as if it were a new expenditure; and direct spending caps to enhance oversight of automatic pilot spending that increases each year without congressional approval.

(6) Promote efficient and timely budget actions, so that lawmakers complete their budget actions by the time the new fiscal year begins.

(7) Provide access to the best analysis of economic conditions available and increase awareness of how fiscal policy directly impacts overall economic growth and job creation.

(8) Remove layers of complexity that have complicated the procedures designed in 1974, and made budgeting more arcane and opaque.

(9) Remove existing biases that favor higher spending.

(10) Include procedures by which current tax laws may be extended and treated on a basis that is not different from the extension of entitlement programs.

(c) BUDGET PROCESS REFORM.—Comprehensive budget process reform should also remove the bias in the baseline against the extension of current tax laws in the following ways:

(1) Permanent extension of tax laws should not be used as a means to increase taxes on other taxpayers.

(2) For those expiring tax provisions that are proposed to be permanently extended, Congress should use a more realistic baseline that does not require them to be offset.

(3) Tax-reform legislation should not include tax increases just to offset the extension of current tax laws.

(d) LEGISLATION.—The Committee on the Budget of the House of Representatives intends to draft legislation during the 114th Congress that will rewrite the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 to fulfill the goals of making the congressional budget process more effective in ensuring taxpayers' dollars are spent wisely and efficiently.

SEC. 6202. POLICY STATEMENT ON ECONOMIC GROWTH AND JOB CREATION.

(a) FINDINGS.—The House of Representatives finds the following:

(1) Although the United States economy technically emerged from recession more than 5 years ago, the subsequent recovery has felt more like a malaise than a rebound. Real gross domestic product GDP growth over the past 5 years has averaged slightly more than 2 percent, well below the 3.2 percent historical trend rate of growth in the United States. Although the economy has shown some welcome signs of improvement of late, the Nation remains in the midst of the weakest economic recovery of the modern era.

(2) Looking ahead, CBO expects the economy to grow by an average of just 2.3 percent over the next 10 years. That level of economic growth is simply unacceptable and insufficient to expand opportunities and the incomes of millions of middle-income Americans.

(3) Sluggish economic growth has also contributed to the country's fiscal woes. Subpar growth means that revenue levels are lower than they would otherwise be while government spending (e.g. welfare and income-support programs) is higher. Clearly, there is a dire need for policies that will spark higher rates of economic growth and greater, higher-quality job opportunities.

(4) Although job gains have been trending up of late, other aspects of the labor market remain weak. The labor force participation rate, for instance, is hovering just under 63 percent, close to the lowest level since 1978. Long-term unemployment also remains a problem. Of the roughly 8.7 million people who are currently unemployed, 2.7 million (more than 30 percent) have been unemployed for more than 6 months. Long-term unemployment erodes an individual's job skills and detaches them from job opportunities. It also undermines the long-term productive capacity of the economy.

(5) Perhaps most important, wage gains and income growth have been subpar for middle-class Americans. Average hourly earnings of private-sector workers have increased by just 1.6 percent over the past year. Prior to the recession, average hourly earnings were tracking close to 4 percent. Likewise, average income levels have remained flat in recent years. Real median household income is just under $52,000, one of the lowest levels since 1995.

(6) The unsustainable fiscal trajectory has cast a shadow on the country's economic outlook. investors and businesses make decisions on a forward-looking basis. they know that today's large debt levels are simply tomorrow's tax hikes, interest rate increases, or inflation and they act accordingly. This debt overhang, and the uncertainty it generates, can weigh on growth, investment, and job creation.

(7) Nearly all economists, including those at the CBO, conclude that reducing budget deficits (thereby bending the curve on debt levels is a net positive for economic growth over time. The logic is that deficit reduction creates long-term economic benefits because it increases the pool of national savings and boosts investment, thereby raising economic growth and job creation.

(8) CBO analyzed the House Republican fiscal year 2016 budget resolution and found it would increase real output per capita (a proxy for a country's standard of living) by about $1,000 in 2025 and roughly $5,000 by 2040 relative to the baseline path. That means more income and greater prosperity for all Americans.

(9) In contrast, if the Government remains on the current fiscal path, future generations will face ever-higher debt service costs, a decline in national savings, and a ''crowding out'' of private investment. This dynamic will eventually lead to a decline in economic output and a diminution in our country's standard of living.

(10) The key economic challenge is determining how to expand the economic pie, not how best to divide up and re-distribute a shrinking pie.

(11) A stronger economy is vital to lowering deficit levels and eventually balancing the budget. According to CBO, if annual real GDP growth is just 0.1 percentage point higher over the budget window, deficits would be reduced by $326 billion.

(12) This budget resolution therefore embraces pro-growth policies, such as fundamental tax reform, that will help foster a stronger economy, greater opportunities and more job creation.

(b) POLICY ON ECONOMIC GROWTH AND JOB CREATION.—In the House of Representatives, it is the policy of this concurrent resolution to promote faster economic growth and job creation. By putting the budget on a sustainable path, this concurrent resolution ends the debt-fueled uncertainty holding back job creators. Reforms to the tax code will put American businesses and workers in a better position to compete and thrive in the 21st century global economy. This concurrent resolution targets the regulatory red tape and cronyism that stack the deck in favor of special interests. All of the reforms in this concurrent resolution serve as means to the larger end of helping the economy grow and expanding opportunity for all Americans.

SEC. 6203. POLICY STATEMENT ON TAX REFORM.

(a) FINDINGS.—The House of Representatives finds the following:

(1) A world-class tax system should be simple, fair, and promote (rather than impede) economic growth. The United States tax code fails on all three counts: It is notoriously complex, patently unfair, and highly inefficient. The tax code's complexity distorts decisions to work, save, and invest, which leads to slower economic growth, lower wages, and less job creation.

(2) Over the past decade alone, there have been 4,107 changes to the tax code, more than one per day. Many of the major changes over the years have involved carving out special preferences, exclusions, or deductions for various activities or groups. These loopholes add up to more than $1 trillion per year and make the code unfair, inefficient, and highly complex.

(3) In addition, these tax preferences are disproportionately used by upper-income individuals.

(4) The large amount of tax preferences that pervade the code end up narrowing the tax base. A narrow tax base, in turn, requires much

higher tax rates to raise a given amount of revenue.

(5) It is estimated that American taxpayers end up spending $160 billion and roughly 6 billion hours a year complying with the tax code waste of time and resources that could be used in more productive activities.

(6) Standard economic theory shows that high marginal tax rates dampen the incentives to work, save, and invest, which reduces economic output and job creation. Lower economic output, in turn, mutes the intended revenue gain from higher marginal tax rates.

(7) Roughly half of United States active business income and half of private sector employment are derived from business entities (such as partnerships, S corporations, and sole proprietorships) that are taxed on a ''pass-through'' basis, meaning the income flows through to the tax returns of the individual owners and is taxed at the individual rate structure rather than at the corporate rate. Small businesses, in particular, tend to choose this form for Federal tax purposes, and the top Federal rate on such small business income can reach nearly 45 percent. For these reasons, sound economic policy requires lowering marginal rates on these pass-through entities.

(8) The United States corporate income tax rate (including Federal, State, and local taxes) sums to slightly more than 39 percent, the highest rate in the industrialized world. Tax rates this high suppress wages and discourage investment and job creation, distort business activity, and put American businesses at a competitive disadvantage with foreign competitors.

(9) By deterring potential investment, the United States corporate tax restrains economic growth and job creation. The United States tax rate differential with other countries also fosters a variety of complicated multinational corporate behaviors intended to avoid the tax, which have the effect of moving the tax base offshore, destroying American jobs, and decreasing corporate revenue.

(10) The ''worldwide'' structure of United States international taxation essentially taxes earnings of United States firms twice, putting them at a significant competitive disadvantage with competitors with more competitive international tax systems.

(11) Reforming the United States tax code to a more competitive international system would boost the competitiveness of United States companies operating abroad and it would also greatly reduce tax avoidance.

(12) The tax code imposes costs on American workers through lower wages, on consumers in higher prices, and on investors in diminished returns.

(13) Revenues have averaged about 17.4 percent of the economy throughout modern American history. Revenues rise above this level under current law to 18.3 percent of the economy by the end of the 10-year budget window.

(14) Attempting to raise revenue through new tax increases to meet out-of-control spending would sink the economy and Americans' ability to save for their retirement and their children's education.

(15) This concurrent resolution also rejects the idea of instituting a carbon tax in the United States, which some have offered as a new source of revenue. Such a plan would damage the economy, cost jobs, and raise prices on American consumers.

(16) Closing tax loopholes to fund spending does not constitute fundamental tax reform.

(17) The goal of tax reform should be to curb or eliminate loopholes and use those savings to lower tax rates across the board not to fund more wasteful Government spending. Washington has a spending problem, not a revenue problem.

(18) Many economists believe that fundamental tax reform (i.e. a broader tax base and lower tax rates) would lead to greater labor supply and increased investment, which, over time, would have a positive impact on total national output.

(19) Heretofore, the congressional scorekeepers the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) and the Joint Committee on Taxation (JCT).

(20) Static scoring implicitly assumes that the size of the economy (and therefore key economic variables such as labor supply and investment) remains fixed throughout the considered budget horizon. This is an abstraction from reality.

(21) A new House of Representatives rule was adopted at the beginning of the 114th Congress to help correct this problem. This rule requires CBO and JCT to incorporate the macroeconomic effects of major legislation into their official cost estimates.

(22) This rule seeks to bridge the divide between static estimates and scoring that incorporates economic feedback effects by providing policymakers with a greater amount of information about the likely economic impact of policies under their consideration while at the same time preserving traditional scoring methods and reporting conventions.

(b) POLICY ON TAX REFORM.—In the House of Representatives, it is the policy of this concurrent resolution that Congress should enact legislation that provides for a comprehensive reform of the United States tax code to promote economic growth, create American jobs, increase wages, and benefit American consumers, investors, and workers through fundamental tax reform that—

(1) simplifies the tax code to make it fairer to American families and businesses and reduces the amount of time and resources necessary to comply with tax laws;

(2) substantially lowers tax rates for individuals and consolidates the current seven individual income tax brackets into fewer brackets;

(3) repeals the Alternative Minimum Tax;

(4) reduces the corporate tax rate; and

(5) transitions the tax code to a more competitive system of international taxation.

SEC. 6204. POLICY STATEMENT ON TRADE.

(a) FINDINGS.—The House of Representatives finds the following:

(1) Opening foreign markets to American exports is vital to the United States economy and beneficial to American workers and consumers. The Commerce Department estimates that every $1 billion of United States exports supports more than 5,000 jobs here at home.

(2) The United States can increase economic opportunities for American workers and businesses through the expansion of trade, adherence to trade agreement rules by the United States and its trading partners, and the elimination of foreign trade barriers to United States goods and services.

(3) Trade Promotion Authority is a bipartisan and bicameral effort to strengthen the role of Congress in setting negotiating objectives for trade agreements, to improve consultation with Congress by the Administration, and to provide a clear framework for congressional consideration and implementation of trade agreements.

(4) Global trade and commerce is not a zero-sum game. The idea that global expansion tends to ''hollow out'' United States operations is incorrect. Foreign-affiliate activity tends to complement, not substitute for, key parent activities in the United States such as employment, worker compensation, and capital investment. When United States headquartered multinationals invest and expand operations abroad it often leads to more jobs and economic growth at home.

(5) Trade agreements have saved the average American family of four more than $10,000 per year, as a result of lower duties. Trade agreements also lower the cost of manufacturing inputs by removing duties.

(6) American businesses and workers have shown that, on a level playing field, they can excel and surpass the international competition.

(7) When negotiating trade agreements, United States laws on Intellectual Property (IP) protection should be used as a benchmark for establishing global IP frameworks. Strong IP protections have contributed significantly to the United States status as a world leader in innovation across sectors, including in the development of life-saving biologic medicines. The data protections afforded to biologics in United States law, including 12 years of data protection, allow continued development of pioneering medicines to benefit patients both in the United States and abroad. To maintain the cycle of innovation and achieve truly 21st century trade agreements, it is vital that our negotiators insist on the highest standards for IP protections.

(8) The status quo of the current tax code also undermines the competitiveness of United States businesses and costs the United States economy investment and jobs.

(9) The United States currently has an antiquated system of international taxation whereby United States multinationals operating abroad pay both the foreign-country tax and United States corporate taxes. They are essentially taxed twice. This puts them at an obvious competitive disadvantage. A modern and competitive international tax system would facilitate global commerce for United States multinational companies and would encourage foreign business investment and job creation in the United States.

(10) The ability to defer United States taxes on their foreign operations, which some erroneously refer to as a ''tax loophole,'' cushions this disadvantage to a certain extent. Eliminating or restricting this provision (and others like it) would harm United States competitiveness.

(11) This budget resolution advocates fundamental tax reform that would lower the United States corporate rate, now the highest in the industrialized world, and switch to a more competitive system of international taxation. This would make the United States a much more attractive place to invest and station business activity and would chip away at the incentives for United States companies to keep their profits overseas (because the United States corporate rate is so high).

(b) POLICY ON TRADE.—In the House of Representatives, it is the policy of this concurrent resolution to pursue international trade, global commerce, and a modern and competitive United States international tax system to promote job creation in the United States. The United States should continue to seek increased economic opportunities for American workers and businesses through the expansion of trade opportunities, adherence to trade agreements and rules by the United States and its trading partners, and the elimination of foreign trade barriers to United States goods and services by opening new markets and by enforcing United States rights. To that end, Congress should pass Trade Promotion Authority to strengthen the role of Congress in setting negotiating objectives for trade agreements, to improve consultation with Congress by the Administration, and to provide a clear framework for congressional consideration and implementation of trade agreements.

SEC. 6205. POLICY STATEMENT ON REPEALING THE PRESIDENT'S HEALTH CARE LAW AND PROMOTING REAL HEALTH CARE REFORM.

(a) FINDINGS.—The House of Representatives finds the following:

(1) The President's health care law put Washington's priorities first, and not patients'. The Affordable Care Act (ACA) has failed to reduce health care premiums as promised; instead, the law mandated benefits and coverage levels, denying patients the opportunity to choose the type of coverage that best suits their health needs and driving up health coverage costs. A typical family's health care premiums were supposed to decline by $2,500 a year; instead, according to the 2014 Employer Health Benefits Survey, health care premiums have increased by 7 percent for individuals and families since 2012.

(2) The President pledged, ''If you like your health care plan, you can keep your health care plan.'' Instead, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office now estimates 9 million Americans with employment-based health coverage will lose those plans due to the President's health care law, further limiting patient choice.

(3) Then-Speaker of the House, Pelosi, said that the President's health care law would create 4 million jobs over the life of the law and almost 400,000 jobs immediately. Instead, the Congressional Budget Office estimates that the reduction in hours worked due to Obamacare represents a decline of about 2.0 to 2.5 million full-time equivalent workers, compared with what would have occurred in the absence of the law. The full impact on labor represents a reduction in employment by 1.5 percent to 2.0 percent, while additional studies show less modest results. A recent study by the Mercatus Center at George Mason University estimates that Obamacare will reduce employment by up to 3 percent, or about 4 million full-time equivalent workers.

(4) The President has charged the Independent Payment Advisory Board, a panel of unelected bureaucrats, with cutting Medicare by an additional $20.9 billion over the next ten years, according to the President's most recent budget.

(5) Since ACA was signed into law, the administration has repeatedly failed to implement it as written. The President has unilaterally acted to make a total of 28 changes, delays, and exemptions. The President has signed into law another 17 changes made by Congress. The Supreme Court struck down the forced expansion of Medicaid; ruled the individual ''mandate'' could only be characterized as a tax to remain constitutional; and rejected the requirement that closely held companies provide health insurance to their employees if doing so violates these companies' religious beliefs. Even now, almost five years after enactment, the Supreme Court continues to evaluate the legality of how the President's administration has implemented the law. All of these changes prove the folly underlying the entire program—health care in the United States cannot be run from a centralized bureaucracy.

(6) The President's health care law is unaffordable, intrusive, overreaching, destructive, and unworkable. Its complex structure of subsidies, mandates, and penalties perversely impact individuals, married couples, and families. The law should be fully repealed, allowing for real, patient-centered health care reform: the development of real health care reforms that puts patients first, that make affordable, quality health care available to all Americans, and that build on the innovation and creativity of all the participants in the health care sector.

(b) POLICY ON PROMOTING REAL HEALTH CARE REFORM.—In the House of Representatives, it is the policy of this concurrent resolution that the President's health care law should be fully repealed and real health care reform promoted in accordance with the following principles:

(1) IN GENERAL.—Health care reform should enhance affordability, accessibility, quality, innovation, choices and responsiveness in health care coverage for all Americans, putting patients, families, and doctors in charge, not Washington, DC. These reforms should encourage increased competition and transparency. Under the President's health care law, government controls Americans' health care choices. Under true, patient-centered reform, Americans would.

(2) AFFORDABILITY.—Real reform should be centered on ensuring that all Americans, no matter their age, income, or health status, have the ability to afford health care coverage. The health care delivery structure should be improved, and individuals should not be priced out of the health insurance market due to pre-existing conditions, but nationalized health care is not only unnecessary to accomplish this, it undermines the goal. Individuals should be allowed to join together voluntarily to pool risk through mechanisms such as Individual Membership Associations and Small Employer Membership Associations.

(3) ACCESSABILITY.—Instead of Washington outlining for Americans the ways they cannot use their health insurance, reforms should make health coverage more portable. Individuals should be able to own their insurance and have it follow them in and out of jobs throughout their career. Small business owners should be permitted to band together across State lines through their membership in bona fide trade or professional associations to purchase health coverage for their families and employees at a low cost. This will increase small businesses' bargaining power, volume discounts, and administrative efficiencies while giving them freedom from State-mandated benefit packages. Also, insurers licensed to sell policies in one State should be permitted to offer them to residents in any other State, and consumers should be permitted to shop for health insurance across State lines, as they are with other insurance products online, by mail, by phone, or in consultation with an insurance agent.

(4) QUALITY.—Incentives for providers to deliver high-quality, responsive, and coordinated care will promote patient outcomes and drive down health care costs. Likewise, reforms that work to restore the patient-physician relationship by reducing administrative burdens and allowing physicians to do what they do best—care for patients.

(5) CHOICES.—Individuals and families should be free to secure the health care coverage that best meets their needs, rather than instituting one-size-fits-all directives from Federal bureaucracies such as the Internal Revenue Service, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Independent Payment Advisory Board.

(6) INNOVATION.—Instead of stifling innovation in health care technologies, treatments, medications, and therapies with Federal mandates, taxes, and price controls, a reformed health care system should encourage research, development and innovation.

(7) RESPONSIVENESS.—Reform should return authority to States wherever possible to make the system more responsive to patients and their needs. Instead of tying States' hands with Federal requirements for their Medicaid programs, the Federal Government should return control of this program to the States. Not only does the current Medicaid program drive up Federal debt and threaten to bankrupt State budgets, but States are better positioned to provide quality, affordable care to those who are eligible for the program and to track down and weed out waste, fraud and abuse. Beneficiary choices in the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) and Medicaid should be improved. States should make available the purchase of private insurance as an option to their Medicaid and SCHIP populations (though they should not require enrollment).

(8) REFORMS.—Reforms should be made to prevent lawsuit abuse and curb the practice of defensive medicine, which are significant drivers increasing health care costs. The burden of proof in medical malpractice cases should be based on compliance with best practice guidelines, and States should be free to implement those policies to best suit their needs.

SEC. 6206. POLICY STATEMENT ON MEDICARE.

(a) FINDINGS.—The House of Representatives finds the following:

(1) More than 50 million Americans depend on Medicare for their health security.

(2) The Medicare Trustees Report has repeatedly recommended that Medicare's long-term financial challenges be addressed soon. Each year without reform, the financial condition of Medicare becomes more precarious and the threat to those in or near retirement becomes more pronounced. According to the Medicare Trustees Report—

(A) the Hospital Insurance Trust Fund will be exhausted in 2030 and unable to pay scheduled benefits;

(B) Medicare enrollment is expected to increase by over 50 percent in the next two decades, as 10,000 baby boomers reach retirement age each day;

(C) enrollees remain in Medicare three times longer than at the outset of the program;

(D) current workers' payroll contributions pay for current beneficiaries;

(E) in 2013, the ratio was 3.2 workers per beneficiary, but this falls to 2.3 in 2030 and continues to decrease over time;

(F) most Medicare beneficiaries receive about three dollars in Medicare benefits for every one dollar paid into the program; and

(G) Medicare spending is growing faster than the economy and Medicare outlays are currently rising at a rate of 6.5 percent per year over the next 10 years. According to the Congressional Budget Office's 2014 Long-Term Budget Outlook, spending on Medicare is projected to reach 5 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) by 2043 and 9.3 percent of GDP by 2089.

(3) Failing to address this problem will leave millions of American seniors without adequate health security and younger generations burdened with enormous debt to pay for spending levels that cannot be sustained.

(b) POLICY ON MEDICARE REFORM.—In the House of Representatives, it is the policy of this concurrent resolution to preserve the program for those in or near retirement and strengthen Medicare for future beneficiaries.

(c) ASSUMPTIONS.—This concurrent resolution assumes reform of the Medicare program such that—

(1) current Medicare benefits are preserved for those in or near retirement;

(2) permanent reform of the sustainable growth rate is responsibly accounted for to ensure physicians continue to participate in the Medicare program and provide quality health care for beneficiaries;

(3) when future generations reach eligibility, Medicare is reformed to provide a premium support payment and a selection of guaranteed health coverage options from which recipients can choose a plan that best suits their needs;

(4) Medicare will maintain traditional fee-for-service as a plan option;

(5) Medicare will provide additional assistance for lower income beneficiaries and those with greater health risks; and

(6) Medicare spending is put on a sustainable path and the Medicare program becomes solvent over the long-term.

SEC. 6207. POLICY STATEMENT ON MEDICAL DISCOVERY, DEVELOPMENT, DELIVERY AND INNOVATION.

(a) FINDINGS.—The House of Representatives finds the following:

(1) For decades, the Nation's commitment to the discovery, development, and delivery of new treatments and cures has made the United States the biomedical innovation capital of the world, bringing life-saving drugs and devices to patients and well over a million high-paying jobs to local communities.

(2) Thanks to the visionary and determined leadership of innovators throughout America, including industry, academic medical centers, and the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the United States has led the way in early discovery. The United States leadership role is being threatened, however, as other countries contribute more to basic research from both public and private sources.

(3) The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development predicts that China, for example, will outspend the United States in total research and development by the end of the decade.

(4) Federal policies should foster innovation in health care, not stifle it. America should maintain its world leadership in medical science by encouraging competitive forces to work

through the marketplace in delivering cures and therapies to patients.

(5) Too often the bureaucracy and red-tape in Washington hold back medical innovation and prevent new lifesaving treatments from reaching patients. This concurrent resolution recognizes the valuable role of the NIH and the indispensable contributions to medical research coming from outside Washington.

(6) America is the greatest, most innovative Nation on Earth. Her people are innovators, entrepreneurs, visionaries, and relentless builders of the future. Americans were responsible for the first telephone, the first airplane, the first computer, for putting the first man on the moon, for creating the first vaccine for polio and for legions of other scientific and medical breakthroughs that have improved and prolonged human health and life for countless people in America and around the world.

(b) POLICY ON MEDICAL INNOVATION.—

(1) In the House of Representatives, it is the policy of this concurrent resolution to support the important work of medical innovators throughout the country, including private-sector innovators, medical centers and the National Institutes of Health.

(2) At the same time, the budget calls for continued strong funding for the agencies that engage in valuable research and development, while also urging Washington to get out of the way of researchers, discoverers and innovators all over the country.

SEC. 6208. POLICY STATEMENT ON FEDERAL REGULATORY REFORM.

(a) FINDINGS.—The House of Representatives finds the following:

(1) Excessive regulation at the Federal level has hurt job creation and dampened the economy, slowing the Nation's recovery from the economic recession.

(2) Since President Obama's inauguration in 2009, the administration has issued more than 468,500 pages of regulations in the Federal Register including 70,066 pages in 2014.

(3) The National Association of Manufacturers estimates the total cost of regulations is as high as $2.03 trillion per year. Since 2009, the White House has generated more than $494 billion in regulatory activity, with an additional $87.6 billion in regulatory costs currently pending.

(4) The Dodd-Frank financial services legislation (Public Law 111–203) has resulted in more than $32 billion in compliance costs and saddled job creators with more than 63 million hours of compliance paperwork.

(5) Implementation of the Affordable Care Act to date has added 132.9 million annual hours of compliance paperwork, imposing $24.3 billion of compliance costs on the private sector and an $8 billion cost burden on the States.

(6) The highest regulatory costs come from rules issued by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); these regulations are primarily targeted at the coal industry. In June 2014, the EPA proposed a rule to cut carbon pollution from the Nation's power plants. The proposed standards are unachievable with current commercially available technology, resulting in a de-facto ban on new coal-fired power plants.

(7) Coal-fired power plants provide roughly 40 percent of the United States electricity at a low cost. Unfairly targeting the coal industry with costly and unachievable regulations will increase energy prices, disproportionately disadvantaging energy-intensive industries like manufacturing and construction, and will make life more difficult for millions of low-income and middle class families already struggling to pay their bills.

(8) Three hundred and thirty coal units are being retired or converted as a result of EPA regulations. Combined with the de-facto prohibition on new plants, these retirements and conversions may further increase the cost of electricity.

(9) A recent study by the energy market analysis group Energy Ventures Analysis Inc. estimates the average energy bill in West Virginia will rise $750 per household by 2020, due in part to EPA regulations. West Virginia receives 95 percent of its electricity from coal.

(10) The Heritage Foundation found that a phase-out of coal would cost 600,000 jobs by the end of 2023, resulting in an aggregate gross domestic product decrease of $2.23 trillion over the entire period and reducing the income of a family of four by $1,200 per year. Of these jobs, 330,000 will come from the manufacturing sector, with California, Texas, Ohio, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Michigan, New York, Indiana, North Carolina, Wisconsin, and Georgia seeing the highest job losses.

(b) POLICY ON FEDERAL REGULATORY REFORM.—In the House of Representatives, it is the policy of this concurrent resolution that Congress should, in consultation with the public burdened by excessive regulation, enact legislation that—

(1) promotes economic growth and job creation by eliminating unnecessary red tape and streamlining and simplifying Federal regulations;

(2) requires the implementation of a regulatory budget to be allocated amongst Government agencies, which would require congressional approval and limit the maximum costs of regulations in a given year;

(3) requires congressional approval of all new major regulations (those with an impact of $100 million or more) before enactment as opposed to current law in which Congress must expressly disapprove of regulation to prevent it from becoming law, which would keep Congress engaged as to pending regulatory policy and prevent costly and unsound policies from being implemented and becoming effective;

(4) requires a three year retrospective cost-benefit analysis of all new major regulations, to ensure that regulations operate as intended;

(5) reinforces the requirement of regulatory impact analysis for regulations proposed by executive branch agencies but also expands the requirement to independent agencies so that by law they consider the costs and benefits of proposed regulations rather than merely being encouraged to do so as is current practice; and

(6) requires a formal rulemaking process for all major regulations, which would increase transparency over the process and allow interested parties to communicate their views on proposed legislation to agency officials.

SEC. 6209. POLICY STATEMENT ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY.

(a) FINDINGS ON HIGHER EDUCATION.—The House of Representatives finds the following:

(1) A well-educated workforce is critical to economic, job, and wage growth.

(2) Roughly 20 million students are enrolled in American colleges and universities.

(3) Over the past decade, tuition and fees have been growing at an unsustainable rate. Between the 2004–2005 Academic Year and the 2014–2015 Academic Year—

(A) published tuition and fees at public 4-year colleges and universities increased at an average rate of 3.5 percent per year above the rate of inflation;

(B) published tuition and fees at public two-year colleges and universities increased at an average rate of 2.5 percent per year above the rate of inflation; and

(C) published tuition and fees at private non-profit 4-year colleges and universities increased at an average rate of 2.2 percent per year above the rate of inflation.

(4) Federal financial aid for higher education has also seen a dramatic increase. The portion of the Federal student aid portfolio composed of Direct Loans, Federal Family Education Loans, and Perkins Loans with outstanding balances grew by 119 percent between fiscal year 2007 and fiscal year 2014.

(5) This spending has failed to make college more affordable.

(6) In his 2012 State of the Union Address, President Obama noted: ''We can't just keep subsidizing skyrocketing tuition; we'll run out of money''.

(7) American students are chasing ever-increasing tuition with ever-increasing debt. According to the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, student debt now stands at nearly $1.2 trillion. This makes student loans the second largest balance of consumer debt, after mortgage debt.

(8) Students are carrying large debt loads and too many fail to complete college or end up defaulting on these loans due to their debt burden and a weak economy and job market.

(9) Based on estimates from the Congressional Budget Office, the Pell Grant Program will face a fiscal shortfall beginning in fiscal year 2017 and continuing in each subsequent year in the current budget window.

(10) Failing to address these problems will jeopardize access and affordability to higher education for America's young people.

(b) POLICY ON HIGHER EDUCATION AFFORDABILITY.—In the House of Representatives, it is the policy of this concurrent resolution to address the root drivers of tuition inflation, by—

(1) targeting Federal financial aid to those most in need;

(2) streamlining programs that provide aid to make them more effective;

(3) maintaining the maximum Pell grant award level at $5,775 in each year of the budget window; and

(4) removing regulatory barriers in higher education that act to restrict flexibility and innovative teaching, particularly as it relates to non-traditional models such as online coursework and competency-based learning.

(c) FINDINGS ON WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT.—The House of Representatives finds the following:

(1) 8.7 million Americans are currently unemployed.

(2) Despite billions of dollars in spending, those looking for work are stymied by a broken workforce development system that fails to connect workers with assistance and employers with trained personnel.

(3) The House Education and Workforce Committee successfully consolidated 15 job training programs in the recently enacted Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

(d) POLICY ON WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT.—In the House of Representatives, it is the policy of this concurrent resolution to address the failings in the current workforce development system, by—

(1) further streamlining and consolidating Federal job training programs; and

(2) empowering states with the flexibility to tailor funding and programs to the specific needs of their workforce, including the development of career scholarships.

SEC. 6210. POLICY STATEMENT ON DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) FINDINGS.—The House of Representatives finds the following:

(1) For years, there has been serious concern regarding the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) bureaucratic mismanagement and continuous failure to provide veterans timely access to health care and benefits.

(2) In 2014, reports started breaking across the Nation that VA medical centers were manipulating wait-list documents to hide long delays veterans were facing to receive health care. The VA hospital scandal led to the immediate resignation of then-Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki.

(3) In 2015, for the first time ever, VA health care was added to the ''high-risk'' list of the Government Accountability Office (GAO), due to management and oversight failures that have directly resulted in risks to the timeliness, cost-effectiveness, and quality of health care.

(4) In response to the scandal, the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs held several oversight hearings and ultimately enacted the Veterans' Access, Choice and Accountability Act of

2014 (VACAA) (Public Law 113–146) to address these problems. VACAA provided $15 billion in emergency resources to fund internal health care needs within the department and provided veterans enhanced access to private-sector health care under the new Veterans Choice Program.

(b) POLICY ON THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.—This budget supports the continued oversight efforts by the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives to ensure the VA is not only transparent and accountable, but also successful in achieving its goals in providing timely health care and benefits to America's veterans. The Committee on the Budget of the House of Representatives will continue to closely monitor the VA's progress to ensure resources provided by Congress are sufficient and efficiently used to provide needed benefits and services to veterans.

SEC. 6211. POLICY STATEMENT ON FEDERAL ACCOUNTING METHODOLOGIES.

(a) FINDINGS.—The House of Representatives finds the following:

(1) Given the thousands of Federal programs and trillions of dollars the Federal Government spends each year, assessing and accounting for Federal fiscal activities and liabilities is a complex undertaking.

(2) Current methods of accounting leave much to be desired in capturing the full scope of government and in presenting information in a clear and compelling way that illuminates the best options going forward.

(3) Most fiscal analysis produced by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) is conducted over a relatively short time horizon: 10 or 25 years. While this time frame is useful for most purposes, it fails to consider the fiscal consequences over the longer term.

(4) Additionally, current accounting methodology does not provide an analysis of how the Federal Government's fiscal situation over the long run affects Americans of various age cohorts.

(5) Another consideration is how Federal programs should be accounted for. The ''accrual method'' of accounting records revenue when it is earned and expenses when they are incurred, while the ''cash method'' records revenue and expenses when cash is actually paid or received.

(6) The Federal budget accounts for most programs using cash accounting. Some programs, however, particularly loan and loan guarantee programs, are accounted for using accrual methods.

(7) GAO has indicated that accrual accounting may provide a more accurate estimation of the Federal Government's liabilities than cash accounting for some programs specifically those that provide some form of insurance.

(8) Where accrual accounting is used, it is almost exclusively calculated by CBO according to the methodology outlined in the Federal Credit Reform Act of 1990 (FCRA). CBO uses fair value methodology instead of FCRA to measure the cost of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, for example.

(9) FCRA methodology, however, understates the risk and thus the true cost of Federal programs. An alternative is fair value methodology, which uses discount rates that incorporate the risk inherent to the type of liability being estimated in addition to Treasury discount rates of the proper maturity length.

(10) The Congressional Budget Office has concluded that ''adopting a fair-value approach would provide a more comprehensive way to measure the costs of Federal credit programs and would permit more level comparisons between those costs and the costs of other forms of federal assistance'' than the current approach under FCRA.

(b) POLICY ON FEDERAL ACCOUNTING METHODOLOGIES.—In the House of Representatives, it is the policy of this concurrent resolution that Congress should, in consultation with the Congressional Budget Office and the public affected by Federal budgetary choices, adopt Government-wide reforms of budget and accounting practices so the American people and their representatives can more readily understand the fiscal situation of the Government of the United States and the options best suited to improving it. Such reforms may include but should not be limited to the following:

(1) Providing additional metrics to enhance our current analysis by considering our fiscal situation comprehensively, over an extended time horizon, and as it affects Americans of various age cohorts.

(2) Expanding the use of accrual accounting where appropriate.

(3) Accounting for certain Federal credit programs using fair value accounting as opposed to the current approach under the Federal Credit Reform Act of 1990.

SEC. 6212. POLICY STATEMENT ON REDUCING UNNECESSARY, WASTEFUL, AND UNAUTHORIZED SPENDING.

(a) FINDINGS.—The House of Representatives finds the following:

(1) The Government Accountability Office (GAO) is required by law to identify examples of waste, duplication, and overlap in Federal programs, and has so identified dozens of such examples.

(2) In its report to Congress on Government Efficiency and Effectiveness, the Comptroller General has stated that addressing the identified waste, duplication, and overlap in Federal programs could ''lead to tens of billions of dollars of additional savings.''.

(3) In 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014 the GAO issued reports showing excessive duplication and redundancy in Federal programs including—

(A) two hundred nine Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics education programs in 13 different Federal agencies at a cost of $3 billion annually;

(B) two hundred separate Department of Justice crime prevention and victim services grant programs with an annual cost of $3.9 billion in 2010;

(C) twenty different Federal entities administer 160 housing programs and other forms of Federal assistance for housing with a total cost of $170 billion in 2010;

(D) seventeen separate Homeland Security preparedness grant programs that spent $37 billion between fiscal years 2011 and 2012;

(E) fourteen grant and loan programs, and three tax benefits to reduce diesel emissions;

(F) ninety-four different initiatives run by 11 different agencies to encourage ''green building'' in the private sector; and

(G) twenty-three agencies implemented approximately 670 renewable energy initiatives in fiscal year 2010 at a cost of nearly $15 billion.

(4) The Federal Government spends more than $80 billion each year for approximately 1,400 information technology investments. GAO has identified broad acquisition failures, waste, and unnecessary duplication in the Government's information technology infrastructure. experts have estimated that eliminating these problems could save 25 percent or $20 billion.

(5) GAO has identified strategic sourcing as a potential source of spending reductions. In 2011 GAO estimated that saving 10 percent of the total or all Federal procurement could generate more than $50 billion in savings annually.

(6) Federal agencies reported an estimated $106 billion in improper payments in fiscal year 2013.

(7) Under clause 2 of rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives, each standing committee must hold at least one hearing during each 120 day period following its establishment on waste, fraud, abuse, or mismanagement in Government programs.

(8) According to the Congressional Budget Office, by fiscal year 2015, 32 laws will expire, possibly resulting in $693 billion in unauthorized appropriations. Timely reauthorizations of these laws would ensure assessments of program justification and effectiveness.

(9) The findings resulting from congressional oversight of Federal Government programs should result in programmatic changes in both authorizing statutes and program funding levels.

(b) POLICY ON REDUCING UNNECESSARY, WASTEFUL, AND UNAUTHORIZED SPENDING.—

(1) Each authorizing committee of the House of Representatives annually should include in its Views and Estimates letter required under section 301(d) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 recommendations to the Committee on the Budget of the House of Representatives of programs within the jurisdiction of such committee whose funding should be reduced or eliminated.

(2) Committees of jurisdiction should review all unauthorized programs funded through annual appropriations to determine if the programs are operating efficiently and effectively.

(3) Committees should reauthorize those programs that in the committees' judgment should continue to receive funding.

(4) For those programs not reauthorized by committees, the House of Representatives should enforce the limitations on funding such unauthorized programs in the House rules. If the strictures of the rules are deemed to be too rapid in prohibiting spending on unauthorized programs, then milder measures should be adopted and enforced until a return to the full prohibition of clause 2(a)(1) of rule XXI of the Rules of the House.

SEC. 6213. POLICY STATEMENT ON DEFICIT REDUCTION THROUGH THE CANCELLATION OF UNOBLIGATED BALANCES.

(a) FINDINGS.—The House of Representatives finds the following:

(1) According to the most recent estimate from the Office of Management and Budget, Federal agencies were expected to hold $844 billion in unobligated balances at the close of fiscal year 2015.

(2) These funds represent direct and discretionary spending previously made available by Congress that remains available for expenditure.

(3) In some cases, agencies are granted funding and it remains available for obligation indefinitely.

(4) The Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 requires the Office of Management and Budget to make funds available to agencies for obligation and prohibits the Administration from withholding or cancelling unobligated funds unless approved by an Act of Congress.

(5) Greater congressional oversight is required to review and identify potential savings from canceling unobligated balances of funds that are no longer needed.

(b) POLICY ON DEFICIT REDUCTION THROUGH THE CANCELLATION OF UNOBLIGATED BALANCES.—In the House of Representatives, committees should through their oversight activities identify and achieve savings through the cancellation or rescission of unobligated balances that neither abrogate contractual obligations of the Government nor reduce or disrupt Federal commitments under programs such as Social Security, veterans' affairs, national security, and Treasury authority to finance the national debt.

(c) DEFICIT REDUCTION.—The House of Representatives, with the assistance of the Government Accountability Office, the Inspectors General, and other appropriate agencies should continue to make it a high priority to review unobligated balances and identify savings for deficit reduction.

SEC. 6214. POLICY STATEMENT ON AGENCY FEES AND SPENDING.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) A number of Federal agencies and organizations have permanent authority to collect fees and other offsetting collections and to spend these collected funds.

(2) The total amount of offsetting fees and offsetting collections is estimated by the Office of

Management and Budget to be $525 billion in fiscal year 2016.

(3) Agency budget justifications are, in some cases, not fully transparent about the amount of program activity funded through offsetting collections or fees. This lack of transparency prevents effective and accountable government.

(b) POLICY ON AGENCY FEES AND SPENDING.—In the House of Representatives, it is the policy of this concurrent resolution that Congress must reassert its constitutional prerogative to control spending and conduct oversight. To do so, Congress should enact legislation requiring programs that are funded through fees, offsetting receipts, or offsetting collections to be allocated new budget authority annually. Such allocation may arise from—

(1) legislation originating from the authorizing committee of jurisdiction for the agency or program; or

(2) fee and account specific allocations included in annual appropriation Acts.

SEC. 6215. POLICY STATEMENT ON RESPONSIBLE STEWARDSHIP OF TAXPAYER DOLLARS.

(a) FINDINGS.—The House of Representatives finds the following:

(1) The budget for the House of Representatives is $188 million less than it was when Republicans became the majority in 2011.

(2) The House of Representatives has achieved significant savings by consolidating operations and renegotiating contracts.

(b) POLICY ON RESPONSIBLE STEWARDSHIP OF TAXPAYER DOLLARS.—In the House of Representatives, it is the policy of this concurrent resolution that:

(1) The House of Representatives must be a model for the responsible stewardship of taxpayer resources and therefore must identify any savings that can be achieved through greater productivity and efficiency gains in the operation and maintenance of House services and resources like printing, conferences, utilities, telecommunications, furniture, grounds maintenance, postage, and rent. This should include a review of policies and procedures for acquisition of goods and services to eliminate any unnecessary spending. The Committee on House Administration should review the policies pertaining to the services provided to Members and committees of the House of Representatives, and should identify ways to reduce any subsidies paid for the operation of the House gym, barber shop, salon, and the House dining room.

(2) No taxpayer funds may be used to purchase first class airfare or to lease corporate jets for Members of Congress.

(3) Retirement benefits for Members of Congress should not include free, taxpayer-funded health care for life.

SEC. 6216. POLICY STATEMENT ON "NO BUDGET, NO PAY".

In the House of Representatives, it is the policy of this concurrent resolution that Congress should agree to a concurrent resolution on the budget every year pursuant to section 301 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974. If by April 15, the House of Representatives has not agreed to a concurrent resolution on the budget, the payroll administrator of the House of Representatives should carry out this policy in the same manner as the provisions of Public Law 113–3, the No Budget, No Pay Act of 2013, and should place in an escrow account all compensation otherwise required to be made for Members of the House of Representatives. Withheld compensation should be released to Members of the House of Representatives the earlier of the day on which the House of Representatives agrees to a concurrent resolution on the budget, pursuant to section 301 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, or the last day of that Congress.

SEC. 6217. POLICY STATEMENT ON NATIONAL SECURITY FUNDING.

(a) FINDINGS.—The House of Representatives finds the following:

(1) Russian aggression, the growing threats of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant in the Middle East, North Korean and Iranian nuclear and missile programs, and continued Chinese investments in high-end military capabilities and cyber warfare shape the parameters of an increasingly complex and challenging security environment.

(2) All four current service chiefs testified that the National Military Strategy could not be executed at sequestration levels.

(3) The independent and bipartisan National Defense Panel conducted risk assessments of force structure changes triggered by the Budget Control Act of 2011 (BCA) and concluded that in addition to previous cuts to defense dating back to 2009, the sequestration of defense discretionary spending has ''caused significant shortfalls in U.S. military readiness and both present and future capabilities''.

(4) The President's fiscal year 2016 budget irresponsibly ignores current law and requests a defense budget $38 billion above the caps for rhetorical gain. By creating an expectation of spending without a plan to avoid the BCA's guaranteed sequester upon breaching of its caps, the White House's proposal compounds the fiscal uncertainty that has affected the military's ability to adequately plan for future contingencies and make investments crucial for the Nation's defense.

(5) The President's budget proposes $1.8 trillion in tax increases, in addition to the $1.7 trillion in tax hikes the Administration has already imposed. The President's tax increases would further burden economic growth and is not a realistic source for offsets to fund defense sequester replacement.

(b) POLICY ON FISCAL YEAR 2016 NATIONAL DEFENSE FUNDING.—In fiscal year 2015, the House-passed budget resolution anticipated $566 billion for national defense in the discretionary base budget for fiscal year 2016. With no necessary statutory change yet provided by Congress, the BCA statute would require limiting national defense discretionary base funding to $523 billion in fiscal year 2016. However, in total with $90 billion, the House of Representatives Budget estimate for Overseas Contingency Operations funding for the Department of Defense, the fiscal year 2016 budget provides over $613 billion total for defense spending that is higher than the President's budget request for the fiscal year.

(c) DEFENSE READINESS AND MODERNIZATION FUND.—(1) The budget resolution recognizes the need to ensure robust funding for national defense while maintaining overall fiscal discipline. The budget resolution prioritizes our national defense and the needs of the warfighter by providing needed dollars through the creation of the ''Defense Readiness and Modernization Fund''.

(2) The Defense Readiness and Modernization Fund provides the mechanism for Congress to responsibly allocate in a deficit-neutral way the resources the military needs to secure the safety and liberty of United States citizens from threats at home and abroad. The Defense Readiness and Modernization Fund will provide the chair of the Committee on the Budget of the House of Representatives the ability to increase allocations to support legislation that would provide for the Department of Defense warfighting capabilities, modernization, training and maintenance associated with combat readiness, activities to reach full auditability of the Department of Defense's financial statements, and implementation of military and compensation reforms.

(d) SEQUESTER REPLACEMENT FOR NATIONAL DEFENSE.—This concurrent resolution encourages an immediate reevaluation of Federal Government priorities to maintain the strength of America's national security posture. In identifying policies to restructure and stabilize the Government's major entitlement programs which, along with net interest, will consume all Federal revenue in less than 20 years, the budget also charts a course that can ensure the availability of needed national security resources.

And the House agree to the same.

TOM PRICE,
TODD ROKITA,
MARIO DIAZ-BALART,
DIANE BLACK,
JOHN R. MOOLENAAR,
Managers on the Part of the House.

MICHAEL B. ENZI,
CHUCK GRASSLEY,
JEFF SESSIONS,
MIKE CRAPO,
LINDSEY GRAHAM,
ROB PORTMAN,
PATRICK J. TOOMEY,
RON JOHNSON,
KELLY AYOTTE,
ROGER F. WICKER,
BOB CORKER,
DAVID PERDUE,
Managers on the Part of the Senate.

JOINT EXPLANATORY STATEMENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF CONFERENCE

The managers on the part of the House and the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the House to the concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 11), setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2016 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2017 through 2025, submit the following joint statement to the House and the Senate in explanation of the effect of the action agreed upon by the managers and recommended in the accompanying conference report:

Joint Explanatory Statement of the Committee on Conference

The conference agreement between the Senate and the House on the fiscal year 2016 budget resolution is a statement of good faith to the American people that Congress can govern responsibly and effectively. This budget agreement achieves five important objectives:

It balances the budget within 10 years to address the problem of government overspending and rising debt.

It balances solely by limiting government spending, not by raising taxes, thereby boosting the private sector economy and job creation.

It provides a path through reconciliation to repeal the Affordable Care Act with its burdensome mandates and restrictions, a first step toward introducing real, patient-centered health care reform.

It makes national defense a priority and provides for the maximum allowable defense funding under current law, with a fiscally responsible path for further spending increases.

It calls for a return to regular order in Congress, allowing all committees to act fully and Appropriations Committees to consider spending bills on time.

It is well known that a budget is more than a set of numbers. It is a reflection of national priorities, a vision of the future. When developed in a responsible way, a sound Federal budget can provide a foundation for moving America in the direction of greater opportunity and economic growth and a safer and more secure Nation.

In writing this budget, Congress is restoring a priority neglected since fiscal year 2010. Moreover, in writing a 10-year balanced budget, the House and Senate Budget Committees have accomplished something the President's budget never does and that Congress last achieved in fiscal year 2002—nearly 15 years ago. Passing this budget will also let

the congressional policymakers who actually allocate the dollars get to work and observe its spending limits to achieve the Nation's goals.

The agreement presents a responsible path forward to reduce the Nation's debt burden and expand economic opportunity for all Americans. In meeting the goals cited above, the budget aims to restore public trust by eliminating wasteful Washington overspending; making government truly more effective and more accountable; protecting America's most vulnerable citizens; and strengthening the health and retirement of the Nation's seniors. It ensures taxpayers' dollars are spent more wisely, and that Medicare, Medicaid, nutrition assistance, and other programs can deliver on their promises. While providing a sturdy and reliable safety net for those who need it, this budget also helps others break free of government dependency and pursue self-sufficiency.

The budget's deficit reduction also will have tangible benefits for the economy. The Congressional Budget Office [CBO] has analyzed how the funding changes contained in the conference report likely would affect U.S. economic performance, finding that the fully implemented spending levels of the budget resolution conference report would improve the economy. Specifically, the budget office found that: a) per capita real gross national product [GNP], a proxy for a country's standard of living, would be 1.4 percent higher in 2025 than it would be without the spending changes; and b) nominal GDP would be $400 billion higher by fiscal year 2025 than it would otherwise be.

On the current fiscal trajectory, which is marked by rising debt levels as a share of the economy, government borrowing would eventually lead to a decline in national savings and a ''crowding out'' of private investment. Crowding out occurs when the Federal Government's borrowing competes successfully with that of private borrowers. Not only can the Federal Government command credit resources more readily, thanks to its generally superior rating for default risk when compared with private borrowers, but excessive borrowing can put upward pressure on interest rates that private borrowers must pay. Less credit available in private lending markets could mean higher prices for Americans as borrowers.

CBO's analysis of the conference agreement indicates that deficit reduction also creates long-term economic benefits because it increases the pool of national savings and boosts private investment, thereby raising economic growth and job creation. CBO estimates that the conference agreement would maintain budget balance in the years beyond the budget window and significantly reduce Federal debt held by the public as a percent of GDP. To put this in perspective, publicly held debt to GDP currently stands at 74 percent, its highest level since 1951, and is projected to rise steadily in the decades ahead under CBO's extended current law baseline. CBO estimates that the conference agreement would reduce debt as a percent of GDP to 56 percent in 2025 and ultimately to about 20 percent in 2040.

A congressional budget develops in stages, of which a concurrent resolution on the budget agreed to by the House and Senate is the first. The resolution establishes a framework for fiscal policy and proposes an alignment of resources with Congress's governing priorities. It is the only legislative vehicle that reflects a global assessment of the governing majority's priorities and the demands on Federal resources. Subsequently, respective committees of jurisdiction develop, in accordance with their judgments, policy reforms needed to achieve the budget's fiscal aims, guided by the budget's aggregates and recommended function levels, as presented later in this statement.

The managers on the part of the House and the Senate of the conference on the votes in disagreement between the Houses on the concurrent resolution establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2016, and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2017 through 2025 (S. Con. Res. 11) submit the following joint statement to the House and the Senate in explanation of the effect of the action agreed upon by the managers and recommended in the accompanying conference report.

The House amendment struck all of the Senate concurrent resolution after the resolving clause and inserted the text of H. Con. Res. 27.

The Senate recedes from its disagreement to the amendment of the House with an amendment that is a substitute for the Senate concurrent resolution and the House amendment. The differences among the Senate concurrent resolution, the House amendment thereto, and the substitute agreed to in conference are noted below, except for clerical corrections, conforming changes made necessary by agreements reached by the conferees, and minor drafting and clarifying changes.

Conferees on the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2016 met in public session on Monday, April 20, 2015.

DISPLAYS AND AMOUNTS

The required contents of concurrent budget resolutions are set forth in section 301(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974. The years in this document are fiscal years unless otherwise noted.

Each function discussion provides recommended function totals for budget authority and outlays, as well as a breakout of discretionary (annually appropriated) and direct (or mandatory) spending amounts for fiscal year 2016. These figures are not binding; they are intended to provide an overall accounting of estimated spending requirements and priorities according to major categories of government activities. Figures for the Senate resolution and the House amendment are based on CBO's January 2015 baseline; conference agreement numbers are based on CBO's March 2015 baseline, adjusted for the enactment of H.R. 2.

SENATE RESOLUTION

The Senate concurrent resolution includes all of the items required under Section 301(a) of the Congressional Budget Act.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

The House amendment includes all of the items required as part of a concurrent budget resolution under section 301(a) of the Congressional Budget Act other than the spending and revenue levels for Social Security Retirement and Disability (which are used to enforce a point of order applicable only in the Senate). It also adds three additional separate budget functions: Government-Wide Savings (930); Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism (970); and Across-the-Board Adjustment (990).

Discussion of the governing principles underlying the budget's recommended policy reforms can be found in House Report 114–47 accompanying H. Con. Res. 27, the House Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2016.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

The conference agreement includes all of the items required under Section 301(a) of the Congressional Budget Act, and adds one separate budget function: Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism (970).

AGGREGATE AND FUNCTION LEVELS

The following tables are included in this section:

Table 1.—Economic Assumptions for the Conference Agreement

Table 2.—FY 2016 Budget Resolution Conference Agreement Summary

Table 3.—FY 2016 Budget Resolution Conference Agreement Budget Aggregates

Table 4.—FY 2016 Budget Resolution Conference Agreement Discretionary Budget Authority

Table 5.—FY 2016 Budget Resolution Conference Agreement Mandatory Outlays

Table 6.—FY 2016 Budget Resolution Conference Agreement Aggregate and Function Levels

Table 7.—FY 2016 Budget Resolution as Passed by the Senate

Table 8.—Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Resolution Total Spending and Revenue, as Passed by the House

Table 9.—Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Resolution Discretionary Spending, as Passed by the House

Table 10.—Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Resolution Mandatory Spending, as Passed by the House

ECONOMIC ASSUMPTIONS

Section 301(g)(2) of the Congressional Budget Act requires that the joint explanatory statement accompanying a conference report on a budget resolution set forth the common economic assumptions upon which the joint statement and conference report are based. The conference agreement is built upon the economic forecasts development by the Congressional Budget Office and presented in CBO's ''Updated Budget Projections: 2015 to 2015,'' (March 9, 2015).

SENATE RESOLUTION

The Senate resolution employed CBO's economic assumptions published in January 2015.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

The House amendment uses CBO's economic assumptions published in January 2015.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

The conference agreement uses CBO's economic assumption published in March 2015.

TABLE 1.—ECONOMIC ASSUMPTIONS FOR THE CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

[Fiscal year]

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Gross Domestic Product (GDP):											
Billions of dollars	18,016	18,832	19,701	20,558	21,404	22,315	23,271	24,262	25,287	26,352	27,456
Percentage change	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.4	4.1	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.2	4.2
Real GDP:											
Billions of 2009 dollars	16,405	16,893	17,361	17,763	18,127	18,524	18,934	19,346	19,762	20,180	20,603
Percentage change	2.7	3.0	2.8	2.3	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.1	2.1

TABLE 1.—ECONOMIC ASSUMPTIONS FOR THE CONFERENCE AGREEMENT—Continued

[Fiscal year]

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Consumer Price Index, All Urban Consumers (CPI–U):											
1982–84=100	238.6	243.3	248.9	254.7	260.7	267.0	273.5	280.2	287.0	294.0	301.0
Percentage change	1.1	2.0	2.3	2.4	2.3	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4
Price Index, Personal Consumption Expenditures (PCE):											
2009=100	109.7	111.6	113.7	116.0	118.3	120.7	123.1	125.6	128.1	130.7	133.3
Percentage change	1.1	1.7	1.9	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Unemployment Rate, Civilian, 16 Years or Older:											
Percent	5.6	5.4	5.4	5.3	5.4	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.4	5.4	5.4
Employment, Total Nonfarm (Establishment Survey):											
Millions	141	143	144	146	146	147	148	149	150	151	152
Percentage change	2.0	1.4	1.1	0.8	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6
10-Year Treasury Note:											
Percent	2.6	3.2	3.8	4.1	4.4	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.6
Income, Personal:											
Billions of dollars	15,183	15,905	16,682	17,508	18,331	19,195	20,125	21,059	22,007	23,003	24,054
Percentage of GDP	84.3	84.5	84.7	85.2	85.6	86.0	86.5	86.8	87.0	87.3	87.6

FUNCTIONS AND REVENUES

TABLE 2.—FY 2016 BUDGET RESOLUTION CONFERENCE AGREEMENT SUMMARY

[Fiscal year, $ billions]

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2016–20	2016–25
Conference Levels:												
Outlays	3,871	3,808	3,846	4,027	4,210	4,365	4,581	4,695	4,774	5,006	19,761	43,183
Revenues	3,471	3,602	3,729	3,875	4,035	4,211	4,395	4,596	4,806	5,030	18,711	41,750
Deficit(+)/Surplus(−)	400	206	117	152	176	153	186	99	−32	−24	1,050	1,432
Debt held by the public	13,842	14,124	14,307	14,523	14,757	14,965	15,204	15,354	15,374	15,405		
As a Share of GDP: [a]												
Outlays	20.6%	19.4%	18.8%	18.8%	18.8%	18.7%	18.8%	18.5%	18.0%	18.1%	19.3%	18.8%
Revenues	18.5%	18.4%	18.2%	18.1%	18.0%	18.1%	18.0%	18.1%	18.1%	18.2%	18.2%	18.2%
Deficit(+)/Surplus(−)	2.1%	1.0%	0.6%	0.7%	0.8%	0.7%	0.8%	0.4%	−0.1%	−0.1%	1.0%	0.7%
Debt held by the public	73.6%	72.1%	69.8%	67.9%	65.9%	64.2%	62.3%	60.5%	58.0%	55.6%	n.a.	n.a.

[a] In 2016–20 and 2016–25 columns, percentages reflect five- and ten-year averages, respectively.

TABLE 3.—FY 2016 BUDGET RESOLUTION CONFERENCE AGREEMENT BUDGET AGGREGATES

[Fiscal year, $ billions]

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2016–20	2016–25
Discretionary:												
Defense (regular BA) [a]	523	536	549	562	576	590	623	636	649	662	2,746	5,906
Nondefense (regular BA) [a]	493	477	478	487	495	503	509	515	521	527	2,431	5,006
Total Discretionary:												
BA	1,120	1,085	1,097	1,113	1,128	1,148	1,132	1,151	1,170	1,189	5,542	11,332
OT	1,206	1,167	1,148	1,157	1,167	1,182	1,181	1,176	1,180	1,200	5,845	11,764
% change (BA) [b]	−0.2%	−3.1%	1.1%	1.5%	1.3%	1.8%	−1.4%	1.7%	1.7%	1.6%	0.1%	0.6%
Mandatory (OT)	2,390	2,316	2,311	2,431	2,559	2,667	2,853	2,943	2,997	3,196	12,007	26,662
% change [b]	4.8%	−3.1%	−0.2%	5.2%	5.3%	4.2%	7.0%	3.2%	1.8%	6.6%	2.3%	3.4%
Net interest (OT)	275	325	387	438	484	516	548	576	598	611	1,910	4,757
% change [b]	20.4%	18.0%	19.1%	13.3%	10.4%	6.5%	6.3%	5.2%	3.8%	2.1%	16.2%	10.3%
Total outlays	3,871	3,808	3,846	4,027	4,210	4,365	4,581	4,695	4,774	5,006	19,761	43,183
% change [b]	5.1%	−1.6%	1.0%	4.7%	4.6%	3.7%	5.0%	2.5%	1.7%	4.9%	2.7%	3.1%
Revenues	3,471	3,602	3,729	3,875	4,035	4,211	4,395	4,596	4,806	5,030	18,711	41,750
% change [b]	8.7%	3.8%	3.5%	3.9%	4.1%	4.4%	4.4%	4.6%	4.6%	4.7%	4.8%	4.7%
Unified deficit (+)/surplus (−)	400	206	117	152	176	153	186	99	−32	−24	1,050	1,432
On-budget	415	206	94	104	98	44	42	−84	−257	−296	917	365
Off-budget	−15	0	23	48	78	109	144	183	226	272	133	1,067
Unified deficit/surplus % of GDP	2.1%	1.0%	0.6%	0.7%	0.8%	0.7%	0.8%	0.4%	−0.1%	−0.1%	1.0%	0.6%
Total Federal debt	19,072	19,503	19,840	20,178	20,509	20,788	21,048	21,203	21,209	21,165	n.c.	n.c.
Total Federal debt % of GDP	101.4%	99.5%	96.8%	94.3%	91.6%	89.2%	86.3%	83.5%	80.0%	76.4%	n.c.	n.c.
Debt held by the public	13,842	14,124	14,307	14,523	14,757	14,965	15,204	15,354	15,374	15,405	n.c.	n.c.
Debt held by the public % of GDP	73.6%	72.1%	69.8%	67.9%	65.9%	64.2%	62.3%	60.5%	58.0%	55.6%	n.c.	n.c.
MEMORANDA:												
Economic Growth Benefit [c] (OT)	38	20	0	0	0	−23	−24	−25	−53	−55	57	−124
Unified deficit (+)/surplus (−) without Economic Growth Benefit	362	186	117	152	176	177	210	125	21	31	993	1,557
Gross Domestic Product	18,800	19,600	20,500	21,400	22,400	23,300	24,400	25,400	26,500	27,700	102,700	230,000

[a] These amounts are subject to discretionary spending limits in the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (the Deficit Control Act), as amended.
[b] Percentage change represents change from year prior. In 2016–20 and 2016–25 columns, percentage reflects average annual growth.
[c] CBO estimate of the effect on the deficit from the change in the economy attributable to the budget plan. In this table, the effect is included in the mandatory spending line.

n.c. = not computable.

TABLE 4.—FY 2016 BUDGET RESOLUTION CONFERENCE AGREEMENT
DISCRETIONARY BUDGET AUTHORITY

[Fiscal year, $ billions]

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2016–20	2016–25
Defense (regular BA): [a]												
Conference Agreement	523	536	549	562	576	590	623	636	649	662	2,746	5,906
CBO March Baseline	523	536	549	562	576	590	605	620	635	651	2,746	5,848
Difference	0	0	0	0	0	0	18	16	14	11	0	58
Nondefense (regular BA): [a]												
Conference Agreement	493	477	478	487	495	503	509	515	521	527	2,431	5,006
CBO March Baseline	493	504	515	529	543	555	569	583	598	613	2,584	5,503
Difference	0	−26	−37	−43	−47	−52	−60	−68	−77	−86	−153	−496
Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO):												
Conference Agreement	96	65	63	58	50	48	0	0	0	0	331	378
President's Budget	58	27	27	27	27	27	0	0	0	0	191	191
Difference	38	38	36	31	23	21	0	0	0	0	166	187
Disaster Relief Funding:												
Conference Agreement	7	7	7	7	7	7	0	0	0	0	34	41
President's Budget	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	7
Difference	0	7	7	7	7	7	0	0	0	0	27	34

[a] These amounts are subject to discretionary spending limits in the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (the Deficit Control Act), as amended.

TABLE 5.—FY 2016 BUDGET RESOLUTION CONFERENCE AGREEMENT MANDATORY OUTLAYS

[Fiscal year, $ billions]

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2016–20	2016–25
CBO March Baseline: [a]	2,488	2,565	2,633	2,798	2,954	3,118	3,350	3,476	3,597	3,872	13,438	30,852
% change [b]	9.1%	3.1%	2.7%	6.3%	5.6%	5.6%	7.4%	3.8%	3.5%	7.6%	5.3%	5.4%
Conference Agreement: [c]	2,390	2,316	2,311	2,431	2,559	2,667	2,853	2,943	2,997	3,196	12,007	26,662
% change [b]	4.8%	−3.1%	−0.2%	5.2%	5.3%	4.2%	7.0%	3.2%	1.8%	6.6%	2.3%	3.4%
Difference	−99	−249	−323	−367	−395	−451	−498	−533	−601	−676	−1,432	−4,189
MEMORANDUM:												
Gross Domestic Product	18,800	19,600	20,500	21,400	22,400	23,300	24,400	25,400	26,500	27,700	102,700	230,000
% change [b]	4.4%	4.3%	4.6%	4.4%	4.7%	4.0%	4.7%	4.1%	4.3%	4.5%	4.5%	4.4%

[a] Includes the effect of H.R. 2, which cleared Congress on April 14.
[b] Percentage change represents change from year prior. In 2016–20 and 2016–25 columns, percentage reflects average annual growth.
[c] Includes economic growth benefit.

TABLE 6—FY 2016 BUDGET RESOLUTION CONFERENCE AGREEMENT AGGREGATE AND FUNCTION LEVELS

[Fiscal year, $ billions]

Function	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2016–20	2016–25
050–National Defense:												
BA	531.306	544.515	557.764	571.039	585.330	599.646	632.804	646.039	659.310	673.490	2,789.954	6,001.243
OT	564.325	549.357	548.021	560.439	572.493	585.628	615.907	628.518	638.235	658.011	2,794.635	5,920.934
Discretionary:												
BA	523.091	536.068	549.073	562.080	576.088	590.097	623.000	636.000	649.000	662.000	2,746.400	5,906.497
OT	555.480	540.097	538.510	550.830	562.841	575.860	605.978	618.404	627.922	646.598	2,747.758	5,822.520
Mandatory:												
BA	8.215	8.447	8.691	8.959	9.242	9.549	9.804	10.039	10.310	11.490	43.554	94.746
OT	8.845	9.260	9.511	9.609	9.652	9.768	9.929	10.114	10.313	11.413	46.877	98.414
150–International Affairs:												
BA	40.202	40.246	41.176	42.100	43.092	44.085	45.333	46.348	47.408	48.485	206.816	438.475
OT	46.028	43.086	41.818	41.391	41.518	42.005	42.749	43.510	44.367	45.266	213.841	431.738
Discretionary:												
BA	40.094	40.745	41.629	42.522	43.468	44.417	45.417	46.416	47.461	48.527	208.458	440.696
OT	47.086	44.391	43.507	43.184	43.366	43.846	44.394	45.187	46.079	47.018	221.534	448.058
Mandatory:												
BA	0.108	−0.499	−0.453	−0.422	−0.376	−0.332	−0.084	−0.068	−0.053	−0.042	−1.642	−2.221
OT	−1.058	−1.305	−1.689	−1.793	−1.848	−1.841	−1.645	−1.677	−1.712	−1.752	−7.693	−16.320
250–General Science, Space and Technology:												
BA	29.187	29.771	30.432	31.104	31.805	32.508	33.242	33.978	34.743	35.517	152.299	322.287
OT	29.555	29.707	30.162	30.647	31.283	31.875	32.579	33.306	34.053	34.815	151.354	317.982
Discretionary:												
BA	29.087	29.664	30.332	31.004	31.705	32.408	33.142	33.878	34.643	35.417	151.792	321.280
OT	29.454	29.601	30.060	30.547	31.183	31.775	32.479	33.206	33.953	34.715	150.845	316.973
Mandatory:												
BA	0.100	0.107	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.507	1.007
OT	0.101	0.106	0.102	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.509	1.009
270–Energy:												
BA	−3.201	1.962	−0.746	−0.856	−0.884	−0.948	−1.030	−1.098	−1.144	−1.153	−3.725	−9.098
OT	1.412	1.095	−2.111	−1.936	−1.811	−1.657	−1.651	−1.643	−1.614	−1.589	−3.351	−11.505
Discretionary:												
BA	2.588	2.655	2.725	2.790	2.877	2.946	3.019	3.093	3.169	3.241	13.635	29.103
OT	3.233	2.740	2.612	2.736	2.820	2.885	2.961	3.033	3.107	3.183	14.141	29.310
Mandatory:												
BA	−5.789	−0.693	−3.471	−3.646	−3.761	−3.894	−4.049	−4.191	−4.313	−4.394	−17.360	−38.201
OT	−1.821	−1.645	−4.723	−4.672	−4.631	−4.542	−4.612	−4.676	−4.721	−4.772	−17.492	−40.815
300–Natural Resources and Environment:												
BA	36.374	37.654	38.325	38.923	40.388	41.191	41.650	42.496	43.935	45.039	191.664	405.975
OT	39.499	40.016	39.595	39.465	40.563	41.461	41.770	42.726	43.453	44.409	199.138	412.957
Discretionary:												
BA	34.439	35.329	36.359	37.431	38.506	39.603	40.772	41.913	43.108	44.343	182.064	391.803
OT	37.013	37.186	37.191	37.827	38.823	39.799	40.922	42.031	42.600	43.773	188.040	397.165
Mandatory:												
BA	1.935	2.325	1.966	1.492	1.882	1.588	0.878	0.583	0.827	0.696	9.600	14.172
OT	2.486	2.830	2.404	1.638	1.740	1.662	0.848	0.695	0.853	0.636	11.098	15.792
350–Agriculture:												
BA	19.098	22.846	21.964	20.652	19.681	19.545	19.509	20.119	20.253	20.540	104.241	204.207
OT	21.572	22.376	20.853	19.875	19.132	19.025	18.979	19.590	19.699	20.028	103.808	201.129
Discretionary:												
BA	5.998	6.152	6.330	6.513	6.699	6.884	7.084	7.278	7.487	7.699	31.692	68.124
OT	5.939	6.077	6.252	6.428	6.609	6.792	6.989	7.182	7.385	7.595	31.305	67.248
Mandatory:												
BA	13.100	16.694	15.634	14.139	12.982	12.661	12.425	12.841	12.766	12.841	72.549	136.083
OT	15.633	16.299	14.601	13.447	12.523	12.233	11.990	12.408	12.314	12.433	72.503	133.881
370–Commerce and Housing Credit:												
BA	−4.010	−11.014	−10.671	−10.096	−8.181	−7.989	−7.587	−7.204	−6.601	−6.379	−43.972	−79.732
OT	−13.580	−24.064	−27.566	−29.561	−25.522	−22.606	−24.053	−25.111	−25.809	−26.435	−120.293	−244.307
Discretionary:												
BA	−10.605	−13.301	−13.279	−12.114	−9.774	−8.848	−7.588	−6.382	−5.319	−4.680	−59.073	−91.890
OT	−7.165	−11.356	−12.285	−11.885	−10.163	−9.095	−8.000	−7.058	−6.021	−5.208	−52.854	−88.236
Mandatory:												
BA	6.595	2.287	2.608	2.018	1.593	0.859	0.001	−0.822	−1.282	−1.699	15.101	12.158
OT	−6.415	−12.708	−15.281	−17.676	−15.359	−13.511	−16.053	−18.053	−19.788	−21.227	−67.439	−156.071
370 on-budget:												
BA	−0.997	−8.697	−8.277	−7.401	−5.156	−4.806	−4.250	−3.613	−2.754	−2.278	−30.528	−48.229
OT	−10.566	−21.748	−25.173	−26.866	−22.499	−19.423	−20.716	−21.520	−21.962	−22.335	−106.852	−212.808
Discretionary:												
BA	−10.871	−13.578	−13.567	−12.413	−10.084	−9.169	−7.922	−6.728	−5.677	−5.051	−60.513	−95.060
OT	−7.430	−11.633	−12.573	−12.183	−10.473	−9.415	−8.333	−7.403	−6.378	−5.578	−54.292	−91.399
Mandatory:												
BA	9.874	4.881	5.290	5.012	4.928	4.363	3.672	3.115	2.923	2.773	29.985	46.831
OT	−3.136	−10.115	−12.600	−14.683	−12.026	−10.008	−12.383	−14.117	−15.584	−16.757	−52.560	−121.409
400–Transportation:												
BA	72.055	72.715	73.262	73.696	74.070	74.409	55.154	56.254	56.798	57.190	365.798	665.603
OT	87.153	82.838	79.648	78.845	78.268	77.871	73.378	66.074	62.874	61.710	406.752	748.659
Discretionary:												
BA	30.083	30.772	31.607	32.465	33.352	34.247	35.168	36.106	35.506	36.451	158.279	335.757
OT	86.083	82.021	79.159	78.766	78.603	78.624	74.550	67.646	63.296	62.689	404.632	751.437
Mandatory:												
BA	41.972	41.943	41.655	41.231	40.718	40.162	19.986	20.148	21.292	20.739	207.519	329.846
OT	1.070	0.817	0.489	0.079	−0.335	−0.753	−1.172	−1.572	−0.422	−0.979	2.120	−2.778
450–Community and Regional Development:												
BA	15.486	16.344	16.737	16.973	16.984	16.903	9.965	9.947	9.993	10.077	82.524	139.409
OT	20.692	19.144	19.692	20.450	20.702	20.682	19.034	15.892	13.220	11.515	100.680	181.023
Discretionary:												
BA	15.040	15.316	15.508	15.697	15.900	16.116	9.461	9.683	9.911	10.136	77.461	132.768
OT	19.627	18.125	18.037	18.487	18.617	18.481	16.680	14.192	12.495	11.002	92.893	165.743
Mandatory:												
BA	0.446	1.028	1.229	1.276	1.084	0.787	0.504	0.264	0.082	−0.059	5.063	6.641

TABLE 6—FY 2016 BUDGET RESOLUTION CONFERENCE AGREEMENT AGGREGATE AND FUNCTION LEVELS—Continued

[Fiscal year, $ billions]

Function	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2016–20	2016–25
OT	1.065	1.019	1.655	1.963	2.085	2.201	2.354	1.700	0.725	0.513	7.787	15.280
500–Education, Training, Employment:												
BA	83.315	89.084	91.432	90.189	92.597	93.900	95.502	96.984	98.820	100.785	446.617	932.608
OT	93.293	92.888	91.193	89.369	91.891	93.562	95.022	96.608	98.336	100.297	458.634	942.459
Discretionary:												
BA	89.823	92.951	94.703	96.567	98.546	100.549	102.624	104.620	106.756	108.896	472.590	996.035
OT	93.797	95.174	93.014	94.795	96.655	98.659	100.670	102.690	104.746	106.863	473.435	987.063
Mandatory:												
BA	−6.508	−3.867	−3.271	−6.378	−5.949	−6.649	−7.122	−7.636	−7.936	−8.111	−25.973	−63.427
OT	−0.504	−2.286	−1.821	−5.426	−4.764	−5.097	−5.648	−6.082	−6.410	−6.566	−14.801	−44.604
550–Health:												
BA	433.064	397.209	387.638	398.203	420.326	426.184	442.681	461.378	476.599	493.913	2,036.440	4,337.195
OT	430.917	394.211	397.302	399.888	411.116	426.218	442.701	461.378	476.631	494.059	2,033.434	4,334.421
Discretionary:												
BA	57.727	58.919	60.296	61.691	63.146	64.602	66.126	67.651	69.242	70.844	301.779	640.244
OT	58.420	58.957	59.775	60.285	61.571	62.806	64.273	65.771	67.308	68.881	299.008	628.047
Mandatory:												
BA	375.337	338.290	327.342	336.512	357.180	361.582	376.555	393.727	407.357	423.069	1,734.661	3,696.951
OT	372.497	335.254	337.527	339.603	349.545	363.412	378.428	395.607	409.323	425.178	1,734.426	3,706.374
570–Medicare:												
BA	579.430	571.876	566.754	628.736	667.036	711.198	800.458	812.590	815.240	923.187	3,013.832	7,076.505
OT	579.361	571.830	566.656	628.652	666.951	711.111	800.363	812.496	815.139	923.082	3,013.450	7,075.641
Discretionary:												
BA	6.535	6.918	7.338	7.792	8.263	8.758	9.285	9.829	10.395	10.983	36.846	86.096
OT	6.492	6.894	7.269	7.719	8.188	8.677	9.198	9.742	10.305	10.887	36.562	85.371
Mandatory:												
BA	572.895	564.958	559.416	620.944	658.773	702.440	791.173	802.761	804.845	912.204	2,976.986	6,990.409
OT	572.869	564.936	559.387	620.933	658.763	702.434	791.165	802.754	804.834	912.195	2,976.888	6,990.270
600–Income Security:												
BA	523.086	496.233	485.055	476.663	484.015	489.999	498.503	503.364	510.872	517.417	2,465.052	4,985.207
OT	523.645	492.511	476.530	471.357	478.199	484.318	497.869	499.521	501.192	511.441	2,442.242	4,936.583
Discretionary:												
BA	63.235	61.219	61.398	60.997	62.339	63.675	65.591	66.390	67.163	67.655	309.188	639.662
OT	64.237	62.844	62.101	61.716	62.215	63.189	64.658	65.788	66.695	67.305	313.113	640.748
Mandatory:												
BA	459.851	435.014	423.657	415.666	421.676	426.324	432.912	436.974	443.709	449.762	2,155.864	4,345.545
OT	459.408	429.667	414.429	409.641	415.984	421.129	433.211	433.733	434.497	444.136	2,129.129	4,295.835
650–Social Security Retirement and Disability:												
BA	928.939	978.390	1,039.410	1,104.586	1,174.741	1,248.387	1,325.517	1,406.861	1,491.896	1,579.505	5,226.066	12,278.232
OT	924.957	973.310	1,033.990	1,098.755	1,168.609	1,242.055	1,318.684	1,399.827	1,484.561	1,571.969	5,199.621	12,216.717
Discretionary:												
BA	5.009	5.296	5.469	5.645	5.827	6.012	6.205	6.399	6.600	6.805	27.246	59.267
OT	5.127	5.316	5.449	5.614	5.795	5.980	6.172	6.365	6.565	6.769	27.301	59.152
Mandatory:												
BA	923.930	973.094	1,033.941	1,098.941	1,168.914	1,242.375	1,319.312	1,400.462	1,485.296	1,572.700	5,198.820	12,218.965
OT	919.830	967.994	1,028.541	1,093.141	1,162.814	1,236.075	1,312.512	1,393.462	1,477.996	1,565.200	5,172.320	12,157.565
650 on-budget:												
BA	33.885	36.535	39.407	42.634	46.104	49.712	53.547	57.455	61.546	65.751	198.565	486.576
OT	33.928	36.563	39.424	42.634	46.104	49.712	53.547	57.455	61.546	65.751	198.653	486.664
Discretionary:												
BA												
OT	0.043	0.028	0.017								0.088	0.088
Mandatory:												
BA	33.885	36.535	39.407	42.634	46.104	49.712	53.547	57.455	61.546	65.751	198.565	486.576
OT	33.885	36.535	39.407	42.634	46.104	49.712	53.547	57.455	61.546	65.751	198.565	486.576
700–Veterans Benefits and Services:												
BA	166.261	164.546	162.740	174.599	179.485	183.721	196.041	192.637	189.442	203.290	847.631	1,812.762
OT	171.862	168.559	162.753	173.869	178.581	182.821	195.056	191.640	188.356	202.189	855.624	1,815.686
Discretionary:												
BA	68.575	70.512	72.705	74.963	77.290	79.647	82.102	84.593	87.145	89.767	364.045	787.299
OT	68.327	69.849	72.081	74.168	76.442	78.811	81.246	83.689	86.234	88.808	360.867	779.655
Mandatory:												
BA	97.686	94.034	90.035	99.636	102.195	104.074	113.939	108.044	102.297	113.523	483.586	1,025.463
OT	103.535	98.710	90.672	99.701	102.139	104.010	113.810	107.951	102.122	113.381	494.757	1,036.031
750–Administration of Justice:												
BA	50.976	57.639	55.885	57.582	59.324	61.247	63.791	65.688	67.626	69.425	281.406	609.183
OT	56.455	56.693	54.562	56.699	61.755	62.635	63.748	65.589	67.266	68.892	286.164	614.294
Discretionary:												
BA	51.172	53.352	55.105	56.918	58.784	60.676	62.647	64.646	66.694	68.607	275.331	598.601
OT	51.981	53.328	54.891	56.622	58.312	60.207	62.163	64.153	66.188	68.081	275.134	595.926
Mandatory:												
BA	−0.196	4.287	0.780	0.664	0.540	0.571	1.144	1.042	0.932	0.818	6.075	10.582
OT	4.474	3.365	−0.329	0.077	3.443	2.428	1.585	1.436	1.078	0.811	11.030	18.368
800–General Government:												
BA	23.151	23.194	23.426	24.000	24.703	25.202	25.962	26.698	27.130	27.881	118.474	251.347
OT	22.981	23.289	23.371	23.685	24.290	24.878	25.562	26.272	26.766	27.435	117.616	248.529
Discretionary:												
BA	16.958	16.932	17.217	17.703	18.337	18.738	19.417	20.105	20.710	21.413	87.147	187.530
OT	16.970	17.069	17.307	17.494	18.029	18.497	19.077	19.723	20.353	21.025	86.869	185.544
Mandatory:												
BA	6.193	6.262	6.209	6.297	6.366	6.464	6.545	6.593	6.420	6.468	31.327	63.817
OT	6.011	6.220	6.064	6.191	6.261	6.381	6.485	6.549	6.413	6.410	30.747	62.985
900–Net Interest:												
BA	275.302	324.912	387.001	438.431	483.884	515.508	547.736	575.992	597.779	610.540	1,909.530	4,757.085
OT	275.302	324.912	387.001	438.431	483.884	515.508	547.736	575.992	597.779	610.540	1,909.530	4,757.085
Discretionary:												
BA												
OT												
Mandatory:												
BA	275.302	324.912	387.001	438.431	483.884	515.508	547.736	575.992	597.779	610.540	1,909.530	4,757.085
OT	275.302	324.912	387.001	438.431	483.884	515.508	547.736	575.992	597.779	610.540	1,909.530	4,757.085
900 on-budget:												
BA	367.542	416.418	479.446	533.121	579.344	611.558	642.888	669.066	687.195	694.215	2,375.871	5,680.793
OT	367.542	416.418	479.446	533.121	579.344	611.558	642.888	669.066	687.195	694.215	2,375.871	5,680.793
Discretionary:												
BA												
OT												
Mandatory:												
BA	367.542	416.418	479.446	533.121	579.344	611.558	642.888	669.066	687.195	694.215	2,375.871	5,680.793

OT	367.542	416.418	479.446	533.121	579.344	611.558	642.888	669.066	687.195	694.215	2,375.871	5,680.793
920–Allowances:												
BA	25.256	−21.661	−50.890	−60.624	−72.620	−104.010	−119.157	−131.418	−168.306	−204.728	−180.539	−908.158
OT	45.538	−5.856	−40.133	−53.987	−65.480	−98.128	−111.033	−122.924	−160.427	−186.150	−119.918	−798.580
Discretionary:												
BA	−5.395	−29.258	−40.330	−45.080	−53.213	−60.121	−71.330	−81.369	−89.614	−99.341	−173.276	−575.051
OT	14.887	−17.027	−30.665	−38.828	−46.562	−54.135	−63.349	−73.092	−81.982	−91.116	−118.195	−481.869
Mandatory:												
BA	30.651	7.597	−10.560	−15.544	−19.407	−43.889	−47.827	−50.049	−78.692	−105.387	−7.263	−333.107
OT	30.651	11.171	−9.468	−15.159	−18.918	−43.993	−47.684	−49.832	−78.445	−95.034	−1.723	−316.711
950–Undistributed Offsetting Receipts:												
BA	−99.168	−113.627	−121.235	−120.230	−120.280	−124.851	−132.974	−141.599	−152.306	−166.153	−574.540	−1,292.423
OT	−99.168	−113.627	−121.235	−120.230	−120.280	−124.851	−132.974	−141.599	−152.306	−166.153	−574.540	−1,292.423
Discretionary:												
BA												
OT												
Mandatory:												
BA	−99.168	−113.627	−121.235	−120.230	−120.280	−124.851	−132.974	−141.599	−152.306	−166.153	−574.540	−1,292.423
OT	−99.168	−113.627	−121.235	−120.230	−120.280	−124.851	−132.974	−141.599	−152.306	−166.153	−574.540	−1,292.423
950 on-budget:												
BA	−82.548	−96.446	−103.441	−101.796	−101.191	−105.094	−112.536	−120.466	−130.467	−143.591	−485.422	−1,097.576
OT	−82.548	−96.446	−103.441	−101.796	−101.191	−105.094	−112.536	−120.466	−130.467	−143.591	−485.422	−1,097.576
Discretionary:												
BA												
OT												
Mandatory:												
BA	−82.548	−96.446	−103.441	−101.796	−101.191	−105.094	−112.536	−120.466	−130.467	−143.591	−485.422	−1,097.576
OT	−82.548	−96.446	−103.441	−101.796	−101.191	−105.094	−112.536	−120.466	−130.467	−143.591	−485.422	−1,097.576
970–Overseas Contingency Operations/ Global War on Terrorism:												
BA	96.287	64.598	62.593	57.586	49.578	47.569					330.642	378.211
OT	48.798	65.684	63.758	60.653	54.095	50.191	19.493	7.554	2.683	0.892	292.988	373.801
Discretionary:												
BA	96.287	64.598	62.593	57.586	49.578	47.569					330.642	378.211
OT	48.798	65.684	63.758	60.653	54.095	50.191	19.493	7.554	2.683	0.892	292.988	373.801
Mandatory:												
BA												
OT												
Total:												
BA	3,822.396	3,787.432	3,858.052	4,053.256	4,245.074	4,393.404	4,573.100	4,716.054	4,819.487	5,037.868	19,766.210	43,306.123
OT	3,870.597	3,807.959	3,845.860	4,026.756	4,210.237	4,364.602	4,580.919	4,695.216	4,774.454	5,006.223	19,761.409	43,182.823
Discretionary:												
BA	1,119.741	1,084.839	1,096.778	1,113.170	1,127.718	1,147.975	1,132.142	1,150.849	1,170.057	1,188.763	5,542.246	11,332.032
OT	1,205.786	1,166.970	1,148.023	1,157.158	1,167.439	1,181.849	1,180.554	1,176.206	1,179.911	1,199.760	5,845.376	11,763.656
Mandatory:												
BA	2,702.655	2,702.593	2,761.274	2,940.086	3,117.356	3,245.429	3,440.958	3,565.205	3,649.430	3,849.105	14,223.964	31,974.091
OT	2,664.811	2,640.989	2,697.837	2,869.598	3,042.798	3,182.753	3,400.365	3,519.010	3,594.543	3,806.463	13,916.033	31,419.167
Total on-budget:												
BA	3,039.215	2,956.581	2,970.682	3,107.123	3,234.011	3,313.719	3,420.057	3,484.446	3,504.239	3,634.452	15,307.612	32,664.525
OT	3,091.442	2,982.215	2,963.926	3,086.454	3,205.304	3,291.249	3,434.709	3,470.642	3,466.541	3,610.342	15,329.341	32,602.824
Discretionary:												
BA	1,114.466	1,079.266	1,091.021	1,107.226	1,121.581	1,141.642	1,125.603	1,144.104	1,163.099	1,181.587	5,513.560	11,269.595
OT	1,200.437	1,161.405	1,142.303	1,151.246	1,161.334	1,175.549	1,174.049	1,169.496	1,172.989	1,192.621	5,816.725	11,701.429
Mandatory:												
BA	1,924.749	1,877.315	1,879.661	1,999.897	2,112.430	2,172.077	2,294.454	2,340.342	2,341.140	2,452.865	9,794.052	21,394.930
OT	1,891.005	1,820.810	1,821.623	1,935.208	2,043.970	2,115.700	2,260.660	2,301.146	2,293.552	2,417.721	9,512.616	20,901.395
Revenues	3,470.720	3,602.254	3,729.105	3,874.731	4,034.524	4,211.287	4,395.193	4,596.085	4,806.181	5,030.409	18,711.334	41,750.489
Revenues on-budget	2,676.733	2,776.156	2,870.206	2,982.310	3,107.111	3,247.391	3,392.968	3,554.412	3,723.973	3,906.111	14,412.516	32,237.371
Surplus/Deficit (−)	−399.877	−205.705	−116.755	−152.025	−175.713	−153.315	−185.726	−99.131	31.727	24.186	−1,050.075	−1,432.334
On-budget	−414.709	−206.059	−93.720	−104.144	−98.193	−43.858	−41.741	83.770	257.432	295.769	−916.825	−365.453
Off-budget	14.832	0.354	−23.035	−47.881	−77.520	−109.457	−143.985	−182.901	−225.705	−271.583	−133.250	−1,066.881

TABLE 7—FY 2016 BUDGET RESOLUTION AS PASSED BY THE SENATE

[Fiscal year, $ billions]

Function	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2016–20	2016–25
050–National Defense:													
BA	593.277	620.263	544.506	557.744	571.019	585.310	599.627	600.634	615.997	631.771	648.836	2,878.842	5,975.707
OT	590.190	605.189	576.934	558.049	564.685	573.614	586.038	596.103	603.051	611.920	632.992	2,878.471	5,908.575
Discretionary:													
BA	585.833	612.020	536.067	549.071	562.079	576.087	590.096	590.848	605.970	621.469	637.356	2,835.324	5,881.063
OT	582.690	596.886	568.349	549.213	555.646	564.355	576.503	586.322	593.026	601.623	621.580	2,834.449	5,813.503
Mandatory:													
BA	7.444	8.243	8.439	8.673	8.940	9.223	9.531	9.786	10.027	10.302	11.480	43.518	94.644
OT	7.500	8.303	8.585	8.836	9.039	9.259	9.535	9.781	10.025	10.297	11.412	44.022	95.072
150–International Affairs:													
BA	53.012	47.791	41.839	42.802	43.749	44.754	45.276	46.553	47.593	48.681	49.786	220.935	458.824
OT	48.796	48.227	45.656	43.642	42.565	42.437	42.795	43.424	44.153	45.023	45.943	222.527	443.865
Discretionary:													
BA	53.905	48.342	41.853	42.761	43.678	44.650	45.625	46.653	47.678	48.753	49.846	221.284	459.839
OT	50.378	49.522	47.046	45.407	44.430	44.355	44.703	45.134	45.897	46.804	47.763	230.760	461.061
Mandatory:													
BA	−0.893	−0.551	−0.014	0.041	0.071	0.104	−0.349	−0.100	−0.085	−0.072	−0.060	−0.349	−1.015
OT	−1.582	−1.295	−1.390	−1.765	−1.865	−1.918	−1.908	−1.710	−1.744	−1.781	−1.820	−8.233	−17.196
250–General Science, Space and Technology:													
BA	29.803	30.007	30.596	31.286	31.981	32.706	33.433	34.192	34.953	35.745	36.545	156.576	331.444
OT	29.286	30.007	30.529	31.165	31.712	32.400	33.022	33.756	34.512	35.290	36.084	155.813	328.477
Discretionary:													
BA	29.704	29.900	30.496	31.186	31.881	32.606	33.333	34.092	34.853	35.645	36.445	156.069	330.437
OT	29.187	29.902	30.427	31.065	31.612	32.300	32.922	33.656	34.412	35.190	35.984	155.306	327.470
Mandatory:													
BA	0.099	0.107	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.507	1.007
OT	0.099	0.105	0.102	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.100	0.507	1.007
270–Energy:													
BA	5.369	−1.947	2.483	0.076	0.090	0.128	0.097	0.062	0.036	2.869	2.963	0.830	6.857
OT	5.417	2.365	2.112	−0.731	−0.753	−0.668	−0.543	−0.465	−0.393	2.521	2.655	2.325	6.100
Discretionary:													
BA	4.623	3.123	3.200	3.281	3.360	3.459	3.543	3.628	3.716	3.805	3.892	16.423	35.007
OT	5.439	4.151	3.761	3.494	3.462	3.518	3.556	3.649	3.737	3.825	3.917	18.386	37.070
Mandatory:													
BA	0.746	−5.070	−0.717	−3.205	−3.270	−3.331	−3.446	−3.566	−3.680	−0.936	−0.929	−15.593	−28.150
OT	−0.022	−1.786	−1.649	−4.225	−4.215	−4.186	−4.099	−4.114	−4.130	−1.304	−1.262	−16.061	−30.970
300–Natural Resources and Environment:													
BA	36.003	36.277	36.685	37.680	39.125	41.066	40.951	41.844	43.240	44.125	45.522	190.833	406.515

TABLE 7—FY 2016 BUDGET RESOLUTION AS PASSED BY THE SENATE—Continued

[Fiscal year, $ billions]

Function	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2016–20	2016–25
OT	39.286	38.983	38.866	38.719	39.486	41.098	41.232	41.992	43.467	43.663	44.966	197.152	412.472
Discretionary:													
BA	34.413	34.513	35.402	36.433	37.505	38.583	39.683	40.852	41.995	43.191	44.427	182.436	392.584
OT	37.230	37.203	37.209	37.226	37.829	38.838	39.874	41.004	42.098	42.678	43.856	188.305	397.815
Mandatory:													
BA	1.590	1.764	1.283	1.247	1.620	2.483	1.268	0.992	1.245	0.934	1.095	8.397	13.931
OT	2.056	1.780	1.657	1.493	1.657	2.260	1.358	0.988	1.369	0.985	1.110	8.847	14.657
350–Agriculture:													
BA	17.328	20.628	24.247	23.204	22.083	20.974	21.078	20.914	21.506	21.620	21.834	111.136	218.088
OT	16.587	20.585	23.696	22.471	21.401	20.498	20.613	20.476	21.051	21.125	21.416	108.651	213.332
Discretionary:													
BA	5.923	5.922	6.075	6.252	6.433	6.617	6.801	6.998	7.191	7.398	7.608	31.299	67.295
OT	5.835	5.902	6.027	6.178	6.346	6.528	6.709	6.904	7.095	7.296	7.505	30.981	66.490
Mandatory:													
BA	11.405	14.706	18.172	16.952	15.650	14.357	14.277	13.916	14.315	14.222	14.226	79.837	150.793
OT	10.752	14.683	17.669	16.293	15.055	13.970	13.904	13.572	13.956	13.829	13.911	77.670	146.842
370–Commerce and Housing Credit:													
BA	−18.404	1.948	−4.376	−1.858	−2.211	−1.170	−1.508	−0.296	0.511	1.401	1.969	−7.667	−5.590
OT	−31.249	−11.678	−18.718	−16.688	−22.065	−21.790	−16.821	−17.426	−17.883	−18.298	−18.561	−90.939	−179.928
Discretionary:													
BA	−3.508	−8.065	−10.512	−10.300	−9.018	−6.716	−5.647	−4.314	−3.056	−1.942	−1.252	−44.611	−60.822
OT	−3.493	−7.943	−10.391	−10.273	−9.117	−6.832	−5.768	−4.439	−3.182	−2.075	−1.384	−44.556	−61.404
Mandatory:													
BA	−14.896	10.013	6.136	8.442	6.807	5.546	4.139	4.018	3.567	3.343	3.221	36.944	55.232
OT	−27.756	−3.735	−8.327	−6.415	−12.948	−14.958	−11.053	−12.987	−14.701	−16.223	−17.177	−46.383	−118.524
370 on-budget:													
BA	−16.682	2.260	−3.959	−1.264	−1.316	0.055	−0.075	1.341	2.452	3.648	4.520	−4.224	7.662
OT	−29.527	−11.365	−18.302	−16.095	−21.170	−20.567	−15.388	−15.789	−15.942	−16.051	−16.011	−87.499	−166.680
Discretionary:													
BA	−3.767	−8.332	−10.789	−10.588	−9.317	−7.026	−5.968	−4.648	−3.402	−2.300	−1.623	−46.052	−63.993
OT	−3.752	−8.209	−10.668	−10.561	−9.415	−7.142	−6.088	−4.772	−3.527	−2.432	−1.754	−45.995	−64.568
Mandatory:													
BA	−12.915	10.592	6.830	9.324	8.001	7.081	5.893	5.989	5.854	5.948	6.143	41.828	71.655
OT	−25.775	−3.156	−7.634	−5.534	−11.755	−13.425	−9.300	−11.017	−12.415	−13.619	−14.257	−41.504	−102.112
400–Transportation:													
BA	85.889	71.528	72.392	73.286	74.077	74.826	75.549	76.221	76.840	77.506	78.208	366.109	750.433
OT	91.361	88.436	83.756	80.329	79.437	78.935	78.708	78.973	79.228	79.123	79.426	410.893	806.351
Discretionary:													
BA	31.428	29.118	29.744	30.558	31.396	32.261	33.134	34.033	34.948	34.324	35.246	153.077	324.762
OT	90.181	87.205	82.496	79.055	78.178	77.686	77.469	77.735	77.973	76.290	76.533	404.620	790.620
Mandatory:													
BA	54.461	42.410	42.648	42.728	42.681	42.565	42.415	42.188	41.892	43.182	42.962	213.032	425.671
OT	1.180	1.231	1.260	1.274	1.259	1.249	1.239	1.238	1.255	2.833	2.893	6.273	15.731
450–Community and Regional Development:													
BA	17.051	17.414	18.263	18.606	18.862	18.870	18.771	18.782	18.861	18.975	19.140	92.015	186.544
OT	21.741	22.351	21.002	21.457	22.314	22.547	22.474	21.323	19.747	19.313	19.384	109.671	211.912
Discretionary:													
BA	16.766	16.250	16.715	16.946	17.174	17.420	17.678	17.939	18.205	18.479	18.750	84.505	175.556
OT	21.812	20.956	19.622	19.331	19.852	19.980	19.974	18.566	17.964	18.225	18.501	99.741	192.971
Mandatory:													
BA	0.285	1.164	1.548	1.660	1.688	1.450	1.093	0.843	0.656	0.496	0.390	7.510	10.988
OT	−0.071	1.395	1.380	2.126	2.462	2.567	2.500	2.757	1.783	1.088	0.883	9.930	18.941
500–Education, Training, Employment:													
BA	91.688	86.251	87.848	90.703	89.535	91.991	93.353	94.970	96.575	98.439	100.362	446.328	930.027
OT	97.522	95.717	92.889	90.534	88.889	91.556	93.315	94.734	96.383	98.178	100.129	459.585	942.324
Discretionary:													
BA	91.783	91.399	93.004	94.915	96.838	98.851	100.872	102.975	105.077	107.271	109.472	475.007	1,000.674
OT	89.553	94.971	95.932	93.394	95.162	97.067	99.030	101.033	103.113	105.235	107.414	476.526	992.351
Mandatory:													
BA	−0.095	−5.148	−5.156	−4.212	−7.303	−6.860	−7.519	−8.005	−8.502	−8.832	−9.110	−28.679	−70.647
OT	7.969	0.746	−3.043	−2.860	−6.273	−5.511	−5.715	−6.299	−6.730	−7.057	−7.285	−16.941	−50.027
550–Health:													
BA	483.912	414.351	385.565	388.629	402.511	425.526	433.351	452.426	471.644	489.491	512.965	2,016.582	4,376.459
OT	476.985	424.736	389.710	390.503	403.324	415.791	433.395	452.523	471.719	489.587	513.163	2,024.064	4,384.451
Discretionary:													
BA	59.474	57.751	58.920	60.297	61.690	63.145	64.602	66.127	67.650	69.241	70.842	301.803	640.265
OT	57.073	58.434	58.958	59.792	60.302	61.592	62.827	64.296	65.794	67.331	68.903	299.078	628.229
Mandatory:													
BA	424.438	356.600	326.645	328.332	340.821	362.381	368.749	386.299	403.994	420.250	442.123	1,714.779	3,736.194
OT	419.912	366.302	330.752	330.711	343.022	354.199	370.568	388.227	405.925	422.256	444.260	1,724.986	3,756.222
570–Medicare:													
BA	529.733	567.213	562.941	562.143	619.228	657.658	698.284	776.034	787.879	797.075	902.467	2,969.183	6,930.922
OT	529.281	567.122	562.881	562.102	619.148	657.564	698.188	775.930	787.681	796.964	902.349	2,968.817	6,929.929
Discretionary:													
BA	6.618	6.605	6.994	7.424	7.888	8.368	8.875	9.412	9.967	10.547	11.145	37.279	87.225
OT	6.506	6.556	6.969	7.356	7.814	8.291	8.794	9.326	9.878	10.456	11.047	36.986	86.487
Mandatory:													
BA	523.115	560.608	555.947	554.719	611.340	649.290	689.409	766.622	777.912	786.528	891.322	2,931.904	6,843.697
OT	522.775	560.566	555.912	554.746	611.334	649.273	689.394	766.604	777.803	786.508	891.302	2,931.831	6,843.442
600–Income Security:													
BA	517.037	529.494	458.455	466.015	460.943	471.826	481.804	493.877	502.550	512.932	521.641	2,386.733	4,899.537
OT	512.945	528.778	455.293	458.848	457.388	467.468	477.132	493.223	498.468	504.310	517.044	2,367.775	4,857.952
Discretionary:													
BA	64.786	65.057	60.403	59.887	58.087	59.130	60.255	62.519	62.539	62.520	62.051	302.564	612.448
OT	65.111	65.371	61.746	61.803	60.204	59.861	60.057	61.269	62.579	63.463	63.242	308.985	619.595
Mandatory:													
BA	452.251	464.437	398.052	406.128	402.856	412.696	421.549	431.358	440.011	450.412	459.590	2,084.169	4,287.089
OT	447.834	463.407	393.547	397.045	397.184	407.607	417.075	431.954	435.889	440.847	453.802	2,058.790	4,238.357
650–Social Security:													
BA	891.618	929.956	981.220	1042.467	1107.220	1176.924	1249.477	1325.445	1405.708	1489.969	1577.505	5,237.787	12,285.891
OT	888.420	925.860	976.135	1037.038	1101.489	1170.893	1243.245	1318.712	1398.674	1482.735	1570.570	5,211.415	12,225.351
Discretionary:													
BA	5.555	5.026	5.175	5.345	5.518	5.699	5.881	6.072	6.266	6.462	6.665	26.763	58.109
OT	5.557	5.130	5.190	5.316	5.487	5.668	5.849	6.039	6.232	6.428	6.630	26.791	57.969
Mandatory:													
BA	886.063	924.930	976.045	1037.122	1101.702	1171.225	1243.596	1319.373	1399.442	1483.507	1570.840	5,211.024	12,227.782
OT	882.863	920.730	970.945	1031.722	1096.002	1165.225	1237.396	1312.673	1392.442	1476.307	1563.940	5,184.624	12,167.382
650 on-budget:													
BA	31.554	33.878	36.535	39.407	42.634	46.104	49.712	53.547	57.455	61.546	65.751	198.558	486.569
OT	31.662	33.919	36.535	39.407	42.634	46.104	49.712	53.547	57.455	61.546	65.751	198.599	486.610
Discretionary:													
BA	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
OT	0.108	0.041	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.041	0.041
Mandatory:													
BA	31.554	33.878	36.535	39.407	42.634	46.104	49.712	53.547	57.455	61.546	65.751	198.558	486.569
OT	31.554	33.878	36.535	39.407	42.634	46.104	49.712	53.547	57.455	61.546	65.751	198.558	486.569
700–Veterans Benefits and Services:													
BA	153.408	166.708	164.905	163.101	174.989	179.899	184.172	196.530	193.156	189.999	203.895	849.602	1,817.354

TABLE 7—FY 2016 BUDGET RESOLUTION AS PASSED BY THE SENATE—Continued

[Fiscal year, $ billions]

Function	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2016–20	2016–25
OT	162.804	170.152	164.449	162.477	174.175	178.942	183.222	195.502	192.124	188.884	202.761	850.195	1,812.688
Discretionary:													
BA	65.346	68.602	70.540	72.735	74.992	77.320	79.678	82.135	84.626	87.179	89.826	364.189	787.633
OT	64.235	68.316	69.857	72.097	74.198	76.474	78.841	81.279	83.723	86.267	88.853	360.942	779.905
Mandatory:													
BA	88.062	98.106	94.365	90.366	99.997	102.579	104.494	114.395	108.530	102.820	114.069	485.413	1,029.721
OT	98.569	101.836	94.592	90.380	99.977	102.468	104.381	114.223	108.401	102.617	113.908	489.253	1,032.783
750–Administration of Justice:													
BA	54.819	52.543	57.030	56.787	58.512	60.284	62.239	64.815	66.745	68.717	70.550	285.156	618.222
OT	55.088	56.757	58.576	57.929	57.973	59.888	61.690	64.224	66.238	68.091	69.922	291.123	621.288
Discretionary:													
BA	51.027	51.326	54.142	55.914	57.747	59.633	61.546	63.539	65.560	67.630	69.566	278.762	606.603
OT	50.542	51.999	53.623	55.353	57.179	58.946	61.010	62.988	64.995	67.050	68.999	277.100	602.142
Mandatory:													
BA	3.792	1.217	2.888	0.873	0.765	0.651	0.693	1.276	1.185	1.087	0.984	6.394	11.619
OT	4.546	4.758	4.953	2.576	0.794	0.942	0.680	1.236	1.243	1.041	0.923	14.023	19.146
800–General Government:													
BA	23.264	23.755	24.046	24.755	25.485	26.202	26.958	27.766	28.493	29.022	29.809	124.243	266.291
OT	23.510	23.708	23.958	24.573	25.089	25.782	26.551	27.375	28.114	28.671	29.399	123.110	263.220
Discretionary:													
BA	16.462	17.192	17.730	18.341	18.974	19.618	20.274	20.961	21.655	22.367	23.101	91.855	200.213
OT	16.784	17.149	17.651	18.210	18.580	19.200	19.847	20.522	21.205	21.903	22.629	90.790	196.896
Mandatory:													
BA	6.802	6.563	6.316	6.414	6.511	6.584	6.684	6.805	6.838	6.655	6.708	32.388	66.078
OT	6.726	6.559	6.307	6.363	6.509	6.582	6.704	6.853	6.909	6.768	6.770	32.320	66.324
900–Net Interest:													
BA	226.651	274.379	323.732	386.693	438.770	486.122	520.025	552.341	580.201	603.687	622.119	1,909.696	4,788.069
OT	226.651	274.379	323.732	386.693	438.770	486.122	520.025	552.341	580.201	603.687	622.119	1,909.696	4,788.069
Discretionary:													
BA	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
OT	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Mandatory:													
BA	226.651	274.379	323.732	386.693	438.770	486.122	520.025	552.341	580.201	603.687	622.119	1,909.696	4,788.069
OT	226.651	274.379	323.732	386.693	438.770	486.122	520.025	552.341	580.201	603.687	622.119	1,909.696	4,788.069
900 on-budget:													
BA	323.951	366.579	415.132	478.693	532.670	580.522	614.725	645.841	671.301	690.987	703.419	2,373.596	5,699.869
OT	323.951	366.579	415.132	478.693	532.670	580.522	614.725	645.841	671.301	690.987	703.419	2,373.596	5,699.869
Discretionary:													
BA	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
OT	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Mandatory:													
BA	323.951	366.579	415.132	478.693	532.670	580.522	614.725	645.841	671.301	690.987	703.419	2,373.596	5,699.869
OT	323.951	366.579	415.132	478.693	532.670	580.522	614.725	645.841	671.301	690.987	703.419	2,373.596	5,699.869
920–Allowances:													
BA	−0.021	−12.322	12.975	−10.750	−15.199	−46.590	−54.803	−98.454	−112.036	−90.119	−250.580	−71.886	−677.878
OT	−0.011	−5.571	2.923	−14.755	−16.838	−44.799	−51.787	−80.798	−101.438	−83.225	−234.419	−79.040	−630.707
Discretionary:													
BA	−0.021	−15.155	8.461	5.677	4.428	−1.149	−6.600	−45.393	−55.229	−63.761	−72.999	2.262	−241.720
OT	−0.011	−11.461	−3.112	1.097	2.626	0.429	−3.224	−27.583	−44.414	−56.657	−66.541	−10.421	−208.840
Mandatory:													
BA	0.000	2.833	4.514	−16.427	−19.627	−45.441	−48.203	−53.061	−56.807	−26.358	−177.581	−74.148	−436.158
OT	0.000	5.890	6.035	−15.852	−19.464	−45.228	−48.563	−53.215	−57.024	−26.568	−167.878	−68.619	−421.867
950–Undistributed Offsetting Receipts:													
BA	−128.564	−86.017	−95.444	−102.025	−101.613	−102.666	−106.530	−112.775	−120.779	−130.843	−143.932	−487.765	−1,102.624
OT	−128.564	−86.028	−95.459	−102.044	−101.634	−102.689	−106.555	−112.800	−120.805	−130.869	−143.959	−487.854	−1,102.842
Discretionary:													
BA	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
OT	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Mandatory:													
BA	−128.564	−86.017	−95.444	−102.025	−101.613	−102.666	−106.530	−112.775	−120.779	−130.843	−143.932	−487.765	−1,102.624
OT	−128.564	−86.028	−95.459	−102.044	−101.634	−102.689	−106.555	−112.800	−120.805	−130.869	−143.959	−487.854	−1,102.842
950 on-budget:													
BA	−112.410	−69.397	−78.263	−84.231	−83.179	−83.577	−86.773	−92.337	−99.646	−109.004	−121.370	−398.647	−907.777
OT	−112.410	−69.408	−78.278	−84.250	−83.200	−83.600	−86.798	−92.362	−99.672	−109.030	−121.397	−398.736	−907.995
Discretionary:													
BA	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
OT	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Mandatory:													
BA	−112.410	−69.397	−78.263	−84.231	−83.179	−83.577	−86.773	−92.337	−99.646	−109.004	−121.370	−398.647	−907.777
OT	−112.410	−69.408	−78.278	−84.250	−83.200	−83.600	−86.798	−92.362	−99.672	−109.030	−121.397	−398.736	−907.995
Total:													
BA	3,662.873	3,790.220	3,729.908	3,851.344	4,059.156	4,244.640	4,421.604	4,611.881	4,759.673	4,941.062	5,051.604	19,675.268	43,461.092
OT	3,656.046	3,820.075	3,758.920	3,832.311	4,026.555	4,195.589	4,385.939	4,599.122	4,724.292	4,886.693	5,013.383	19,633.450	43,242.879
Discretionary:													
BA	1,120.117	1,118.926	1,064.409	1,086.723	1,110.650	1,135.582	1,159.629	1,139.076	1,159.611	1,180.578	1,201.987	5,516.290	11,357.171
OT	1,174.609	1,180.249	1,151.360	1,135.114	1,149.790	1,168.256	1,188.973	1,187.700	1,192.125	1,201.332	1,225.431	5,784.769	11,780.330
Mandatory:													
BA	2,542.756	2,671.294	2,665.499	2,764.621	2,948.506	3,109.058	3,261.975	3,472.805	3,600.062	3,760.484	3,849.617	14,158.978	32,103.921
OT	2,481.437	2,639.826	2,607.560	2,697.197	2,876.765	3,027.333	3,196.966	3,411.422	3,532.167	3,685.361	3,787.952	13,848.681	31,462.549
Total on-budget:													
BA	2,917.985	3,003.274	2,894.221	2,958.672	3,107.799	3,228.534	3,337.729	3,455.558	3,525.594	3,624.025	3,646.263	15,192.500	32,781.669
OT	2,914.464	3,037.267	2,928.317	2,945.067	3,080.929	3,185.512	3,308.296	3,449.532	3,497.247	3,576.890	3,614.976	15,177.092	32,624.033
Discretionary:													
BA	1,114.303	1,113.633	1,058.957	1,081.090	1,104.833	1,129.573	1,153.427	1,132.670	1,152.999	1,173.758	1,194.951	5,488.086	11,295.891
OT	1,168.901	1,174.894	1,145.893	1,129.510	1,144.005	1,162.278	1,182.804	1,181.328	1,185.548	1,194.547	1,218.431	5,756.580	11,719.238
Mandatory:													
BA	1,803.682	1,889.641	1,835.264	1,877.582	2,002.966	2,098.961	2,184.302	2,322.888	2,372.595	2,450.267	2,451.312	9,704.414	21,485.778
OT	1,745.563	1,862.373	1,782.424	1,815.557	1,936.924	2,023.234	2,125.492	2,268.204	2,311.699	2,382.343	2,396.545	9,420.512	20,904.795
Revenues	3,188.539	3,459.531	3,587.670	3,715.285	3,864.756	4,025.170	4,204.151	4,389.325	4,590.782	4,803.620	5,029.396	18,652.412	41,669.686
Revenues on-budget	2,425.883	2,666.755	2,763.328	2,858.131	2,974.147	3,099.410	3,241.963	3,388.688	3,550.388	3,722.144	3,905.648	14,361.771	32,170.602
Surplus/Deficit (−)	−467.507	−360.544	−171.250	−117.026	−161.799	−170.419	−181.788	−209.797	−133.510	−83.073	16.013	−981.038	−1,573.193
On-budget	−488.581	−370.512	−164.989	−86.936	−106.782	−86.102	−66.333	−60.844	53.141	145.254	290.672	−815.321	−453.431
Off-budget	21.074	9.968	−6.261	−30.090	−55.017	−84.317	−115.455	−148.953	−186.651	−228.327	−274.659	−165.717	−1,119.762

TABLE 8.—FY 2016 BUDGET RESOLUTION TOTAL SPENDING AND REVENUE, AS PASSED BY THE HOUSE

[Fiscal year, in millions of dollars]

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2016–2020	2016–2025
SUMMARY												
Total spending:												
BA	3,720,708	3,706,440	3,833,169	4,038,671	4,260,329	4,407,830	4,615,122	4,758,942	4,899,220	5,116,195	19,559,316	43,356,626
OT	3,789,766	3,721,791	3,810,949	4,004,105	4,211,731	4,372,536	4,597,890	4,720,746	4,843,916	5,079,217	19,538,341	43,152,645

TABLE 8.—FY 2016 BUDGET RESOLUTION TOTAL SPENDING AND REVENUE, AS PASSED BY THE HOUSE—Continued

[Fiscal year, in millions of dollars]

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2016–2020	2016–2025
On-budget:												
BA	2,936,989	2,874,003	2,944,067	3,091,104	3,248,181	3,328,045	3,463,044	3,529,161	3,586,560	3,715,369	15,094,345	32,716,524
OT	3,010,185	2,894,439	2,927,276	3,062,270	3,205,614	3,298,984	3,452,546	3,497,999	3,538,491	3,685,327	15,099,785	32,573,131
Off-budget:												
BA	783,719	832,437	889,101	947,567	1,012,148	1,079,785	1,152,078	1,229,781	1,312,660	1,400,826	4,464,971	10,640,102
OT	779,581	827,352	883,672	941,835	1,006,117	1,073,552	1,145,344	1,222,746	1,305,425	1,393,890	4,438,556	10,579,514
Revenues:												
Total	3,459,531	3,587,670	3,715,285	3,864,756	4,025,170	4,204,151	4,389,325	4,590,782	4,803,620	5,029,396	18,652,412	41,669,686
On-budget	2,666,755	2,763,328	2,858,131	2,974,147	3,099,410	3,241,963	3,388,688	3,550,388	3,722,144	3,905,648	14,361,771	32,170,602
Off-budget	792,776	824,342	857,154	890,609	925,760	962,188	1,000,637	1,040,394	1,081,476	1,123,748	4,290,641	9,499,084
Recommended Change in Revenues:												
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
On-budget	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Off-budget	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Surplus/Deficit(−):												
Total	−346,693	−152,211	−95,372	−139,326	−187,244	−169,288	−185,412	−105,526	12,408	32,791	−920,846	−1,335,873
Macroeconomic Fiscal Impact	−16,458	−18,090	291	22	−683	−903	23,153	24,437	52,704	82,611	−34,917	147,086
On-budget	−343,430	−131,111	−69,145	−88,123	−106,204	−57,021	−63,858	52,389	183,653	220,321	−738,014	−402,529
Off-budget	13,195	−3,010	−26,518	−51,226	−80,357	−111,364	−144,707	−182,352	−223,949	−270,142	−147,915	−1,080,430
Debt Held by the Public (end of year)	13,839,152	14,041,709	14,146,945	14,340,084	14,562,210	14,744,287	15,130,369	15,302,457	15,164,550	15,237,647		
Debt Subject to Limit (end of year)	19,048,915	19,395,251	19,643,341	19,949,858	20,263,382	20,507,829	20,908,840	21,078,135	20,918,559	20,907,169		
BY FUNCTION												
National Defense (050):												
BA	531,334	582,506	607,744	620,019	632,310	644,627	657,634	670,997	683,771	698,836	2,973,913	6,329,778
OT	564,027	572,025	586,422	604,238	617,553	630,610	648,269	656,389	663,936	683,350	2,944,265	6,226,819
International Affairs (150):												
BA	38,342	39,623	40,539	41,437	42,390	42,861	44,081	45,070	46,098	47,148	202,331	427,589
OT	42,923	40,821	39,736	39,214	39,564	40,108	40,868	41,633	42,470	43,349	202,258	410,686
General Science, Space and Technology (250):												
BA	28,381	28,932	29,579	30,227	30,904	31,584	32,293	33,003	33,742	34,488	148,023	313,132
OT	29,003	28,924	29,357	29,798	30,388	30,957	31,637	32,338	33,059	33,795	147,471	309,257
Energy (270):												
BA	−3,581	1,410	1,189	1,196	1,259	1,309	1,335	1,375	1,332	−964	1,473	5,860
OT	654	649	234	307	472	728	863	1,000	1,037	−1,215	2,316	4,729
Natural Resources & Environment (300):												
BA	35,350	36,047	36,385	37,206	38,171	38,367	39,221	40,108	40,962	39,095	183,159	380,912
OT	38,113	38,268	37,674	37,747	38,304	38,685	39,361	40,319	40,486	38,471	190,105	387,427
Agriculture (350):												
BA	20,109	23,064	21,987	20,907	19,835	19,296	19,245	19,821	20,020	20,256	105,901	204,538
OT	21,164	23,194	21,396	20,275	19,386	18,849	18,830	19,391	19,553	19,851	105,416	201,891
Commerce & Housing Credit (370):												
On-budget:												
BA	−3,269	−12,373	−10,252	−8,801	−6,903	−6,522	−5,742	−4,965	−3,991	−3,370	−41,598	−66,189
OT	−16,617	−26,620	−24,998	−28,587	−27,479	−21,769	−22,819	−23,306	−23,635	−23,845	−124,301	−239,674
Off-budget:												
BA	−3,487	−3,347	−3,409	−3,619	−3,822	−3,886	−3,928	−3,972	−4,016	−4,159	−17,684	−37,645
OT	−3,488	−3,347	−3,409	−3,620	−3,822	−3,887	−3,929	−3,973	−4,017	−4,160	−17,686	−37,652
Transportation (400):												
BA	36,743	69,381	70,298	76,397	77,763	79,149	80,613	82,128	83,709	85,335	330,582	741,516
OT	79,181	69,500	73,623	76,051	76,767	78,369	79,946	81,336	82,724	83,983	375,122	781,481
Community & Regional Development (450):												
BA	7,082	7,688	8,089	8,381	8,409	8,305	8,304	8,359	8,447	8,579	39,649	81,641
OT	19,928	16,753	15,383	13,789	12,567	12,095	10,937	9,345	8,890	8,930	78,420	128,617
Education, Training, Employment, and Social Services (500):												
BA	80,620	84,746	87,029	85,514	87,901	88,908	90,148	91,237	92,744	94,400	425,810	883,247
OT	90,389	90,513	87,366	85,290	87,669	89,276	90,467	91,646	93,101	94,734	441,227	900,451
Health (550):												
BA	416,475	360,678	358,594	367,103	387,076	388,981	398,136	408,454	425,381	433,945	1,889,926	3,944,823
OT	426,860	364,823	360,468	367,916	377,341	389,025	398,233	408,529	425,477	434,143	1,897,408	3,952,815
Medicare (570):												
BA	577,726	580,837	580,782	639,293	680,575	726,644	808,204	825,577	834,148	927,410	3,059,213	7,181,196
OT	577,635	580,777	580,741	639,213	680,481	726,548	808,100	825,379	834,037	927,292	3,058,847	7,180,203
Income Security (600):												
BA	512,364	479,836	481,994	483,293	516,193	502,001	518,690	525,230	532,515	550,057	2,473,680	5,102,173
OT	513,709	475,234	471,951	477,470	510,603	496,856	518,542	519,391	521,105	543,361	2,448,967	5,048,222
Social Security (650):												
On-budget:												
BA	33,878	36,535	39,407	42,634	46,104	49,712	53,547	57,455	61,546	65,751	198,558	486,569
OT	33,919	36,535	39,407	42,634	46,104	49,712	53,547	57,455	61,546	65,751	198,599	486,610
Off-budget:												
BA	896,078	944,535	1,002,680	1,064,126	1,130,310	1,199,245	1,271,338	1,347,673	1,427,813	1,511,114	5,037,729	11,794,912
OT	891,941	939,450	997,251	1,058,395	1,124,279	1,193,013	1,264,605	1,340,639	1,420,579	1,504,179	5,011,316	11,734,331
Veterans Benefits and Services (700):												
BA	166,677	164,843	163,009	174,862	179,735	183,969	196,283	192,866	189,668	203,517	849,126	1,815,429
OT	170,121	164,387	162,385	174,048	178,778	183,019	195,255	191,834	188,553	202,383	849,719	1,810,763
Administration of Justice (750):												
BA	52,156	55,450	55,169	56,854	58,585	60,498	63,032	64,917	66,844	68,632	278,214	602,137
OT	56,006	57,547	56,659	56,572	58,392	59,992	62,485	64,355	66,264	68,051	285,177	606,325
General Government (800):												
BA	23,593	22,761	22,817	23,252	23,947	24,192	24,981	25,695	26,010	26,968	116,370	244,216
OT	23,576	23,202	23,279	23,084	23,602	24,309	25,114	25,840	25,878	26,825	116,743	244,709
Net Interest (900):												
On-budget:												
BA	366,542	414,802	477,785	531,097	578,726	612,198	642,470	667,176	684,394	696,025	2,368,952	5,671,217
OT	366,542	414,802	477,785	531,097	578,726	612,198	642,470	667,176	684,394	696,025	2,368,952	5,671,217
Off-budget:												
BA	−92,252	−91,570	−92,376	−94,506	−95,251	−95,817	−94,894	−92,787	−89,298	−83,567	−465,956	−922,318
OT	−92,252	−91,570	−92,376	−94,506	−95,251	−95,817	−94,894	−92,787	−89,298	−83,567	−465,956	−922,318
Allowances (920):												
BA	−33,462	−29,863	−32,175	−34,261	−39,009	−42,221	−46,013	−49,123	−50,652	−48,913	−168,770	−405,692
OT	−17,275	−24,277	−28,249	−31,078	−35,136	−38,438	−42,205	−45,430	−47,736	−48,058	−136,015	−357,882
Government-Wide Savings (930):												
BA	27,465	−15,712	−32,429	−41,554	−50,240	−55,831	−63,954	−71,850	−78,889	−113,903	−112,470	−496,897
OT	18,416	−3,005	−20,148	−32,383	−42,168	−50,276	−57,849	−65,124	−71,689	−93,929	−79,288	−418,155
Undistributed Offsetting Receipts (950):												
On-budget:												
BA	−73,514	−83,832	−90,115	−90,594	−92,193	−96,623	−99,437	−104,343	−111,213	−117,896	−430,248	−959,760
OT	−73,514	−83,832	−90,115	−90,594	−92,193	−96,623	−99,437	−104,343	−111,213	−117,896	−430,248	−959,760
Off-budget:												
BA	−16,620	−17,181	−17,794	−18,434	−19,089	−19,757	−20,438	−21,133	−21,839	−22,562	−89,118	−194,847
OT	−16,620	−17,181	−17,794	−18,434	−19,089	−19,757	−20,438	−21,133	−21,839	−22,562	−89,118	−194,847
Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism (970):												
BA	96,000	26,666	26,666	26,666	26,666	26,666	0	0	0	0	202,664	229,330
OT	45,442	34,238	26,940	26,191	25,916	24,776	9,956	2,869	278	0	158,727	196,606

TABLE 8.—FY 2016 BUDGET RESOLUTION TOTAL SPENDING AND REVENUE, AS PASSED BY THE HOUSE—Continued

[Fiscal year, in millions of dollars]

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2016–2020	2016–2025
Across the Board Adjustment (990):												
BA	−21	−22	−23	−23	−24	−24	−25	−26	−26	−27	−113	−241
OT	−17	−20	−21	−22	−23	−23	−24	−25	−25	−26	−103	−226

Notes:

1. Only on-budget amounts for fiscal years 2016–2025 are entered into the budget resolution legislative text. Off-budget amounts are shown for display purposes only.

2. The Office of Management and Budget and the Congressional Budget Office do not separately track outlays for the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) once funds have been appropriated. The budget, therefore, shows in function 970 GWOT outlays that result from new budget authority occurring in fiscal years 2016–2025 only. Outlays resulting from GWOT activity prior to fiscal year 2016 are included in budget functions 050 and 150.

TABLE 9.—FY 2016 BUDGET RESOLUTION DISCRETIONARY SPENDING, AS PASSED BY THE HOUSE

[Fiscal year, in millions of dollars]

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2016–2020	2016–2025
SUMMARY												
Total spending:												
BA	1,112,582	1,060,530	1,078,106	1,095,980	1,114,158	1,132,646	1,124,781	1,143,903	1,163,349	1,183,126	5,461,356	11,209,161
OT	1,173,418	1,127,581	1,118,039	1,132,445	1,147,476	1,163,133	1,170,379	1,176,793	1,187,230	1,211,974	5,698,959	11,608,469
Base Defense (050):												
BA	523,091	574,067	599,071	611,079	623,087	635,096	647,848	660,970	673,469	687,356	2,930,395	6,235,134
OT	555,724	563,440	577,586	595,199	608,294	621,075	638,488	646,364	653,639	671,938	2,900,243	6,131,747
Base Non Defense:												
BA	493,491	459,797	452,369	458,235	464,405	470,884	476,933	482,933	489,880	495,770	2,328,297	4,744,697
OT	572,252	529,904	513,512	511,055	513,267	517,282	521,936	527,560	533,314	540,036	2,639,989	5,280,116
BY FUNCTION												
National Defense (050):												
BA	523,091	574,067	599,071	611,079	623,087	635,096	647,848	660,970	673,469	687,356	2,930,395	6,235,134
OT	555,724	563,440	577,586	595,199	608,294	621,075	638,488	646,364	653,639	671,938	2,900,243	6,131,747
International Affairs (150):												
BA	38,893	39,637	40,498	41,366	42,286	43,210	44,181	45,155	46,170	47,208	202,680	428,604
OT	44,218	42,211	41,501	41,079	41,482	42,016	42,578	43,377	44,251	45,169	210,491	427,882
General Science, Space and Technology (250):												
BA	28,274	28,832	29,479	30,127	30,804	31,484	32,193	32,903	33,642	34,388	147,516	312,125
OT	28,898	28,822	29,257	29,698	30,288	30,857	31,537	32,238	32,959	33,695	146,964	308,250
Energy (270):												
BA	2,054	2,110	2,169	2,221	2,295	2,350	2,411	2,470	2,533	2,590	10,849	23,203
OT	2,435	2,284	2,243	2,290	2,375	2,433	2,498	2,561	2,622	2,688	11,627	24,429
Natural Resources & Environment (300):												
BA	34,366	35,256	36,284	37,357	38,429	39,524	40,692	41,831	43,025	44,260	181,693	391,024
OT	36,796	36,971	37,048	37,666	38,669	39,700	40,828	41,918	42,496	43,672	187,151	395,764
Agriculture (350):												
BA	6,073	6,229	6,409	6,593	6,781	6,968	7,169	7,365	7,576	7,790	32,085	68,953
OT	5,979	6,141	6,324	6,504	6,689	6,873	7,072	7,266	7,471	7,684	31,637	68,003
Commerce & Housing Credit (370):												
On-budget:												
BA	−13,410	−16,367	−16,546	−15,510	−13,141	−12,370	−11,196	−10,054	−9,054	−8,478	−74,974	−126,127
OT	−13,067	−16,159	−16,462	−15,566	−13,227	−12,459	−11,287	−10,146	−9,152	−8,575	−74,481	−126,099
Off-budget:												
BA	267	277	288	299	310	321	334	346	358	371	1,441	3,171
OT	266	277	288	298	310	320	333	345	357	370	1,439	3,164
Transportation (400):												
BA	31,049	31,800	32,656	33,535	34,444	35,360	36,304	37,264	36,688	37,656	163,484	346,756
OT	78,107	68,491	72,712	75,345	76,185	77,851	79,470	80,868	80,694	81,906	370,840	771,629
Community & Regional Development (450):												
BA	6,958	7,045	7,199	7,348	7,509	7,682	7,856	8,033	8,216	8,394	36,059	76,238
OT	19,577	16,283	14,037	11,996	10,565	10,081	8,591	7,908	8,083	8,268	72,458	115,389
Education, Training, Employment, and Social Services (500):												
BA	88,248	92,897	94,491	96,297	98,241	100,227	102,273	104,164	106,241	108,321	470,174	991,400
OT	91,356	96,048	93,128	94,795	96,633	98,594	100,539	102,404	104,413	106,434	471,960	984,344
Health (550):												
BA	57,726	58,920	60,297	61,690	63,145	64,602	66,127	67,650	69,241	70,842	301,778	640,240
OT	58,409	58,958	59,792	60,302	61,592	62,827	64,296	65,794	67,331	68,903	299,053	628,204
Medicare (570):												
BA	6,605	6,994	7,424	7,888	8,368	8,875	9,412	9,967	10,547	11,145	37,279	87,225
OT	6,556	6,969	7,356	7,814	8,291	8,794	9,326	9,878	10,456	11,047	36,986	86,487
Income Security (600):												
BA	61,414	62,035	62,909	63,908	65,548	67,096	68,664	70,242	71,806	73,260	315,814	666,882
OT	63,626	62,685	62,928	63,555	64,825	66,229	67,708	69,218	70,758	72,174	317,619	663,706
Social Security (650):												
On-budget:												
BA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
OT	41	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	41	41
Off-budget:												
BA	5,026	5,175	5,345	5,518	5,699	5,881	6,072	6,266	6,462	6,665	26,763	58,109
OT	5,089	5,190	5,316	5,487	5,668	5,849	6,039	6,232	6,428	6,630	26,750	57,928
Veterans Benefits and Services (700):												
BA	68,602	70,540	72,735	74,992	77,320	79,678	82,135	84,626	87,179	89,826	364,189	787,633
OT	68,316	69,857	72,097	74,198	76,474	78,841	81,279	83,723	86,267	88,853	360,942	779,905
Administration of Justice (750):												
BA	51,019	52,562	54,296	56,089	57,934	59,805	61,756	63,732	65,757	67,648	271,900	590,598
OT	51,279	52,625	54,091	55,778	57,450	59,312	61,249	63,212	65,223	67,128	271,224	587,349
General Government (800):												
BA	16,724	16,134	16,093	16,433	17,057	17,202	17,874	18,556	19,054	19,726	82,441	174,853
OT	16,682	16,555	16,578	16,239	16,689	17,275	17,935	18,608	18,790	19,504	82,743	174,855
Allowances (920):												
BA	−27,758	−27,069	−29,787	−31,883	−36,240	−40,404	−43,857	−46,986	−48,549	−50,852	−152,737	−383,385
OT	−14,628	−22,704	−26,536	−29,263	−33,180	−36,961	−40,595	−43,876	−46,223	−48,425	−126,311	−342,391
Government-Wide Savings (930):												
BA	31,382	−13,188	−29,847	−36,010	−42,360	−46,582	−53,441	−60,571	−66,986	−74,962	−90,023	−392,565
OT	22,333	−1,581	−18,166	−27,139	−34,488	−41,127	−47,436	−53,945	−59,886	−67,063	−59,041	−328,498
Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism (970):												
BA	96,000	26,666	26,666	26,666	26,666	26,666	0	0	0	0	202,664	229,330
OT	45,442	34,238	26,940	26,191	25,916	24,776	9,956	2,869	278	0	158,727	196,606
Across the Board Adjustment (990):												
BA	−21	−22	−23	−23	−24	−24	−25	−26	−26	−27	−113	−241
OT	−17	−20	−21	−22	−23	−23	−24	−25	−25	−26	−103	−226

TABLE 10—FY 2016 BUDGET RESOLUTION MANDATORY SPENDING, AS PASSED BY THE HOUSE

[Fiscal year, in millions of dollars]

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2016–2020	2016–2025
SUMMARY												
Total spending:												
BA	2,608,126	2,645,910	2,755,063	2,942,691	3,146,170	3,275,184	3,490,341	3,615,039	3,735,871	3,933,069	14,097,960	32,147,465
OT	2,616,348	2,594,209	2,692,910	2,871,660	3,064,255	3,209,403	3,427,511	3,543,953	3,656,685	3,867,242	13,839,382	31,544,176
On-budget:												
BA	1,829,700	1,818,925	1,871,595	2,000,941	2,140,031	2,201,601	2,344,669	2,391,870	2,430,031	2,539,279	9,661,193	21,568,643
OT	1,842,122	1,772,325	1,814,842	1,935,610	2,064,116	2,142,020	2,288,539	2,327,784	2,358,045	2,480,352	9,429,015	21,025,754
Off-budget:												
BA	778,426	826,985	883,468	941,750	1,006,139	1,073,583	1,145,672	1,223,169	1,305,840	1,393,790	4,436,767	10,578,822
OT	774,226	821,885	878,068	936,050	1,000,139	1,067,383	1,138,972	1,216,169	1,298,640	1,386,890	4,410,367	10,518,422
BY FUNCTION												
National Defense (050):												
BA	8,243	8,439	8,673	8,940	9,223	9,531	9,786	10,027	10,302	11,480	43,518	94,644
OT	8,303	8,585	8,836	9,039	9,259	9,535	9,781	10,025	10,297	11,412	44,022	95,072
International Affairs (150):												
BA	−551	−14	41	71	104	−349	−100	−85	−72	−60	−349	−1,015
OT	−1,295	−1,390	−1,765	−1,865	−1,918	−1,908	−1,710	−1,744	−1,781	−1,820	−8,233	−17,196
General Science, Space and Technology (250):												
BA	107	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	507	1,007
OT	105	102	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	507	1,007
Energy (270):												
BA	−5,635	−700	−980	−1,025	−1,036	−1,041	−1,076	−1,095	−1,201	−3,554	−9,376	−17,343
OT	−1,781	−1,635	−2,009	−1,983	−1,903	−1,705	−1,635	−1,561	−1,585	−3,903	−9,311	−19,700
Natural Resources & Environment (300):												
BA	984	791	100	−151	−258	−1,157	−1,472	−1,723	−2,063	−5,164	1,466	−10,112
OT	1,317	1,297	625	81	−365	−1,015	−1,467	−1,599	−2,011	−5,200	2,955	−8,337
Agriculture (350):												
BA	14,036	16,835	15,578	14,314	13,054	12,328	12,076	12,456	12,444	12,466	73,816	135,585
OT	15,185	17,053	15,072	13,771	12,697	11,976	11,758	12,125	12,082	12,167	73,779	133,888
Commerce & Housing Credit (370):												
On-budget:												
BA	10,141	3,994	6,294	6,709	6,238	5,848	5,454	5,089	5,063	5,108	33,376	59,938
OT	−3,550	−10,461	−8,536	−13,021	−14,252	−9,310	−11,532	−13,160	−14,483	−15,270	−49,820	−113,575
Off-budget:												
BA	−3,754	−3,624	−3,697	−3,918	−4,132	−4,207	−4,262	−4,318	−4,374	−4,530	−19,125	−40,816
OT	−3,754	−3,624	−3,697	−3,918	−4,132	−4,207	−4,262	−4,318	−4,374	−4,530	−19,125	−40,816
Transportation (400):												
BA	5,694	37,581	37,642	42,862	43,319	43,789	44,309	44,864	47,021	47,679	167,098	394,760
OT	1,074	1,009	911	706	582	518	476	468	2,030	2,077	4,282	9,852
Community & Regional Development (450):												
BA	124	643	890	1,033	900	623	448	326	231	185	3,590	5,403
OT	351	470	1,346	1,793	2,002	2,014	2,346	1,437	807	662	5,962	13,228
Education, Training, Employment, and Social Services (500):												
BA	−7,628	−8,151	−7,462	−10,783	−10,340	−11,319	−12,125	−12,927	−13,497	−13,921	−44,364	−108,153
OT	−967	−5,535	−5,762	−9,505	−8,964	−9,318	−10,072	−10,758	−11,312	−11,700	−30,733	−83,893
Health (550):												
BA	358,749	301,758	298,297	305,413	323,931	324,379	332,009	340,804	356,140	363,103	1,588,148	3,304,583
OT	368,451	305,865	300,676	307,614	315,749	326,198	333,937	342,735	358,146	365,240	1,598,355	3,324,611
Medicare (570):												
BA	571,121	573,843	573,358	631,405	672,207	717,769	798,792	815,610	823,601	916,265	3,021,934	7,093,971
OT	571,079	573,808	573,385	631,399	672,190	717,754	798,774	815,501	823,581	916,245	3,021,861	7,093,716
Income Security (600):												
BA	450,950	417,801	419,085	419,385	450,645	434,905	450,026	454,988	460,709	476,797	2,157,866	4,435,291
OT	450,083	412,549	409,023	413,915	445,778	430,627	450,834	450,173	450,347	471,187	2,131,348	4,384,516
Social Security (650):												
On-budget:												
BA	33,878	36,535	39,407	42,634	46,104	49,712	53,547	57,455	61,546	65,751	198,558	486,569
OT	33,878	36,535	39,407	42,634	46,104	49,712	53,547	57,455	61,546	65,751	198,558	486,569
Off-budget:												
BA	891,052	939,360	997,335	1,058,608	1,124,611	1,193,364	1,265,266	1,341,407	1,421,351	1,504,449	5,010,966	11,736,803
OT	886,852	934,260	991,935	1,052,908	1,118,611	1,187,164	1,258,566	1,334,407	1,414,151	1,497,549	4,984,566	11,676,403
Veterans Benefits and Services (700):												
BA	98,075	94,303	90,274	99,870	102,415	104,291	114,148	108,240	102,489	113,691	484,937	1,027,796
OT	101,805	94,530	90,288	99,850	102,304	104,178	113,976	108,111	102,286	113,530	488,777	1,030,858
Administration of Justice (750):												
BA	1,137	2,888	873	765	651	693	1,276	1,185	1,087	984	6,314	11,539
OT	4,727	4,922	2,568	794	942	680	1,236	1,143	1,041	923	13,953	18,976
General Government (800):												
BA	6,869	6,627	6,724	6,819	6,890	6,990	7,107	7,139	6,956	7,242	33,929	69,363
OT	6,894	6,647	6,701	6,845	6,913	7,034	7,179	7,232	7,088	7,321	34,000	69,854
Net Interest (900):												
On-budget:												
BA	366,542	414,802	477,785	531,097	578,726	612,198	642,470	667,176	684,394	696,025	2,368,952	5,671,217
OT	366,542	414,802	477,785	531,097	578,726	612,198	642,470	667,176	684,394	696,025	2,368,952	5,671,217
Off-budget:												
BA	−92,252	−91,570	−92,376	−94,506	−95,251	−95,817	−94,894	−92,787	−89,298	−83,567	−465,956	−922,318
OT	−92,252	−91,570	−92,376	−94,506	−95,251	−95,817	−94,894	−92,787	−89,298	−83,567	−465,956	−922,318
Allowances (920):												
BA	−5,704	−2,794	−2,388	−2,378	−2,769	−1,817	−2,156	−2,137	−2,103	1,939	−16,033	−22,307
OT	−2,647	−1,573	−1,713	−1,815	−1,956	−1,477	−1,610	−1,554	−1,513	367	−9,704	−15,491
Government-Wide Savings (930):												
BA	−3,917	−2,524	−2,582	−5,544	−7,880	−9,249	−10,513	−11,279	−11,903	−38,941	−22,447	−104,332
OT	−3,917	−1,424	−1,982	−5,244	−7,680	−9,149	−10,413	−11,179	−11,803	−26,866	−20,247	−89,657
Undistributed Offsetting Receipts (950):												
On-budget:												
BA	−73,514	−83,832	−90,115	−90,594	−92,193	−96,623	−99,437	−104,343	−111,213	−117,896	−430,248	−959,760
OT	−73,514	−83,832	−90,115	−90,594	−92,193	−96,623	−99,437	−104,343	−111,213	−117,896	−430,248	−959,760
Off-budget:												
BA	−16,620	−17,181	−17,794	−18,434	−19,089	−19,757	−20,438	−21,133	−21,839	−22,562	−89,118	−194,847
OT	−16,620	−17,181	−17,794	−18,434	−19,089	−19,757	−20,438	−21,133	−21,839	−22,562	−89,118	−194,847

National Defense: Function 050

FUNCTION SUMMARY

The National Defense function includes funds to develop, maintain, and equip the military forces of the United States. Historically, about 95 percent of the funding in this function goes to Department of Defense military activities; the remaining funding applies to atomic energy defense activities of the Department of Energy and other defense-related activities.

SENATE RESOLUTION

The Senate budget resolution calls for $531.3 billion in regular budget authority and $564.0 billion in outlays in fiscal year 2016. Regular discretionary budget authority in fiscal year 2016 totals $523.1 billion, with $555.7 billion in outlays; direct spending is $8.2 billion in budget authority and $8.3 billion in outlays. Over 10 years, regular budget authority totals $5,886.8 billion, and outlays are $5,821.5 billion.

As well, the function contains $89.0 billion in discretionary budget authority and $87.1 billion in related outlays for overseas contingency operations.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

The House amendment abides by the Budget Control Act discretionary defense cap of $523 billion for fiscal year 2016. In addition to this funding, the House amendment continues to prioritize national defense by providing needed dollars through the creation of the ''Defense Readiness and Modernization Fund.'' The fund will provide the Chairman of the House Committee on the Budget the ability to increase the defense allocation, in a deficit-neutral way, to support legislation that would provide additional resources for the Department of Defense [DOD]. In total with $90 billion, the House budget estimate for Overseas Contingency Operations funding for DOD, the fiscal year 2016 budget provides more than $613 billion total for defense spending—higher than the President's budget request for the fiscal year.

The House amendment includes a policy statement supporting national defense and the need to replace the defense discretionary sequester. Ultimately, the amendment fully supports U.S. troops, both at home and abroad, especially as the security environment becomes increasingly dangerous, complex, and unpredictable.

The House amendment specifies $531.3 billion in budget authority and $564.0 billion in outlays in fiscal year 2016, per current law. Discretionary budget authority is $523.1 billion, with $555.7 billion in associated outlays. Direct spending for fiscal year 2016 totals $8.2 billion in budget authority and $8.3 billion in outlays. The 10-year function totals for budget authority and outlays are $6,329.8 billion and $6,226.8 billion, respectively.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

The conference agreement calls for $531.3 billion in regular budget authority and $564.3 billion in outlays in fiscal year 2016. Regular discretionary budget authority in fiscal year 2016 totals $523.1 billion, with $555.5 billion in outlays; direct spending is $8.2 billion in budget authority and $8.8 billion in outlays. Over 10 years, regular budget authority totals $6,001.2 billion, and outlays are $5,920.9 billion. Additional resources for national security are provided outside this budget function through overseas contingency operations funding in Function 970.

The agreement supports funding for national defense that is consistent with current law, thus removing the possibility of across-the-board reductions to the national security budget. The agreement makes clear that U.S. troops will have the resources and support they need to meet the challenges of a complex security environment. Taking into account both funding in this function and the Overseas Contingency Operations function, the agreement supports national security spending levels above the President's request over the next 5 and 10 years.

International Affairs: Function 150

FUNCTION SUMMARY

The International Affairs function contains spending on international humanitarian and development assistance; international security assistance; the conduct of foreign affairs; foreign information and exchange activities; and international financial programs. Major agencies with programs funded under this function include the Departments of State, Treasury, and Agriculture; the U.S. Agency for International Development; and the Millennium Challenge Corporation. Negative numbers in the descriptions below reflect receipts from foreign-military sales and financing programs.

SENATE RESOLUTION

The Senate budget resolution calls for $40.7 billion in regular budget authority and $46.6 billion in outlays in fiscal year 2016. Regular discretionary budget authority in fiscal year 2016 totals $41.3 billion, with $47.9 billion in related outlays. Direct spending is −$551 million in budget authority and −$1.3 billion in outlays. Over 10 years, regular budget authority totals $451.8 billion, and outlays are $437.1 billion.

The above figures exclude the $7.0 billion in discretionary budget authority and $6.8 billion in related outlays provided in this function for overseas contingency operations.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

Since 2001, funding for the international affairs base budget (excluding Global War on Terrorism/Overseas Contingency Operations funding) has increased by 45 percent, adjusting for inflation. Yet more spending has not yielded better results. Duplicative programs, programs unrelated to vital U.S. national interests, and inefficiencies are prevalent in the budget and should be addressed. This amendment represents a thorough re-evaluation of accounts in this category and prioritizes programs that are both integral to the core mission and that effectively and efficiently achieve desired outcomes. For this budget category, the House amendment proposes a total of $38.3 billion in budget authority and $42.9 billion in outlays for fiscal year 2016. Most of the function's spending is discretionary, totaling $38.9 billion in budget authority and $44.2 billion in outlays for fiscal year 2016. Direct spending amounts are −$551 million in budget authority and −$1.3 billion in outlays. Over 10 years the resolution provides $427.6 billion in budget authority and $410.7 billion in outlays.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

The conference agreement calls for $40.2 billion in regular budget authority and $46.0 billion in outlays in fiscal year 2016. Regular discretionary budget authority in fiscal year 2016 totals $40.1 billion, with $47.1 billion in outlays; direct spending is $108 million in budget authority and −$1.1 billion in outlays. Over 10 years, regular budget authority totals $438.5 billion, with outlays of $431.7 billion. Additional resources for international affairs are provided outside this budget function through overseas contingency operations funding in Function 970.

The agreement supports international affairs activities with the goal of promoting U.S. interests abroad and supporting humanitarian and development assistance overseas. It recognizes the need for review of programs in this function as many of them continue to receive funding despite expired authorizations. The agreement supports efforts by the committees of jurisdiction to reform U.S. foreign aid programs to ensure that foreign assistance is prioritized to deliver aid in a more effective and transparent manner.

General Science, Space, and Technology: Function 250

FUNCTION SUMMARY

The General Science, Space, and Technology function includes the National Science Foundation, programs other than aviation programs at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and general science programs at the Department of Energy.

SENATE RESOLUTION

The Senate budget resolution calls for $30.0 billion in budget authority and $30.0 billion in outlays in fiscal year 2016. Discretionary budget authority in fiscal year 2016 totals $29.9 billion, with $29.9 billion in related outlays. Direct spending is $107 million in budget authority and $105 million in outlays. Over 10 years, budget authority totals $331.4 billion, and outlays are $328.5 billion.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

The House amendment reduces excess and unnecessary spending, while supporting core government responsibilities. It preserves basic research, providing stable funding for the National Science Foundation to conduct its authorized activities in science, space, and technology basic research, development, and science, technology, engineering, and math [STEM] education, while shifting the focus back to basic research. The amendment provides continued support for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration [NASA] and recognizes the vital strategic importance of the United States remaining the pre-eminent space-faring nation. The amendment aligns funding in accordance with the NASA core principles to support robust space capability, to allow for exploration beyond low Earth orbit, and to support the Nation's scientific and educational base. Total funding in the amendment is $28.4 billion and $29.0 billion in budget authority and outlays, respectively, in fiscal year 2016. Nearly all the function's spending is discretionary, with $28.3 billion in budget authority and $28.9 billion in outlays in fiscal year 2016; direct spending is $107 million in budget authority and $105 million in outlays. The 10-year totals are $313.1 billion in budget authority and $309.3 billion in outlays.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

Function 250 consists almost entirely of discretionary funding. The largest component of this category—about half of total spending—is for NASA's space-flight, research, and supporting activities. The conference agreement recognizes and supports preserving the Federal scientific community's original role as a venue for groundbreaking basic science research discoveries and a driver of innovation and economic growth. The agreement calls for $29.2 billion in budget authority and $29.6 billion in outlays in fiscal year 2016. Discretionary budget authority in fiscal year 2016 is $29.1 billion, with outlays of $29.5 billion; direct spending is $100 million in budget authority and $101 million in outlays. Over 10 years, budget authority totals $322.3 billion, and outlays are $318.0 billion.

Energy: Function 270

FUNCTION SUMMARY

The Energy function concerns the production, development, and use of energy for the country. This function contains civilian energy programs at agencies including the Departments of Energy and Agriculture, Tennessee Valley Authority, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, and Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Negative numbers in the function mainly reflect the incoming repayment of loans and receipts from the sale of electricity produced by Federal entities, which are accounted for as negative spending.

SENATE RESOLUTION

The Senate budget resolution calls for −$1.9 billion in budget authority and $2.4 billion in outlays in fiscal year 2016. Discretionary budget authority in fiscal year 2016 totals $3.1 billion, with $4.2 billion in related outlays. Direct spending is −$5.1 billion in budget authority and −$1.8 billion in outlays. Over 10 years, budget authority totals $6.9 billion, and outlays are $6.1 billion.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

A central aim of policies assumed in this function is to ensure that private sector capital is not crowded out by government overreach and bureaucratic waste. The policies also should protect taxpayers from poor government decision-making that wastes Federal dollars and increases energy prices. Finally, streamlining research and development activities across the Department of Energy will increase efficiency and consolidate

operations, leading to reduced costs. These are the guiding principles for energy policy in the House amendment. For fiscal year 2016, the budget resolution provides −$3.6 billion in budget authority, with $654 million in related outlays. The discretionary figures for fiscal year 2016 are $2.1 billion in budget authority and $2.4 billion in outlays, with direct spending of −$5.6 billion in budget authority and −$1.8 billion in outlays. Ten-year function totals are $5.9 billion in budget authority and $4.7 billion in outlays.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

The conference agreement promotes abundant and affordable American energy production and use. It envisions policies that realign the size and role of government involvement in the private sector, while empowering the committees of jurisdiction to pursue legislation in pursuit of these broad goals. The agreement provides −$3.2 billion in budget authority for fiscal year 2016 and $1.4 billion in outlays. These amounts include $2.6 billion in discretionary budget authority and $3.2 billion in discretionary outlays, with direct spending of −$5.8 billion in budget authority and −$1.8 billion in outlays. Spending over the next 10 years totals −$9.1 billion in budget authority and −$11.5 billion in outlays.

Natural Resources and Environment: Function 300

FUNCTION SUMMARY

The Natural Resources and Environment function focuses on the management, development, and maintenance of the Nation's natural heritage. This function includes conservation of land and water resources; development of water power and transportation infrastructure; and agencies and resources associated with the management and regulation of pollution, public and recreational lands, and natural resources.

SENATE RESOLUTION

The Senate budget resolution calls for $36.3 billion in budget authority and $39.0 billion in outlays in fiscal year 2016. Discretionary budget authority in fiscal year 2016 totals $34.5 billion, with $37.2 billion in related outlays. Direct spending is $1.8 billion in budget authority and $1.8 billion in outlays. Over 10 years, budget authority totals $406.5 billion, and outlays are $412.5 billion.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

The House amendment continues to support policies that will make America's natural resources available to producers who can provide a fair return to taxpayers. In addition to the receipts the Federal Government collects from royalties, rents, and bonus bids, the increased economic activity on Federal land will create jobs and boost economic output. The amendment supports reducing the Federal estate, and giving States and localities more control over the resources within their boundaries. The House budget provides $35.4 billion in budget authority for fiscal year 2016, with $38.1 billion in related outlays. The discretionary spending figures for fiscal year 2016 are $34.4 billion in budget authority and $36.8 billion in outlays. For direct spending in fiscal 2016, the House amendment provides $984 million in budget authority and $1.3 billion in outlays. Over 10 years, the function totals are $380.9 billion in budget authority and $387.4 billion in outlays.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

The conference agreement promotes a safe and healthy environment that can accompany robust economic growth and job creation. It supports better management of the lands and resources overseen by the Federal Government, including potentially reducing the Federal estate, and a more responsible relationship between regulatory agencies and the private sector. The agreement provides $36.4 billion in budget authority for fiscal year 2016 and $39.5 billion in outlays. These figures include $34.4 billion in discretionary budget authority and $37.0 billion in discretionary outlays, as well as $1.9 billion in direct spending budget authority with $2.5 billion in outlays. Spending through the 10-year budget window totals $406.0 billion in budget authority and $413.0 billion in outlays.

Agriculture: Function 350

FUNCTION SUMMARY

The Agriculture function helps provide for the continued success of American agriculture and the agricultural industry. This function includes only programs and policies concerned with agricultural production, including direct assistance and loans to farmers; export assistance; agricultural research; and marketing, information, and animal and plant health inspection services.

SENATE RESOLUTION

The Senate budget resolution calls for $20.6 billion in budget authority and $20.6 billion in outlays in fiscal year 2016. Discretionary budget authority in fiscal year 2016 totals $5.9 billion, with $5.9 billion in related outlays. Direct spending is $14.7 billion in budget authority and $14.7 billion in outlays. Over 10 years, budget authority totals $218.1 billion, and outlays are $213.3 billion.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

The House amendment recommends that a higher priority be given to competitive grant-based agricultural research. This type of research funding, in contrast to formula-based and other types, is most likely to spur agricultural productivity growth, which is important to enhancing the international competitiveness of U.S. agriculture over the longer term. Also, continued attention should be given to streamlining and, where possible, consolidating operations and activities across U.S. Department of Agriculture agencies, including in its large network of county field offices.

The 2014 farm bill made a number of reforms to agricultural policies, most notably by eliminating direct payments, but significant declines in market prices over the past year are expected to result in increased levels of assistance under the farm bill's new price- and revenue-based programs. While it is important to continue to reform agricultural programs, weather and market challenges continue to highlight the importance of maintaining a safety net for farmers.

In this function, the amendment provides $20.1 billion in budget authority and $21.2 billion in outlays for fiscal year 2016. Discretionary budget authority in fiscal 2016 is $6.1 billion; outlays are $6.0 billion. The direct spending share of the fiscal year 2016 function totals are $14.0 billion in budget authority and $15.2 billion in outlays. For the period of fiscal years 2016 through 2025, budget authority totals $204.5 billion and outlays are $201.9 billion.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

The conference agreement empowers the Committees on Agriculture in the House of Representatives and Senate to build on the reforms in the 2014 farm bill to ensure American agriculture remains a vital part of the Nation's economy while supporting rural economies in a fiscally responsible way. The agreement provides $19.1 billion in budget authority for fiscal year 2016 and $21.6 billion in outlays in this function. These amounts include $6.0 billion in discretionary budget authority and $5.9 billion in discretionary outlays, as well as direct spending amounts of $13.1 billion in budget authority and $15.6 billion in outlays. Total spending over the next 10 years in this function equals $204.2 billion in budget authority and $201.1 billion in outlays.

Commerce and Housing Credit: Function 370

FUNCTION SUMMARY

The Commerce and Housing Credit function includes mortgage credit, the U.S. Postal Service, deposit insurance, and most of the activities of the Departments of Commerce and Housing and Urban Development. Negative figures in this function mainly reflect the negative subsidy rates applied to certain loan and loan-guarantee programs scored under the guidelines of the Federal Credit Reform Act, such as the Federal Housing Administration [FHA] and the Government National Mortgage Association (commonly known as Ginnie Mae) programs.

SENATE RESOLUTION

The Senate budget resolution calls for $1.9 billion in budget authority and −$11.7 billion in outlays in fiscal year 2016. Discretionary budget authority in fiscal year 2016 totals −$8.1 billion, with −$7.9 billion in related outlays. Direct spending is $10.0 billion in budget authority and −$3.7 billion in outlays. Over 10 years, budget authority totals −$5.6 billion, and outlays are −$179.9 billion. These figures reflect the combined on- and off-budget amounts associated with this function.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

The House amendment envisions a Federal system that supports commerce and housing and regulates in an efficient manner, providing sufficient oversight where necessary without wasting taxpayer monies or stifling free enterprise. The amendment calls for minimizing subsidies to commercial entities where possible and protecting taxpayers from the risk of future bailouts. Additionally, it envisions adjusting the budgets of Federal agencies to levels necessary to effectively and efficiently execute their missions, and creating a climate that supports rather than stifles commerce and free enterprise. The House amendment also recommends giving the Postal Service the flexibility that any business needs to respond to changing market conditions, including declining mail volume, which is down more than 25 percent since 2006.

In this function, on a unified basis, the amendment provides −$6.8 billion in budget authority and −$20.1 billion in outlays for fiscal year 2016, of which −$13.1 billion is discretionary budget authority, with −$12.8 billion in outlays. Direct spending for fiscal 2016 is $6.4 billion in budget authority and −$7.3 billion in outlays. For fiscal years 2016 through 2025, the amendment provides −$103.8 billion in budget authority and −$277.3 billion in outlays.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

The conference agreement supports policies that would reduce the risk of taxpayer bailouts and promote free enterprise. Additionally, the agreement aims to remove burdensome regulations so the economy can run more efficiently. Fiscal year 2016 budget authority totals −$4.0 billion, and outlays total −$13.6 billion. Discretionary budget authority in fiscal year 2016 totals −$10.6 billion, with −$7.2 billion in related outlays. Direct spending budget authority is $6.6 billion in fiscal year 2016, with −$6.4 billion in outlays. Over 10 years, budget authority in Function 370 totals −$79.7 billion, and outlays are −$244.3 billion. These totals reflect combined on- and off-budget amounts.

Transportation: Function 400

FUNCTION SUMMARY

The Transportation function focuses on aid and regulation for ground transportation (including roads and highways, railroads, and

urban mass transit), air transportation (including aeronautical research conducted by NASA), and maritime commerce. The major agencies included in this function are the Department of Transportation (including the Federal Aviation Administration, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, and Maritime Administration), the Department of Homeland Security (including the Transportation Security Administration, United States Coast Guard, and the Federal Air Marshal Service), and the National Railroad Passenger Corporation.

SENATE RESOLUTION

The Senate budget resolution calls for $71.5 billion in budget authority and $88.4 billion in outlays in fiscal year 2016. Discretionary budget authority in fiscal year 2016 totals $29.1 billion, with $87.2 billion in related outlays. Direct spending is $42.4 billion in budget authority and $1.2 billion in outlays. Over 10 years, budget authority totals $750.4 billion, and outlays are $806.4 billion.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

The amendment prioritizes the solvency of the Highway Trust Fund, aligns spending with incoming revenue, and ensures any general fund transfers will be fully offset. It provides the authorizing committees flexibility through a deficit-neutral reserve fund. It also maintains essential funding for surface transportation, aviation, and safety—offset by reductions in other transportation activities of lower priority to the Federal Government.

For fiscal year 2016, the amendment provides $36.7 billion in budget authority and $79.2 billion in associated outlays. Those amounts consist of $31.0 billion in fiscal 2016 discretionary budget authority and $78.1 billion in outlays, and direct spending budget authority of $5.7 billion, with $1.1 billion in outlays. Over 10 years, the function totals are $741.5 billion in budget authority and $781.5 billion in outlays.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

The conference agreement provides essential funding for surface transportation, aviation, and safety, offset by reductions in transportation activities of lower priority to the Federal Government. Through deficit-neutral reserve funds, the agreement gives the committees of jurisdiction flexibility in future legislation involving the Highway Trust Fund. The fund is put on more sound financial footing and its solvency reinstated. The agreement provides $72.1 billion in budget authority for fiscal year 2016 and $87.2 billion in outlays. These amounts include $30.1 billion in discretionary budget authority and $86.1 billion in discretionary outlays, with direct spending of $42.0 billion in budget authority and $1.1 billion in outlays. Spending over the next 10 years totals $665.6 billion in budget authority and $748.7 billion in outlays.

Community and Regional Development: Function 450

FUNCTION SUMMARY

The Community and Regional Development function includes Federal programs to improve community economic conditions, promote rural development, and assist in Federal preparations for and in response to disasters. This function provides appropriated funding for the Community Development Block Grant Program, Department of Agriculture rural development programs, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Federal Emergency Management Agency, and other disaster mitigation and community development-related programs. It also provides direct funding for the National Flood Insurance Program.

SENATE RESOLUTION

The Senate budget resolution calls for $17.4 billion in budget authority and $22.4 billion in outlays in fiscal year 2016. Discretionary budget authority in fiscal year 2016 totals $16.3 billion, with $21.0 billion in related outlays. Direct spending is $1.2 billion in budget authority and $1.4 billion in outlays. Over 10 years, budget authority totals $186.5 billion, and outlays are $211.9 billion.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

While supporting programs in this function related to emergency preparedness and critical needs, the House amendment urges streamlining non-essential community and regional initiatives that are not core functions of the Federal Government. The House amendment provides $7.1 billion in budget authority and $19.9 billion in outlays for the function in fiscal year 2016. Discretionary spending for the year is $7.0 billion in budget authority and $19.6 billion in outlays. Budget authority for direct spending in fiscal 2016 is $124 million, with $351 million in outlays. Over 10 years, the amendment provides $81.6 billion and $128.6 billion in budget authority and outlays, respectively.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

The conference agreement funds programs relating to emergency preparedness and critical needs. Most of this category's funding is discretionary; the main direct spending component of this function is the National Flood Insurance Program. The agreement supports a more efficient grant system, which includes strengthening oversight of the grant programs to reduce waste and improve effectiveness. The agreement calls for $15.5 billion in budget authority and $20.7 billion in outlays in fiscal year 2016. Discretionary budget authority in fiscal year 2016 is $15.0 billion, with outlays of $19.6 billion; direct spending is $446 million in budget authority and $1.1 billion in outlays. Over 10 years, budget authority totals $139.4 billion, and outlays are $181.0 billion.

Education, Training, Employment, and Social Services: Function 500

FUNCTION SUMMARY

The Education, Training, Employment, and Social Services function includes funding for the Department of Education, some social services programs within the Department of Health and Human Services, and employment and training programs within the Department of Labor.

SENATE RESOLUTION

The Senate budget resolution calls for $86.3 billion in budget authority and $95.7 billion in outlays in fiscal year 2016. Discretionary budget authority in fiscal year 2016 totals $91.4 billion, with $95.0 billion in related outlays. Direct spending is −$5.1 billion in budget authority and $746 million in outlays. Over 10 years, budget authority totals $930.0 billion, and outlays are $942.3 billion.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

Rather than foster a system that drives up tuition and presents too many students with the difficult choice between crippling debt and stopping short of their highest educational attainment, the House amendment envisions a framework that uses Federal dollars more efficiently, accounts for student loans in a way that reflects their true cost, and invests in a sustainable higher education system. The amendment also views Federal support for K–12 education as just that: It should support, not seize control from, State and local entities. Real gains in education result from the diversity and creativity of State and local educators, and the trend toward centralizing rules and standards in Washington risks smothering effectiveness and innovation.

Toward these ends, the amendment provides $80.6 billion in budget authority and $90.4 billion in outlays for fiscal year 2016. Of those amounts, $88.2 billion is discretionary budget authority, with $91.4 billion in associated outlays. Direct spending in fiscal 2016 totals −$7.6 billion in budget authority and −$967 million in outlays. (The negative figures result mainly from the methodology used to score direct student loans under the Federal Credit Reform Act.) Over 10 years, the House amendment provides $883.2 billion in total budget authority and $900.5 billion in outlays.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

The conference agreement supports reforms to the current educational system in order to give the Nation's students the opportunity for a better, more affordable education. In addition, it encourages the enactment of policies that better equip Americans of all ages to excel not only in school but also in the workforce. Function 500 totals amount to $83.3 billion in budget authority and $93.3 billion in outlays in fiscal year 2016. Discretionary budget authority in fiscal year 2016 totals $89.8 billion, with $93.8 billion in related outlays. Direct spending budget authority is −$6.5 billion in fiscal year 2016, with −$504 million in outlays. Over 10 years, budget authority totals $932.6 billion, and outlays are $942.5 billion.

Health: Function 550

FUNCTION SUMMARY

The Health function contains spending on a variety of health care services administered by the Department of Health and Human Services. This function also includes health research conducted by the National Institutes of Health; public health and safety programs conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; primary health care services conducted by the Health Resources and Services Administration; and the regulation of pharmaceuticals, medical devices, and food products conducted by the Food and Drug Administration. The most significant drivers of spending in the function are the coverage provisions of the President's health care law and Medicaid.

SENATE RESOLUTION

The Senate budget resolution calls for $414.4 billion in budget authority and $424.7 billion in outlays in fiscal year 2016. Discretionary budget authority in fiscal year 2016 totals $57.8 billion, with $58.4 billion in related outlays. Direct spending is $356.6 billion in budget authority and $366.3 billion in outlays. Over 10 years, budget authority totals $4,376.5 billion, and outlays are $4,384.5 billion.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

The amendment calls for repealing the Affordable Care Act in full—its spending, taxes, regulations, and mandates—as a first step toward introducing real, patient-centered health care reform in America. The amendment contains a policy statement describing the contours of this strategy, emphasizing affordability, accessibility, quality, choices, innovation, responsiveness, and legal reforms. The amendment also supports major reforms to strengthen and secure Medicaid benefits, such as converting the Federal share of Medicaid into State Flexibility Funds that each State may tailor to its own needs. For fiscal year 2016, the amendment provides $416.5 billion in budget authority in Function 550, with $426.9 billion in associated outlays. For discretionary spending, the amendment provides $57.7 billion in budget authority and $58.4 billion in outlays in fiscal year 2016. The direct spending amounts for that year are $358.7 billion in budget authority and $368.5 billion in outlays. Over 10

years, the totals are $3,944.8 billion in budget authority and $3,952.8 billion in outlays.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

The conference agreement calls for the repeal of the President's health care law. The agreement accommodates legislation from the committees of jurisdiction in the House and Senate to continue to develop health care solutions that lower costs and improve access to care. It envisions Medicaid reform, based on a framework proposed by the chairmen of the committees of jurisdiction in the House and the Senate, to modernize and improve the program while increasing State flexibility and protecting the most vulnerable populations.

The conference agreement calls for $433.1 billion in budget authority and $430.9 billion in outlays in fiscal year 2016. Discretionary budget authority in fiscal year 2016 totals $57.7 billion, with $58.4 billion in related outlays. Direct spending in fiscal year 2016 is $375.3 billion in budget authority and $372.5 billion in outlays. Over 10 years, budget authority totals $4,337.2 billion, and outlays are $4,334.4 billion.

Medicare: Function 570

FUNCTION SUMMARY

The Medicare function includes only the Medicare program, which provides health insurance to senior citizens and certain persons with disabilities. Nearly 99 percent of spending in this function occurs on the direct side of the budget, and almost all of the direct spending consists of payments for Medicare benefits. The balance of spending is discretionary annual appropriations for the cost of administering and monitoring the Medicare program.

SENATE RESOLUTION

The Senate budget resolution calls for $567.2 billion in budget authority and $567.1 billion in outlays in fiscal year 2016. Discretionary budget authority in fiscal year 2016 totals $6.6 billion, with $6.6 billion in related outlays. Direct spending is $560.6 billion in budget authority and $560.6 billion in outlays. Over 10 years, budget authority totals $6,930.9 billion, and outlays are $6,929.9 billion.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

The amendment recognizes the imperative of saving, strengthening, and securing the future of Medicare. The current spending trajectory of Medicare will result in an inability to provide the promised benefits to America's seniors in the not-so-distant future. The amendment pursues a responsible course to ensure the viability of the Medicare Program through a number of structural reforms, including transitioning to a premium support model bringing patient choices and helpful competition into the program, allowing for improvement in quality care, increasing accessibility and affordability, and a real check on wasteful practices. For fiscal year 2016, the function totals in the amendment are $577.7 billion in budget authority and $577.6 billion in outlays. The direct spending portion for fiscal 2016 totals $6.6 billion in budget authority and outlays. Far more significant is the function's direct spending of $571.1 billion in budget authority and outlays. Over 10 years, Function 570 spending is projected at $7,181.2 billion in budget authority and $7,180.2 billion in outlays.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

The conference agreement supports the repeal of the President's health care law, including the repeal of the Medicare Independent Payment Advisory Board. The agreement proposes the same amount of Medicare savings reflected in the Senate-passed fiscal year 2016 budget as a target to extend the life of the Hospital Insurance trust fund and tasks the committees of jurisdiction in the House and Senate with determining the specific Medicare reforms needed to bring spending levels under current law in line with the budget. Finally, the conference agreement accounts for the full cost of H.R. 2, the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015.

The conference agreement calls for $579.4 billion in budget authority and $579.4 billion in outlays in fiscal year 2016. Discretionary budget authority in fiscal year 2016 totals $6.5 billion, with $6.5 billion in related outlays. Direct spending is $572.9 billion in budget authority and $572.9 billion in outlays. Over 10 years, budget authority totals $7,076.5 billion, and outlays are $7,075.6 billion.

Income Security: Function 600

FUNCTION SUMMARY

The Income Security function covers a range of income security programs that provide cash or near-cash assistance to low-income persons, and benefits to certain retirees, persons with disabilities, and the unemployed.

SENATE RESOLUTION

The Senate budget resolution calls for $529.5 billion in budget authority and $528.8 billion in outlays in fiscal year 2016. Discretionary budget authority in fiscal year 2016 totals $65.1 billion, with $65.4 billion in related outlays. Direct spending is $464.4 billion in budget authority and $463.4 billion in outlays. Over 10 years, budget authority totals $4,899.5 billion, and outlays are $4,858.0 billion.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

The House amendment proposes to continue the successful welfare reforms of the 1990s by improving work requirements for means-tested programs to help more people escape poverty and move up the economic ladder. It focuses resources on programs that deliver real results, restraining spending to reasonable levels, reducing improper payments, and allowing States more ability to improve programs through policy innovation. For fiscal year 2016, the amendment provides $512.4 billion in budget authority, with $513.7 billion in associated outlays. The amendment provides $61.4 billion in fiscal 2016 discretionary budget authority, with $63.6 billion in outlays, along with $451.0 billion in budget authority and $450.1 billion in outlays for direct spending. Over 10 years, the totals are $5,102.2 billion in budget authority and $5,048.2 billion in outlays.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

The conference agreement assumes the enactment of proposals to reduce poverty and increase opportunity and upward mobility for struggling Americans on the road to personal and financial independence. Based on the successful welfare reforms of the 1990s, these proposals would improve work requirements and provide flexible funding for States to help those most in need find gainful employment, escape poverty, and move up the economic ladder. The agreement focuses resources on programs that deliver real results, reducing wasteful spending and empowering States to make key decisions and improve welfare programs through policy innovation. In fiscal year 2016, the agreement provides $523.1 billion in total budget authority and $523.6 billion in total outlays. Discretionary budget authority is $63.2 billion, and outlays are $64.2 billion. Direct spending is $459.9 billion in budget authority and $459.4 billion in outlays. Over 10 years, the totals are $4,985.2 billion in budget authority and $4,936.6 billion in outlays.

Social Security Retirement and Disability: Function 650

FUNCTION SUMMARY

The Social Security function consists of the payroll-tax-financed programs collectively known as Social Security: Old-Age and Survivors Insurance and Disability Insurance. These programs provide retirement and disability benefits to approximately 56 million eligible retired workers, disabled persons, and their spouses, dependents, and survivors. This function includes both Social Security benefit payments and funds to administer the program and ensure program integrity.

SENATE RESOLUTION

The Senate budget resolution calls for $930.0 billion in budget authority and $925.9 billion in outlays in fiscal year 2016. Discretionary budget authority in fiscal year 2016 totals $5.0 billion, with $5.1 billion in related outlays. Direct spending is $924.9 billion in budget authority and $920.7 billion in outlays. Over 10 years, budget authority totals $12,285.9 billion, and outlays are $12,225.4 billion.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

Absent structural reform, Social Security will fail to fulfill its promises to the Nation's retired and disabled persons—and that outcome will occur sooner than expected. With each year Congress delays, the policy changes needed to correct the program's fiscal trajectory will become larger and more wrenching to adopt, eventually leading to sudden, steep reductions in benefits. The House amendment calls for a bipartisan way forward, encouraging the President and Congress to begin the process of reforming Social Security. The budget provides $930.0 billion in unified Function 650 budget authority in fiscal year 2016, and $925.9 billion in outlays. The discretionary figures for fiscal 2016 are $5.0 billion in budget authority and $5.1 billion in outlays. Direct spending that year is $924.9 billion in budget authority and $920.7 billion in outlays. Over 10 years, the totals are $12,281.5 billion in budget authority and $12,220.9 billion in outlays.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

The conference agreement presumes the President and Congress will work together on a bipartisan basis to preserve Social Security for current and future generations. It assumes enactment of legislation that will prevent the near-term insolvency of the Disability Insurance program; improve the administration and coordination of benefits; and increase employment opportunities for disabled workers. The agreement also assumes the President will submit legislation to Congress addressing the long-term insolvency both of the Old-Age and Survivors Insurance program and the Disability Insurance program. In fiscal year 2016, the agreement provides $928.9 billion in total budget authority and $925.0 billion in total outlays. Discretionary budget authority is $5.0 billion, and outlays are $5.1 billion. Direct spending is $923.9 billion in budget authority and $919.8 billion in outlays. Over 10 years, the totals are $12,278.2 billion in budget authority and $12,216.7 billion in outlays. These figures reflect the combined on- and off-budget amounts associated with this function.

Veterans Benefits and Services: Function 700

FUNCTION SUMMARY

The Veterans Benefits and Services function includes Veterans' Health Administration and health services (majority of the discretionary spending), veterans' pensions and disability compensation (majority of the direct spending), and other veterans services.

SENATE RESOLUTION

The Senate budget resolution calls for $166.7 billion in budget authority and $170.2

billion in outlays in fiscal year 2016. Discretionary budget authority in fiscal year 2016 totals $68.6 billion, with $68.3 billion in related outlays. Direct spending is $98.1 billion in budget authority and $101.8 billion in outlays. Over 10 years, budget authority totals $1,817.4 billion, and outlays are $1,812.7 billion.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

The House amendment fully funds veterans' discretionary benefits and services by providing CBO's estimated funding level of veterans discretionary programs needs for fiscal year 2016, which is a 5 percent increase above last year's level. The House Budget Committee will continue to closely monitor the Department of Veterans Affairs' progress to ensure resources provided by Congress are sufficient and efficiently used to provide benefits and services to veterans. The resolution calls for $166.7 billion in budget authority and $170.1 billion in outlays in fiscal year 2016 for veterans' benefits and services. Fiscal year 2016 discretionary spending is $68.6 billion in budget authority and $68.3 billion in outlays, while direct spending totals $98.1 billion in budget authority and $101.8 billion in outlays. The 10-year totals for budget authority and outlays are $1,815.4 billion and $1,810.8 billion, respectively.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

The conference agreement fully funds veterans' discretionary benefits and services by providing CBO's estimated funding level of veterans discretionary program needs for fiscal year 2016, a 5-percent increase above last year's level. The House and Senate Budget Committees will continue to closely monitor the Department of Veterans Affairs' progress to ensure resources provided by Congress are sufficient and efficiently used to provide benefits and services to veterans. The agreement calls for $166.3 billion in budget authority and $171.9 billion in outlays in fiscal year 2016 for Veterans benefits and services. Discretionary budget authority in fiscal year 2016 is $68.6 billion, with outlays of $68.3 billion; direct spending is $97.7 billion in budget authority and $103.5 billion in outlays. Over 10 years, budget authority totals $1,812.8 billion, and outlays are $1,815.7 billion.

Administration of Justice: Function 750

FUNCTION SUMMARY

The Administration of Justice function includes programs to provide judicial services, police protection, law enforcement (including civil rights), rehabilitation and incarceration of criminals, and the general maintenance of domestic order.

SENATE RESOLUTION

The Senate budget resolution calls for $52.5 billion in budget authority and $56.8 billion in outlays in fiscal year 2016. Discretionary budget authority in fiscal year 2016 totals $51.3 billion, with $52.0 billion in related outlays. Direct spending is $1.2 billion in budget authority and $4.8 billion in outlays. Over 10 years, budget authority totals $618.2 billion, and outlays are $621.3 billion.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

With the risk of terrorism, as well as a tidal wave of debt, the House amendment focuses Federal taxpayer money for the Departments of Justice and Homeland Security on administering justice, arresting and prosecuting terrorists, investigating crimes, and seeking punishment for those guilty of unlawful behavior. For fiscal year 2016, the House amendment provides $52.2 billion in total budget authority and $56.0 billion in outlays, focused on core Federal Government responsibilities and reducing duplication, excess, and unnecessary spending. The discretionary totals—the majority of the function's spending—are $51.0 billion in budget authority and $51.3 billion in outlays; direct spending is $1.1 billion in budget authority and $4.7 billion in outlays. Over 10 years the amendment provides $602.1 billion and $606.3 billion in budget authority and outlays, respectively.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

The vast majority of this category's funding is discretionary and used for Federal law-enforcement programs, litigation and judicial activities, correctional operations, and border security. A small amount of direct spending funds certain immigration activities, the Crime Victims Fund, the Assets Forfeiture Fund, and the Treasury Forfeiture Fund, among other purposes. Federal taxpayer money for the Departments of Justice and Homeland Security should be focused on core responsibilities, with priority given to those activities that are most essential to the Federal Government in this area. The conference agreement calls for $51.0 billion in budget authority and $56.5 billion in outlays in fiscal year 2016. Discretionary budget authority in fiscal year 2016 is $51.2 billion, with outlays of $52.0 billion; direct spending is −$196 million in budget authority and $4.5 billion in outlays. Over 10 years, budget authority totals $609.2 billion, and outlays are $614.3 billion.

General Government: Function 800

FUNCTION SUMMARY

The General Government function includes the activities of the White House and the Executive Office of the President, legislative branch, and programs to carry out the administrative responsibilities of the Federal Government, including personnel management, fiscal operations, and property control.

SENATE RESOLUTION

The Senate budget resolution calls for $23.8 billion in budget authority and $23.7 billion in outlays in fiscal year 2016. Discretionary budget authority in fiscal year 2016 totals $17.2 billion, with $17.1 billion in related outlays. Direct spending is $6.6 billion in budget authority and $6.6 billion in outlays. Over 10 years, budget authority totals $266.3 billion, and outlays are $263.2 billion.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

The House amendment advances the idea that a government seeking greater efficiency in its programs should demand no less from its own operations. This should be achieved by eliminating waste across Federal Government branches and agencies wherever possible, in order to scale back government where it has expanded needlessly or beyond its proper role. The amendment provides $23.6 billion in budget authority and outlays for fiscal year 2016. The totals consist of $16.7 billion in discretionary budget authority and outlays, and $6.9 billion in direct spending budget authority and outlays. For fiscal years 2016 through 2025, the function totals are $244.2 billion in budget authority and $244.7 billion in outlays.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

The conference agreement supports policies that reduce waste and streamline government operations across all Federal Government branches and agencies. Function 800 totals amount to $23.2 billion in budget authority and $23.0 billion in outlays in fiscal year 2016. Discretionary budget authority and outlays total $17.0 billion in fiscal year 2016. Direct spending budget authority is $6.2 billion in fiscal year 2016, with $6.0 billion in outlays. Over 10 years, budget authority in totals $251.3 billion, and outlays are $248.5 billion.

Net Interest: Function 900

FUNCTION SUMMARY

The Net Interest function contains the interest paid to private and foreign government holders of U.S. Treasury securities. This function includes interest on the public debt less the interest received by the Federal Government from trust fund investments and loans to the public. It contains direct payments, with no discretionary components.

SENATE RESOLUTION

The Senate budget resolution calls for $274.4 billion in budget authority and $274.4 billion in outlays, all of which are direct spending, in fiscal year 2016. Over 10 years, budget authority totals $4,788.1 billion, and outlays are $4,788.1 billion. These figures reflect the combined on- and off-budget amounts associated with this function.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

The House amendment calls for $274.3 billion of direct spending for net interest payments in fiscal year 2016. The proposed 10-year total for net interest payments is $4,748.9 billion.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

The conference agreement calls for $275.3 billion of direct spending for net interest payments in fiscal year 2016. The proposed 10-year total for net interest payments is $4,757.1 billion. There are no budget policies for this function.

Allowances: Function 920

FUNCTION SUMMARY

The Allowances function displays the budgetary effects of proposals that cannot easily be distributed across other budget functions. It contains CBO's estimate of the budgetary effects of the Budget Control Act's automatic enforcement provisions for non-defense spending. Function 920 also contains government-wide savings. For example, this function includes CBO's estimate of the macroeconomic feedback effect resulting from the deficit-reduction path assumed in the budget resolution conference agreement.

SENATE RESOLUTION

The Senate budget resolution calls for −$12.3 billion in budget authority and −$5.6 billion in outlays in fiscal year 2016. Discretionary budget authority in fiscal year 2016 totals −$15.2 billion, with −$11.5 billion in related outlays. Direct spending is $2.8 billion in budget authority and $5.9 billion in outlays. Over 10 years, budget authority totals −$677.9 billion, and outlays are −$630.7 billion.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

The House amendment recommends no changes in this function, leaving it instead at the CBO baseline levels. The CBO baseline includes total savings of $33.5 billion in budget authority and $17.3 billion in outlays in fiscal year 2016, and $405.7 billion and $357.9 billion in reductions for budget authority and outlays over 10 years, respectively, to reflect the impact of the Budget Control Act [BCA] on non-defense and non-Medicare spending. The following two components are included in the baseline:

1. A reduction of $383.4 billion in budget authority and $342.4 billion in outlays for non-defense activities, needed to comply with the discretionary spending caps set by section 101 of the BCA;

2. A $22.3 billion and $15.5 billion reduction in budget authority and outlays, respectively, to non-Medicare and non-defense direct spending programs necessary to comply with the automatic-enforcement procedure (the direct spending sequester) mandated by the BCA.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

The conference agreement calls for $25.3 billion in budget authority and $45.5 billion in outlays in fiscal year 2016. Discretionary budget authority in fiscal year 2016 totals

−$5.4 billion, with $14.9 billion in related outlays. Direct spending budget authority and outlays each total $30.7 billion. Over 10 years, total budget authority is −$908.2 billion, and outlays are −$798.6 billion.

Government-Wide Savings: Function 930

FUNCTION SUMMARY

This House category includes various policies that produce government-wide savings in multiple categories rather than in a single, specific budget function.

SENATE RESOLUTION

The Senate resolution does not contain a Function 930.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

The resolution calls for spending of $27.5 billion and $18.4 billion in budget authority and outlays, respectively, in fiscal year 2016. The 10-year totals for budget authority and outlay savings are −$496.9 billion and −$418.2 billion, respectively. (The figures appear in Function 930 in the summary tables.) As is true elsewhere, specific policies will be determined by the appropriate committees of jurisdiction.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

The conference agreement does not contain a Function 930.

Undistributed Offsetting Receipts: Function 950

FUNCTION SUMMARY

The Undistributed Offsetting Receipts function comprises major offsetting receipts items that would distort the funding levels of other functional categories if they were distributed to them.

SENATE RESOLUTION

All funding in this function is direct spending. The Senate budget resolution calls for −$86.0 billion in budget authority and outlays in fiscal year 2016 (The minus sign indicates receipts flowing into the Treasury.). Over 10 years, budget authority totals −$1,102.6 billion, with −$1,102.8 billion in outlays. These figures reflect the combined on- and off-budget amounts associated with this function.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

The House amendment examines the management of Federal fleet vehicles, real-property, and lands among other assets in an effort to help taxpayers recoup billions of dollars devoted to unused government property. The House amendment calls for −$90.1 billion in budget authority and outlays in fiscal year 2016, all of which is direct spending. Over 10 years, budget authority and outlays total −$1,154.6 billion.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

The conference agreement calls for −$99.2 billion in budget authority and outlays for fiscal year 2016. The negative figures reflect receipts flowing into the Treasury. Over 10 years, budget authority and outlays each total −$1,292.4 billion. These figures reflect the combined on- and off-budget amounts associated with this function.

Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism: Function 970

FUNCTION SUMMARY

This function includes funding for the prosecution of Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism and other closely related activities.

SENATE RESOLUTION

The Senate resolution does not have a Function 970.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

The amendment assumes $90.0 billion as a placeholder estimate of the budgetary resources necessary to fulfill the Department of Defense's war policy, with final decisions still pending assessment. Combined with the base resources for National Defense, the fiscal year 2016 budget provides more than $613 billion in total defense spending for the Global War on Terrorism. The House amendment provides for higher total defense resources than the President's request in fiscal year 2016, the President's 5-year plan, and the President's 10-year levels.

This function also estimates $6 billion in funding for the activities of civilian agencies—primarily the State Department and USAID—as part of the integrated civil-military strategy for securing American objectives in the frontline states.

The House amendment provides $96.0 billion in budget authority and $45.4 billion in outlays for fiscal year 2016. The 10-year totals for budget authority and outlays are $229.3 billion and $196.6 billion, respectively.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

The agreement supports overseas contingency operations funding at a level appropriate to meet the challenges posed by an increasingly dangerous security environment, and reflects a realistic ramp-down path for this funding over the budget window. Funding in this function will provide support for military and diplomatic operations to counter the danger from growing global instability and threats posed by those who challenge U.S. security interests at home and abroad. The agreement sets the overall allocation for overseas contingency operations funding. The committees of jurisdiction will determine the specific policies.

The conference agreement calls for $96.3 billion in budget authority and $48.8 billion in outlays in fiscal year 2016. There is no direct spending in this function. Over 10 years, budget authority totals $378.2 billion, and outlays are $373.8 billion.

Across-the-Board Adjustment: Function 990

FUNCTION SUMMARY

This House function reflects the impact of an across-the-board rescission affecting the Department of Homeland Security that was included in the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015 (Public Law 113–235).

SENATE RESOLUTION

The Senate resolution does not contain a Function 990.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

The CBO baseline for Function 990 includes reductions of $241 million in budget authority and $226 million in outlays over 10 years. The resolution recommends retaining the baseline levels.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

The conference agreement does not contain a separate Function 990.

Revenues

FUNCTION SUMMARY

Federal revenues are comprised of taxes and other collections from the public that result from the Government's sovereign powers to impose levies under Article I, section 8, clause I of the U.S. Constitution. Federal revenues include individual and corporate incomes taxes, social insurance taxes, excise taxes, estate and gift taxes, customs duties, and miscellaneous receipts.

SENATE RESOLUTION

The Senate budget resolution calls for $3,459.5 billion in revenues in fiscal year 2016 ($2,666.8 billion on-budget, $792.8 billion off-budget) and $41,669.7 billion over 10 years ($32,170.6 billion on-budget, $9,499.1 billion off-budget).

HOUSE AMENDMENT

The U.S. tax code is notoriously complex, patently unfair, and highly inefficient. Its complexity distorts decisions to work, save, and invest, which leads to slower economic growth, lower wages, and less job creation. The House amendment proposes to correct the notorious complexity, unfairness, and inefficiency of U.S. taxes by calling for a reformed tax code that is simpler and fairer and promotes growth. A revamped tax code could raise just as much revenue as the system in place today, but without the harmful tax policies embedded in current law, such as the Affordable Care Act. A restructured and more efficient tax code with a broader tax base and lower tax rates also would spark greater economic growth and create more jobs.

The amendment's revenue projections—$3.459.5 billion in fiscal year 2016 and $41.669.7 billion through fiscal year 2025—are built on such a tax reform model.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

The U.S. tax code is overly complicated, inefficient, and archaic. The current structure hurts economic growth, frustrates working Americans, and pushes American businesses overseas. The conference agreement assumes that the tax-writing committees will adopt a tax reform proposal that reduces marginal rates but broadens the tax base to create a fair, efficient, competitive, and pro-growth tax regime that is revenue neutral. Any revenue-neutral tax reform would include a repeal of the harmful tax increases in the President's health care law.

The conference agreement calls for revenues of $3,470.7 billion in fiscal year 2016 ($2,676.7 billion on-budget, $794.0 billion off-budget) and $41,750.5 billion over 10 years ($32,237.4 billion on-budget, $9,513.1 billion off-budget). The difference between the conference agreement revenues and those of the Senate resolution and House amendment is due to CBO's March reestimate at projected revenues. The conference agreement contains no tax increases.

RECONCILIATION AND REPORT SUBMISSIONS

The budget resolution conference agreement provides a path for the committees of jurisdiction in the House and Senate through reconciliation to repeal the Affordable Care Act with its burdensome mandates and restrictions, a first step toward introducing real, patient-centered health care reform.

SENATE RESOLUTION

Section 201 of the Senate resolution instructs the Finance Committee and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions each to report, by July 31, 2015, changes in laws within their jurisdictions to reduce the deficit by no less than $1 billion over the 10-year period of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

Section 202 of the resolution prohibits a reconciliation bill reported under section 201 from including a provision that would increase the statutory debt limit. The prohibition is enforced with a point of order that, if raised, would require an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Senate to waive.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

Section 201 of the House amendment instructs 13 authorizing committees to achieve specified amounts of deficit reduction by a deadline of July 15, 2015.

While the amendment instruction provides flexibility as to how the authorizing committees may achieve these savings, it assumes savings will be achieved through reductions in direct spending. The amounts reconciled are intended to serve as a floor on required savings, not a ceiling. The targets are for the total of the 10-year period of fiscal years 2016 through 2025. These targets will provide the committees maximum flexibility in their savings while ensuring the

budget is balanced within the 10-year window.

Each reconciled authorizing committee is directed to mark up legislation meeting its reconciliation target and submit legislation to the Committee of the Budget, consistent with section 310 of the Budget Act, instead of reporting it directly to the House. Other than submitting legislation to the Committee on the Budget, committees are expected to follow regular order in complying with House and Committee rules related to markup procedures and reporting requirements. The Committee on the Budget will then combine all submissions and report the legislation, without substantive revision, to the House.

Section 202 of the House amendment authorizes the Chair of the Committee on the Budget to: (1) use the baseline underlying the Congressional Budget Office's [CBO's] *Budget and Economic Outlook: 2015 to 2025* (January 2015) when making estimates of any bill or joint resolution, or any amendment thereto or conference report thereon and (2) determine whether to use any adjustments to the baseline, if made subsequent to the adoption of this concurrent resolution, when making such estimates. When making such estimates and determining compliance of measures, the Chair of the Committee on the Budget should only exercise this authority if such estimates are inaccurate because the adjustments made to the baseline are inconsistent with the assumptions underlying the budgetary levels set forth in this concurrent resolution. Inaccurate adjustments may include selected adjustments for rulemaking, judicial actions, adjudication, and interpretative rules that have major budgetary effects and are inconsistent with the assumptions underlying the budgetary levels set forth in this concurrent resolution. CBO shall, upon the request of the Chair of the Committee on the Budget, prepare an estimate based on the baseline determination made by such Chair.

Section 202 also stipulates that the authorizing committees instructed to submit reconciliation legislation pursuant to this concurrent resolution shall, in preparing submissions, note and determine the most effective methods by which the President's health care law shall be repealed.

Additionally, section 202 authorizes the Chair of the Committee on the Budget to file with the House appropriately revised allocations under section 302(a) of the Budget Act and revised functional levels and aggregates upon: (1) an authorizing committee's submission to the Committee on the Budget of legislation complying with its reconciliation instructions pursuant to section 310(b) of the Budget Act and (2) the submission of a conference report to the House. Section 202 further stipulates that these revised aggregates and allocations shall be considered to be the allocations and aggregates established by the concurrent resolution on the budget pursuant to section 310 of the Budget Act.

Section 203 of the House amendment authorizes the Chair of the Committee on the Budget to submit additional information to help guide the authorizing committees, including suggested increases in the amount of deficit reduction reconciled to each authorizing committee.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

The conference agreement affirms the use of reconciliation for the sole purpose of repealing the President's job-killing health care law by instructing only those committees with jurisdiction over the health-care-related provisions in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (Public Law 111–148) and the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010 (Public Law 111–152). Specifically, the Senate Committees on Finance and Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, and the House Committees on Ways and Means, Education and the Workforce, and Energy and Commerce all received instructions to report changes in laws within their jurisdictions to reduce the deficit by no less than $1 billion over the 10-year period of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

The instructions for Senate committees are as follows:

[Fiscal years 2016–25]

Committee	10-Year deficit reduction
Finance	$1,000,000,000
Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions	$1,000,000,000

The Senate retains the Senate-only rule against a reconciliation measure that increases the public debt limit. The provision applies to reconciliation bills pursuant to this concurrent resolution, and any amendment, amendments between the Houses, and conference report thereon. The rule may only be waived by two-thirds of the Senate.

The instructions for the House are as follows:

[Fiscal years 2016–25]

Committee	10-Year deficit reduction
Education and the Workforce	$1,000,000,000
Energy and Commerce	$1,000,000,000
Ways and Means	$1,000,000,000

Reconciled committees in the Senate and the House of Representatives are instructed to submit their recommendations to their respective Budget Committees no later than July 24, 2015.

The House retains the House-passed provision clarifying that in the House, for purposes of budget enforcement, the Chairman shall use the baseline underlying the March 2015 update to CBO's *Budget and Economic Outlook: 2015 to 2025*. It further grants the Chairman of the Budget Committee the authority to determine whether to reflect CBO's ad hoc adjustments to the baseline subsequent to the adoption of this concurrent resolution.

While committees determine the policies used to meet their reconciliation targets, the conference report retains the House position that the committees take note of the policy statement in the conference report relating to the repeal of the President's health care law.

The conference report provides authority to the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the House of Representatives to make adjustments in this concurrent resolution for committees that submit reconciliation recommendations and meet their respective reconciliation targets.

BUDGET ENFORCEMENT

Subtitle A—Budget Enforcement in Both Houses

Point of Order against Legislation Increasing Long-Term Deficits or Direct Spending

SENATE RESOLUTION

Section 402 of the Senate resolution extends the current Senate point of order prohibiting the consideration of legislation that would increase the on-budget deficit by more than $5 billion in any of the 4 consecutive 10-year periods beginning after the last year covered in the most recently agreed to budget resolution. The prohibition is enforced with a point of order that, if raised, could be waived with the affirmative vote of three-fifths of Members, duly chosen and sworn. Paragraph (d) provides an exception for any legislation considered under the reserve fund in section 303(1)—repeal of the President's health care law.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

Section 407 of the House amendment prohibits the consideration of any measure reported by an authorizing committee that increases direct spending by $5 billion over the long-term. The prohibition is enforced with a point of order. Subsection (b) states the applicable periods for this section are any of the 4 consecutive 10 fiscal year periods beginning in fiscal year 2026.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

Section 3101 of the conference agreement extends the Senate-passed provision to the House and includes an exception in paragraph (d) for reserve funds in sections 4303(1), 4501, 4502, and 4503 of the conference agreement relating to repeal of the President's health care law. In the House the point of order lies against the bill increasing direct spending over the period.

Allocation for Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism

SENATE RESOLUTION

Section 409 of the Senate resolution establishes a mechanism allowing the Senate to review the designation for overseas contingency operations [OCO] in fiscal years 2016 and 2017. Designations that would cause the total amount of OCO spending in those years to exceed $58 billion and $59.5 billion, respectively, would be subject to a point of order, which—if raised—would require 60 votes to waive. If sustained, the offending provision of budget authority would be stricken from the text, but the rest of the measure would remain standing.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

Subsection 408(a) of the House amendment provides the Committee on Appropriations with two separate OCO/GWOT allocations for the purposes of Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism under section 302(a) of the Budget Act, which are included in this report in the allocation tables.

Subsection (b) stipulates that, for purposes of enforcing the point of order under section 302(f) of the Budget Act, the ''first fiscal year'' and the ''total of fiscal years'' refer to fiscal year 2016 only. This separate allocation is the exclusive allocation for OCO/GWOT under section 302(a) of the Budget Act. It also stipulates that section 302(c) of the Budget Act does not apply to this separate allocation. Subsection (c) stipulates that new budget authority or outlays counting toward the allocation established by subsection (a) shall be designated pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(ii) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

Subsection (d) prohibits any adjustment under section 314(a) of the Budget Act if an adjustment would be made under section 251(b)(2)(A)(ii) of BBEDCA for fiscal year 2016.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

Section 3102 of the conference agreement adopts an approach to Overseas Contingency Operations [OCO] funding similar to the House amendment. A separate 302(a) allocation is provided to each of the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations for the OCO/Global War on Terrorism. Any appropriation designated for OCO under Section 251(b)(2)(A)(ii) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 would be scored against the 302(a) allocation to the Committees on Appropriations. The OCO allocation may be subdivided into 302(b) sub-allocations and is enforceable under section 302(f) on the Congressional Budget Act.

Point of Order against Certain Changes in Mandatory Programs

SENATE RESOLUTION

Section 406 of the Senate resolution phases out the use of certain ''CHIMPs'' (changes in mandatory programs) in appropriation bills that reduce budget authority but do not result in any net outlay savings. For fiscal

year 2016, the limit on this type of CHIMP is $19 billion, the amount contained in fiscal year 2015 appropriations measures. Thereafter, the limit is reduced by 20 percent per year until fiscal year 2021, when CHIMPs that fail to reduce net outlays are no longer to be permitted in appropriation measures. The limit is enforced with a point of order that, if raised, would require the affirmative vote of three-fifths of Members, duly chosen and sworn.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

The House amendment does not contain any provisions relating to CHIMPs.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

Section 3103 of the conference agreement gradually reduces the amount of certain changes in mandatory programs [CHIMPs] permitted in appropriations bills from a total of $19.1 billion in fiscal year 2016 to $15 billion in fiscal year 2019. This reduction would apply only to those CHIMPs that (a) would have been classified as affecting direct spending or receipts under section 252 of BBEDCA (as in effect prior to September 30, 2002) if the provision was included in legislation other than an appropriations bill or joint resolution, and (b) reduce budget authority but do not result in any net outlay savings over the 10-year budget enforcement window. The reduction in this type of CHIMP is enforced in the Senate with a point of order prohibiting consideration of a bill or joint resolution making appropriations for a full fiscal year, (or an amendment thereto or conference report thereon that would cause the total amount of this type of CHIMP enacted in a fiscal year to exceed a specific amount:

Fiscal year 2016	$19,100,000,000
Fiscal year 2017	$19,100,000,000
Fiscal year 2018	$17,000,000,000
Fiscal year 2019	$15,000,000,000

The Senate point of order, if raised, would require the affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members, duly chosen and sworn, to waive. In the House the point of order lies against the individual provision except for an amendment or conference report in which case it lies against the entire amendment or conference report. For purposes of this section, the total budget authority of CHIMPs shall be determined on the basis of estimates provided by the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the applicable House of Congress.

Point of Order against Provisions that Constitute Changes in Mandatory Programs Affecting the Crime Victims Fund

SENATE RESOLUTION

Section 410 of the Senate resolution prohibits Senate consideration of any measure that includes CHIMPs that affect the Crime Victims Fund [CVF]. The prohibition would be enforced with a point of order that, if raised, would require the affirmative vote of three-fifth of Members, duly chose and sworn, to waive. If sustained, the offending provision(s) would be stricken, but the rest of the measure would remain standing.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

The House amendment does not contain any provisions relating to CHIMPs affecting the Crime Victims Fund.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

Section 3104 of the conference agreement limits the use of CHIMPs that affect the CVF to $10.8 billion in fiscal year 2016. This rule only applies to appropriations measures that provide full-year funding for a fiscal year. The reduction in the CVF CHIMP is enforced with a ''surgical strike'' point of order. If a point of order is raised and sustained against a provision containing a CHIMP affecting the CVF that would cause the total value of all such CHIMPS enacted in relation to a fiscal year to exceed the limit, the provision would be stricken from the measure, but the rest of the bill would remain standing. In the House, in the case of an amendment or conference report, the point of order would lie against the entire measure.

For purposes of this section, the absolute of the total budget authority of CHIMPs shall be determined on the basis of estimates provided by the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the applicable House of Congress.

Section 3104 of the conference agreement also directs the Committees on the Budget and Committees on Appropriations of the House and Senate to work with other committees of jurisdiction to review the enforcement procedures for CHIMPs in appropriations bills—especially those affecting the CVF—and to make a joint recommendation that can be included in subsequent concurrent resolutions on the budget.

Fair-Value Credit Estimates

SENATE RESOLUTION

For legislation affecting Federal direct loan and loan-guarantee programs, section 412 of the Senate resolution directs CBO to provide in its cost estimates an assessment using fair-value—alongside those estimates prepared under the Federal Credit Reform Act. In the Senate, cost estimates prepared using fair-value would be provided for informational purposes only.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

Subsection 406(a) of the House amendment requires, upon the request of the Chairman or Ranking Member of the Committee on the Budget, that CBO estimates for any measure under the terms of Title V of the Budget Act to include an estimate of the current actual or estimated market values representing the ''fair value'' of assets and liabilities affected by such measure.

Subsection (b) requires that, whenever CBO prepares an estimate of the cost of legislation with a cost related to housing, residential mortgage, or student loan programs, under the Federal Credit Reform Act of 1990, the estimate include an estimate of the ''fair value'' of the assets and liabilities affected.

Subsection (c) permits the Chair of the Committee on the Budget to use these supplemental estimates to determine whether legislation is within the levels of the budget resolution and complies with other budgetary controls.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

Section 3105 of the conference agreement adopts an approach to fair-value estimates similar to the House amendment. At the request of the Chairman of the Budget Committee of the applicable House, CBO shall prepare, when practicable, a fair-value estimate of measures providing or modifying loan and loan guarantee programs scored under the Federal Credit Reform Act. Under this section, CBO is required to provide these fair-value estimates for housing, residential mortgage, and student loan programs. This scoring rule applies to bills, joint resolutions, motions, amendments, amendments between the Houses, and conference reports. Section 3105(c) authorizes the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the House of Representatives to use these supplemental estimates for the purposes of determining budget-related points of order. In the Senate, any fair-value estimates produced under this section may be used for informational purposes only.

Scoring Rule for Currency Modernization

SENATE RESOLUTION

Section 414 of the Senate resolution requires CBO to estimate the cost of transitioning from the dollar bill to the dollar coin using net present value and to incorporate the behavioral effects of that transition in its estimate.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

The House amendment does not contain any provisions relating to currency modernization.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

In section 3106 of the conference agreement, the House joins the Senate in adopting the Senate-passed scoring rule relating to currency modernization.

Long-Term Scoring of Changes in Spending Limits and Extension of Highway Programs

SENATE RESOLUTION

Section 416 of the Senate resolution directs CBO to provide long-term cost estimates for: (1) legislation that would increase the statutory discretionary spending limits, and (2) legislation that would transfer amounts from the General Fund of the Treasury to the Highway Trust Fund. Under this rule, CBO would provide estimates of the increased spending—and the offsets—for the scoring window (fiscal years 2016 through 2025) as well as the 20 years beyond (fiscal years 2026 through 2045).

HOUSE AMENDMENT

The House amendment does not contain any provisions relating to long-term scoring of changes in spending limits and extension of highway programs.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

In section 3107 of the conference agreement, the House joins the Senate in adopting the Senate-passed rule.

Requiring Clearer Reporting of Projected Federal Spending and Deficits

SENATE RESOLUTION

Section 417 of the Senate resolution requires CBO to provide 30-year projections of three key budget aggregates—revenues, outlays, and deficits—in current dollars and as a percent of GDP when CBO publishes its annual Budget and Economic Outlook.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

The House amendment does not contain any provisions relating to clearer reporting of projected Federal spending and deficits.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

In section 3108 of the conference agreement, the House joins the Senate in adopting the reporting requirement.

Congressional Budget Office Estimates of Measures with Significant Outlay Effects

SENATE RESOLUTION

Section 419 of the Senate resolution requires CBO to provide outyear estimates of legislation that would (1) increase or decrease outlays by more than 0.25 percent of GDP over the 10-year period of the enforcement window, or (2) that would have the same significant impact on outlays, but in the 10th year alone. In the event that the budgetary effects of a measure are not sufficient to automatically trigger the outyear cost estimates, the Chairman of the Budget Committee has the authority to request an estimate.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

The House amendment does not contain any provisions relating to CBO estimates of measures with significant outlay effects.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

In section 3109 of the conference agreement, the House joins the Senate-passed rule regarding supplemental estimates.

Prohibiting the Use of Guarantee Fees as an Offset

SENATE RESOLUTION

Section 421 of the Senate resolution prohibits consideration of legislation that increases or extends an increase of any guarantee fees of the Federal National Mortgage Association [FNMA] and the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation [FHLMC]. Guarantee fees are collected to offset prospective FNMA and FHLMC credit losses, and using these fees as an offset merely double-counts the funds collected.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

The House amendment does not contain any provisions relating to CBO estimates of measures with significant outlay effects.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

In section 3110 of the conference agreement, the House joins the Senate rule prohibiting the use of guarantee fees as an offset.

Information for Congress and the Public about Projected Federal Outlays, Revenues, and Deficits

SENATE RESOLUTION

Section 423 of the Senate resolution directs CBO to produce a one-page executive summary of its annual Budget and Economic Outlook that includes current-year and future-year projections of key budget aggregates (total outlays, tax expenditures, receipts, surpluses/deficits) and categories of spending (total mandatory spending and total discretionary spending; Social Security outlays, revenues, and surpluses/deficits; and Medicare outlays, revenues, and surpluses/deficits.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

The House amendment does not contain any provisions relating to information for Congress and the public about projected Federal outlays, revenue and deficits.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

In section 3111 of the conference agreement, the House joins the Senate rule directing CBO to provide additional information in its annual Budget and Economic Outlook report to Congress.

Honest Accounting: Cost Estimates for Major Legislation to Incorporate Macroeconomic Effects

SENATE RESOLUTION

Section 413 of the Senate resolution directs the Joint Committee on Taxation and CBO to produce, alongside CBO's conventional estimates, cost estimates that incorporate the macroeconomic effects of major policy changes. These estimates would be provided for informational purposes only.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

Sections 401(a) and (b) of the House amendment directs CBO and the Joint Committee on Taxation, as applicable, to incorporate in the cost estimates for major legislation, to the extent practicable, the macroeconomic effects of such legislation during fiscal year 2016.

Subsection (c) stipulates that the macroeconomic estimates include, to the extent practicable, a qualitative assessment of the budgetary effects (including the variables referred to above) of major legislation in the 20-fiscal-year period beginning after the last fiscal year of the most recently agreed-to budget resolution and an identification of the assumptions and source data underlying the estimate.

Subsection (d) defines major legislation to include legislation that causes a gross budgetary effect in any fiscal year covered by the budget resolution equal to or greater than 0.25 percent of the current projected GDP of the United States for that fiscal year. Under this subsection, the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the House or Senate and the Chair of the Joint Committee on Taxation, as applicable, may designate bills providing direct spending as major legislation for which estimates would incorporate macroeconomic effects.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

Section 3112 of the conference agreement directs the Joint Committee on Taxation and CBO to produce, alongside CBO's conventional estimates, cost estimates that incorporate the macroeconomic effects of major policy changes. Subsection (c) defines major legislation as a bill, resolution, conference report, or treaty causing an increase or decrease in revenues, direct spending, or deficits in any fiscal year covered by the budget resolution equal to or greater than 0.25 percent of the projected GDP for that year or equal to or greater than $15 billion for that year for treaties. In applying these thresholds, CBO and JCT are required to look at the gross budgetary effects of the legislation before incorporating macroeconomic effects and not including timing shifts.

In carrying out this requirement, the managers intend that CBO and JCT review provisions that have a significant budgetary effect. Thus, the test is whether the absolute value of the effect of any provision in the legislation has a budgetary effect larger than the threshold, or if the sum of the absolute values of the effects of the provisions on revenues and on direct spending exceeds the threshold, rather than whether the legislation taken as a whole equals or exceeds such threshold values when all of the conventionally estimated costs of the provisions are netted out.

In the Senate, these estimates would be provided for informational purposes only. In the House, the Chair of the Committee on the Budget shall exercise the authority granted under subsection (c)(1)(B)(ii), in collaboration with the appropriate Chair or Vice Chair of the Joint Committee on Taxation, to designate a revenue measure as major legislation.

Subtitle B—Budget Enforcement in the Senate

Extension of Enforcement of Budgetary Points of Order in the Senate

SENATE RESOLUTION

Section 401(a) of the Senate resolution extends several supermajority points of order created in the Congressional Budget Act. These provisions will expire at the end of fiscal year 2016. Subsection (b) repeals the sunset of the Senate Pay-As-You-Go point of order established in section 201 S. Con. Res. 21 (110th Congress), the fiscal year 2008 concurrent resolution on the budget. Subsection (c) repeals the sunset of the short-term deficits point of order established in section 404 of S. Con. Res. 13 (111th Congress), the fiscal year 2010 concurrent resolution on the budget.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

The House-passed resolution does not contain a comparable provision on Senate enforcement of supermajority points of order.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

Section 3201 of the conference agreement adopts the Senate language as a Senate-only provision.

Point of Order against Advance Appropriations

SENATE RESOLUTION

As in past years, section 403 of the Senate resolution provides a supermajority point of order in the Senate against appropriations in fiscal year 2016 bills that would become effective in any year after fiscal year 2016, and against appropriation bills in fiscal year 2017 that would first become available in any year after fiscal year 2017. It does not apply to appropriations for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting or Department of Veterans Affairs for the Medical Services, Medical Support and Compliance, and Medical Facilities accounts of the Veterans Health Administration. It provides an exemption up to $28.852 billion (the same level as provided for fiscal years 2014 and 2015 in the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, P.L. 113-67) for accounts identified in the joint explanatory statement of managers.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

Section 405 of the House amendment provides a limit on appropriations that would become effective in fiscal year 2017. Subsection (a) prohibits the consideration of any general or continuing appropriations measure from making advance appropriations unless the appropriation is included in a list of exceptions.

Subsection (b) specifies the list of excluded accounts, which may receive advance appropriations, are referred to in this report or joint explanatory statement, as applicable, in the section designated as ''Accounts Identified for Advance Appropriations.''

Subsection (c) sets an overall limit for allowable advance appropriations for fiscal year 2017. It permits advance appropriations of up to $63.271 billion for fiscal year 2017 for the veterans accounts referenced in subsection (b) and referred to in this report. It also allows up to $28.852 billion in advance appropriations for other accounts referenced in subsection (b) and referred to in this report.

Subsection (d) defines an advance appropriation as any new discretionary budget authority provided in a bill, joint resolution, amendment, or conference report making general or continuing appropriations for a fiscal year following fiscal year 2016.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

Under the conference agreement, the Senate (in section 3202) and the House (in section 3304) retain their respective limits on advance appropriations.

IN THE SENATE ACCOUNTS IDENTIFIED FOR ADVANCE APPROPRIATIONS IN THE SENATE

Financial Services and General Government

Payment to Postal Service

Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education

Employment and Training Administration
Job Corps
Education for the Disadvantaged
School Improvement
Special Education
Career, Technical, and Adult Education

Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development

Tenant-based Rental Assistance
Project-based Rental Assistance

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ACCOUNTS IDENTIFIED FOR ADVANCE APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017 SUBJECT TO A GENERAL LIMIT OF $28,852,000,000

Financial Services

Postal Service

Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education

Employment and Training Administration
Education for the Disadvantaged
School Improvement
Career, Technical, and Adult Education
Special Education

Transportation, Housing and Urban Development

Tenant-based Rental Assistance
Project-based Rental Assistance

VETERANS ACCOUNTS IDENTIFIED FOR ADVANCE APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017 SUBJECT TO A SEPARATE LIMIT OF $63,271,000,000

Military Construction, Veterans Affairs

Veterans Medical Services
Veterans Medical Support and Compliance
Veterans Medical Facilities

Supermajority Enforcement of Unfunded Mandates

SENATE RESOLUTION

Section 425(a) of the Congressional Budget Act prohibits the consideration of legislation in the Senate that would impose unfunded Federal mandates on State and local governments above a certain limit, enforced with a point of order. Section 404 of the Senate resolution increases the vote threshold needed to waive that point of order from a simple majority to three-fifths of Members, duly chosen and sworn.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

The House amendment does not contain a comparable provision relating to unfunded mandates.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

Section 3203 of the conference agreement adopts the Senate language relating to unfunded mandates as a Senate-only provision.

Point of Order against Certain Reconciliation Legislation

SENATE RESOLUTION

Section 405 of the Senate resolution restores the equal treatment of all reconciliation bills consistent with budget law prior to 2008 by repealing the point of order prohibiting consideration of reconciliation bills that increase the deficit found in section 202(a) of S. Con. Res. 21, the fiscal year 2008 budget resolution.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

Section 410(a)(3) of the House amendment would—for purposes of a reconciliation bill reported pursuant to this concurrent resolution on the budget—temporarily suspend the application of the point of order prohibiting consideration of reconciliation bills that increase the deficit, found in section 202(a) of S. Con. Res. 21, the fiscal year 2008 budget resolution.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

Section 3204 of the conference agreement adopts the Senate language relating to the point of order against certain reconciliation bills.

Prohibition on Agreeing to Legislation without a Score

SENATE RESOLUTION

Section 407 of the Senate resolution prohibits a vote on passage of a bill or resolution unless the CBO cost estimate required for that measure (pursuant to section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act) is available on CBO's website at least 28 hours before a vote on final passage. The prohibition is enforced with point of order that, if raised, would require the affirmative vote of three-fifths of Members, duly chosen and sworn, to waive.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

The House amendment does not contain a comparable provision relating to agreeing to legislation without a score.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

Section 3205 of the conference agreement adopts the Senate language relating to agreeing to legislation without a score as a Senate-only provision.

Protecting the Savings in Reported Reconciliation Bills

SENATE RESOLUTION

In the House, amendments to a reconciliation bill must be deficit-neutral with respect to the reported savings in the bill, not the instructed savings in the affiliated budget resolution. The House rule ensures that if a reconciliation bill exceeds its fiscal target, those ''extra'' savings will be used for deficit reduction, not to increase spending. Section 408 of the Senate resolution applies the House rule in the Senate.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

The House does not have a comparable provision relating to the reported savings in a reconciliation bill (the rule already applies in the House).

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

Section 3206 of the conference agreement adopts the Senate language relating to the reported savings in a reconciliation bill as a Senate-only provision.

Scoring Rule for Certain Energy Contracts

SENATE RESOLUTION

Section 415 of the Senate resolution directs CBO to score energy savings performance contracts using net present value—a method that more accurately represents the economic value of these transactions.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

The House amendment does not have a comparable provision relating to scoring energy savings performance contracts.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

Section 3207 of the conference agreement adopts the Senate language on energy savings performance contracts as a Senate-only provision.

In section 3305 of the conference agreement, the House agrees to assess the implementation of section 3207 through a collaborative assessment, in conjunction with the Senate and CBO, of the appropriate scorekeeping methodology for evaluating the budgetary effects of this type of energy contract.

Adjustment for Wildfire Suppression Funding

SENATE RESOLUTION

If a bill becomes law that provides a new discretionary spending cap adjustment for wildfire suppression, section 424 of the Senate resolution gives the Senate Budget Committee Chairman the authority to adjust the 302(a) allocation to the Appropriations Committee accordingly.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

The House amendment does not have a comparable provision relating to wildfire suppression funding.

CONFERENCE AGREEEMENT

Section 3208 of the conference agreement adopts the Senate language as a Senate-only provision.

Subtitle C—Budget Enforcement in the House of Representatives

Limitation on Measures Affecting Social Security Solvency

SENATE RESOLUTION

The Senate resolution does not have a comparable provision relating to Social Security (a Senate point of order already exists in section 311(a)(3) of the Congressional Budget Act).

HOUSE AMENDMENT

Subsection 402(a) prohibits, during fiscal year 2016, consideration in the House of Representatives or the Senate of any legislation that reduces the actuarial balance of the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance [OASI] Trust Fund by at least .01 percent of the present value of future taxable payroll for the 75-year period included in the most recent annual report of the board of trustees.

Subsection (b) provides an exception if such legislation would improve the actuarial balance of the combined balance in the OASI Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund for the 75-year period utilized in the most recent annual report of the board of trustees.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

The House point of order is not germane to a budget resolution in the Senate. Section 3301 of the conference agreement adopts the language of the House amendment as a House-only provision.

Limitation on Transfers from the General Fund to the Highway Trust Fund

SENATE RESOLUTION

The reserve fund in section 309 of the Senate resolution allows the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget in the Senate to revise the allocations of one or more committees, the aggregates, and other appropriate levels in this resolution for one or more bills, joint resolutions, amendments, amendments between Houses, or motions relating to Federal investment in the infrastructure of the United States, provided that such legislation shall not include transfers from other trust funds but may include transfers from the general fund that are offset, provided further that such legislation would not increase the deficit either over the period of the total of the fiscal years 2016 through 2020, or the period of the total of the fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

Section 404 of the House amendment stipulates that, for purposes of budget enforcement, transfers of funds from the general fund of the Treasury to the Highway Trust Fund shall be counted as new budget authority and outlays equal to the amount of the transfer in the fiscal year in which the transfer occurs.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

Under the conference agreement, the Senate (in section 4309) and the House (in section 3302) retain their respective language on general fund transfers to the Highway Trust Fund.

Adjustments for the Improved Control of Budgetary Resources

SENATE RESOLUTION

The Senate resolution does not have a comparable provision relating to the improved control of budgetary resources.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

Subsection 409(a) of the House amendment authorizes the chairman of the Budget Committee to reduce a committee's allocation (other than the Committee on Appropriations) and increase the Committee on Appropriations allocation of discretionary spending for fiscal year 2016 if a committee (other than Appropriations) reports legislation that decreases direct spending in any fiscal year and authorizes appropriations for the same purpose. Subsection (b) provides the Chair of the Committee on the Budget with the authority to determine and adjust, as applicable, the budgetary levels of this concurrent resolution on the budget.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

Section 3303 of the conference agreement adopts the House amendment language as a House-only provision.

Point of Order against Advance Appropriations

SENATE RESOLUTION

As in past years, section 403 of the Senate resolution provides a supermajority point of order in the Senate against appropriations in fiscal year 2016 bills that would become effective in any year after fiscal year 2016, and against appropriation bills in fiscal year 2017 that would first become available in any year after fiscal year 2017. It does not apply to appropriations for the Corporation for

Public Broadcasting or Department of Veterans Affairs for the Medical Services, Medical Support and Compliance, and Medical Facilities accounts of the Veterans Health Administration. It provides an exemption up to $28.852 billion (the same level as provided for fiscal years 2014 and 2015 in the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, P.L. 113-67) for accounts identified in the joint explanatory statement of managers.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

Section 405 of the House amendment provides a limit on appropriations that would become effective in fiscal year 2017. Subsection (a) prohibits the consideration of any general or continuing appropriations measure from making advance appropriations unless the appropriation is included in a list of exceptions.

Subsection (b) specifies the list of excluded accounts, which may receive advance appropriations, are referred to in this report or joint explanatory statement, as applicable, in the section designated as ''Accounts Identified for Advance Appropriations.''

Subsection (c) sets an overall limit for allowable advance appropriations for fiscal year 2017. It permits advance appropriations of up to $63.271 billion for fiscal year 2017 for the veterans accounts referenced in subsection (b) and referred to in this report. It also allows up to $28.852 billion in advance appropriations for other accounts referenced in subsection (b) and referred to in this report.

Subsection (d) defines an advance appropriation as any new discretionary budget authority provided in a bill, joint resolution, amendment, or conference report making general or continuing appropriations for a fiscal year following fiscal year 2016.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

Under the conference agreement, the Senate (in section 3202) and the House (in section 3304) retain their respective limits on advance appropriations.

IN THE SENATE

ACCOUNTS IDENTIFIED FOR ADVANCE APPROPRIATIONS IN THE SENATE

Financial Services and General Government

Payment to Postal Service

Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education

Employment and Training Administration
Job Corps
Education for the Disadvantaged
School Improvement
Special Education
Career, Technical, and Adult Education

Transportation, Housing and Urban Development

Tenant-based Rental Assistance
Project-based Rental Assistance

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ACCOUNTS IDENTIFIED FOR ADVANCE APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017 SUBJECT TO A GENERAL LIMIT OF $28,852,000,000

Financial Services

Postal Service

Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education

Employment and Training Administration
Education for the Disadvantaged
School Improvement
Career, Technical, and Adult Education
Special Education

Transportation, Housing and Urban Development

Tenant-based Rental Assistance
Project-based Rental Assistance

VETERANS ACCOUNTS IDENTIFIED FOR ADVANCE APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017 SUBJECT TO A SEPARATE LIMIT OF $63,271,000,000

Military Construction, Veterans Affairs

Veterans Medical Services
Veterans Medical Support and Compliance
Veterans Medical Facilities

Subtitle D—Other Provisions

Submission of Findings for the Elimination of Waste, Fraud, and Abuse

SENATE RESOLUTION

Section 431 of the Senate resolution directs Senate committees to identify waste, fraud, abuse, and duplication in Federal programs and to review matters identified by the Government Accountability Office, or GAO (in GAO's annual duplication report or its High Risk list) for consideration by Congress. In addition, the resolution asks committees to provide recommendations for improved governmental performance in their annual views and estimates reports.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

Section 301 of the House amendment includes reconciliation-like instructions to named House committees to submit to the Committee on the Budget of the House of Representatives no later than October 1, 2015, changes in laws within their jurisdiction that would achieve a targeted amount of savings from the elimination of waste, fraud, and abuse. Savings targets for each committee would be published in the Congressional Record by the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the House.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

Section 3401 of the conference agreement adopts the language in the Senate resolution with some modifications. Subsection (a) of the conference agreement directs all committees of the Senate and House of Representatives to review programs within their jurisdiction and identify waste, fraud, abuse, or duplication, and increase the use of performance data to inform each committee's work.

Section 3401(b) also directs all committees of the Senate and House of Representatives to review applicable matters for congressional consideration identified in the Office of Inspector General semiannual reports and the Office of Inspector General's list of unimplemented recommendations and on the Government Accountability Office's High Risk list and annual report to reduce program duplication.

Section 3401(c) further directs all committees of the Senate and House of Representatives, after completing the oversight and performance reviews required under this section, to include recommendations for improved governmental performance in their annual views and estimates reports submitted by the committees to the Committees on the Budget of the Senate and House of Representatives, as applicable, under section 301(d) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 632(d)).

Budgetary Treatment of Administrative Expenses

SENATE RESOLUTION

Section 432 of the Senate resolution requires the joint explanatory statement accompanying the conference report on the budget resolution to include amounts for the discretionary administrative expenses of the Social Security Administration and the United States Postal Service—which are subject to the discretionary spending caps—in the allocation to the Appropriations Committee.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

Section 403(a) of the House amendment declares that the administrative expenses of the Social Security Administration and the United States Postal Service are reflected in the allocation to the Committee on Appropriations even though both are technically off-budget. This language is necessary to ensure the Committee on Appropriations retains control over administrative expenses through the annual appropriations process. This budgetary treatment of administrative expenses is based on the long-term practice of the House and Senate Budget Committees.

Subsection (b) requires the administrative expenses to be included in the cost estimates for the relevant appropriations measure, which are used to determine if a measure exceeds the spending limits in the budget resolution and, as a result, subject to points of order.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

Section 3402 of the conference agreement adopts the language in the House resolution with a minor modification that strikes the reference to the point of order in section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act.

Application and Effect of Changes in Allocations and Aggregates

SENATE RESOLUTION

Section 433 of the Senate resolution directs that (1) adjustments of allocations and aggregates made under the authority of a reserve fund or other directive will apply while a measure is under consideration, take effect once the measure is enacted, and be published in the Congressional Record; (2) revisions to allocations and aggregates will be considered as if contained in this budget resolution, for enforcement purposes; and (3) Budget Committee estimates will serve as the basis for determining new levels of budget authority, outlays, direct spending, new entitlement authority, revenues, deficits, and surpluses.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

Section 410(a) of the House-passed resolution sets forth allocation and adjustment procedures required to accommodate legislation provided for in this concurrent resolution. It declares that these adjustments apply while the legislation is under consideration and become permanent upon enactment of the legislation. These adjustments must be printed in the Congressional Record.

Paragraph 410(a)(3) includes a provision temporarily suspending the Senate point of order against certain reconciliation bills.

Section 410(b) stipulates that in the House of Representatives, for purposes of this concurrent resolution and budget enforcement, any legislation for which the Chair of the Committee on the Budget of the House of Representatives makes an adjustment or revision in the allocations, aggregates, and other budgetary levels of this concurrent resolution shall not be subject to the points of order set forth in clause 10 of rule XXI of the Rules of the House of Representatives (CUT-GO).

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

Section 3403 retains the Senate language but adopts House subsection 410(b) pertaining to Rule XXI of the House of Representatives (CUT-GO).

Adjustments to Reflect Changes in Concepts and Definitions

SENATE RESOLUTION

Section 434 of the Senate resolution declares that in the event Congress enacts a bill or joint resolution that changes concepts or definitions, the Senate resolution provides the Budget Committee Chairman with the authority to change levels and allocations in this resolution, accordingly.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

Section 410 (a) of the House amendment declares that in the event Congress enacts a bill or joint resolution that changes concepts or definitions, the Senate resolution provides the Budget Committee Chairman with the authority to change levels and allocations in this resolution, accordingly

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

Both the Senate and House resolutions include traditional language giving the Chairman of the Budget Committee the authority to make changes to the level and committee allocations in the event legislation becomes law that changes key budgetary concepts or definitions. In section 3404 of the conference agreement, the House joins the Senate language relating to changes in concepts and definitions.

Exercise of Rulemaking Powers

SENATE RESOLUTION

Section 435 of the Senate resolution declares that the provisions in Title III of the resolution are promulgated under the Senate's rulemaking power and shall be considered part of the rules of the Senate.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

Section 411 of the House amendment affirms that the adoption of the budget resolution is an exercise of the House's rulemaking power and that the House has the constitutional right to change these rules.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

In section 3405 of the conference agreement, the House joins the Senate language relating to rulemaking powers of this resolution

PAY-AS-YOU-GO SCORECARD FOR THE SENATE REFLECTING LEVELS FOR THE CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

Period of the current fiscal year, the budget year, and the 4 fiscal years following the budget year: $0.

Period of the current fiscal year, the budget year, and the 9 fiscal years following the budget year: $0.

RESERVE FUNDS

The Budget Committee does not have the authority to authorize policy changes—that is the role of the authorizing committees. Committees often make some of their policy priorities known in their views and estimates letters, and reserve funds are a way to accommodate those requests when the specific spending and revenue contours of those policies are unknown.

Operatively, a reserve fund allows the Chairman of the Budget Committee to revise committee allocations, budgetary aggregates, and other appropriate levels in the budget resolution to accommodate legislation described in the reserve fund, provided the budgetary effects of that legislation satisfy the requirements enumerated.

SENATE RESOLUTION

Section 301. Spending-neutral reserve fund to increase the pace of economic growth and private sector job creation in the United States.

Section 302. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to strengthen America's priorities.

Section 303. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to protect flexible and affordable health care choices for all.

Section 304. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for improving access to the children's health insurance program.

Section 305. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for other health reforms.

Section 306. Spending-neutral reserve fund for child welfare.

Section 307. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for veterans and servicemembers.

Section 308. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for tax reform and administration.

Section 309. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to invest in the infrastructure in America.

Section 310. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for air transportation.

Section 311. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to promote jobs in the United States through international trade.

Section 312. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to increase employment opportunities for disabled workers.

Section 313. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for higher education act reform.

Section 314. Spending-neutral reserve fund for energy legislation.

Section 315. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to reform environmental statutes.

Section 316. Spending-neutral reserve fund for water resources legislation.

Section 317. Spending-neutral reserve fund on mineral security and mineral rights.

Section 318. Spending-neutral reserve fund to reform the abandoned mine lands program.

Section 319. Spending-neutral reserve fund to improve forest health.

Section 320. Spending-neutral reserve fund to reauthorize funding for payments in lieu of taxes to counties and other units of local government.

Section 321. Spending-neutral reserve fund for financial regulatory system reform.

Section 322. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to improve Federal program administration.

Section 323. Spending-neutral reserve fund to implement agreements with freely associated states.

Section 324. Spending-neutral reserve fund to protect payments to rural hospitals and create sustainable access for rural communities.

Section 325. Spending-neutral reserve fund to encourage State Medicaid demonstration programs to promote independent living and integrated work for the disabled.

Section 326. Spending-neutral reserve fund to allow pharmacists to be paid for the provision of services under Medicare.

Section 327. Spending-neutral reserve fund to improve our Nation's community health centers.

Section 328. Spending-neutral reserve fund relating to the funding of independent agencies, which may include subjecting the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to the regular appropriations process.

Section 329. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for export promotion.

Section 330. Spending-neutral reserve fund to reform, improve, and enhance section 529 college savings plans.

Section 331. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to securing overseas diplomatic facilities of the United States.

Section 332. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to achieve savings by helping struggling Americans on the road to personal and financial independence.

Section 333. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to conserving Federal land, enhancing access to Federal land for recreational opportunities, and making investments in counties and schools.

Section 334. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to protect taxpayers from identity fraud.

Section 335. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to career and technical education.

Section 336. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to FEMA preparedness.

Section 337. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to expanding, enhancing, or otherwise improving science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

Section 338. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to promote the next generation of NIH researchers in the United States.

Section 339. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to promoting manufacturing in the United States.

Section 340. Spending-neutral reserve fund to prohibit aliens without legal status in the United States from qualifying for a refundable tax credit.

Section 341. Deficit-reduction reserve fund for report elimination or modification.

Section 342. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to address heroin and prescription opioid abuse.

Section 343. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to strengthen Department of Defense civilian workforce.

Section 344. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for Department of Defense reform.

Section 345. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to improve Federal workforce development, job training, and reemployment programs.

Section 346. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to provide energy assistance and invest in energy efficiency and conservation.

Section 347. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to enable greater collaboration between the Department of Veterans Affairs and law school clinics serving veterans.

Section 348. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to increase funding for Department of Energy nuclear waste cleanup.

Section 349. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to Department of Defense initiatives to bolster resilience of mission-critical department infrastructure to impacts from climate change and associated events.

Section 350. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to end Operation Choke Point and protect the Second Amendment.

Section 351. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to prevent the use of Federal funds for the bailout of improvident State and local governments.

Section 352. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to protect Medicaid beneficiaries from benefit cuts.

Section 353. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to improve health outcomes and lower the costs of caring for medically complex children in Medicaid.

Section 354. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to protect and strengthen the Department of Veterans Affairs, hire more health care professionals for the department, and ensure quality and timely access to health care for all veterans.

Section 355. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to maintain and enhance access, choice, and accountability in veterans care through the Veterans Choice Card program.

Section 356. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to promoting equal pay.

Section 357. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to legislation submitted to Congress by the President of the United States to protect and strengthen Social Security.

Section 358. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to a simplified income-driven student loan repayment option.

Section 359. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to the protection of clean water using scientific standards while maintaining the traditional role of agriculture.

Section 360. Spending-neutral reserve fund relating to keeping the Federal Water Pollution Control Act focused on the protection of water quality.

Section 361. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to saving Medicare.

Section 362. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to supporting Israel.

Section 363. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for legislation to allow Americans to earn paid sick time.

Section 364. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to providing health care to veterans who have geographic inaccessibility to care.

Section 365. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to increasing access to higher education for low-income Americans through the Federal Pell Grant program.

Section 366. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to consumer price transparency.

Section 367. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to transparency in health premium billing.

Section 368. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to carbon emissions.

Section 369. Spending-neutral reserve fund relating to requiring the Federal Government to allow States to opt out of Common Core without penalty.

Section 370. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to small business tax relief.

Section 371. Spending-neutral reserve fund relating to the disposal of certain Federal land.

Section 372. Spending-neutral reserve fund relating to prohibiting funding of international organizations during the implementation of the United Nations Arms Trade Treaty prior to Senate ratification and adoption of implementing legislation.

Section 373. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to reimposing waived sanctions and imposing new sanctions against Iran for violations of the Joint Plan of Action or a comprehensive nuclear agreement.

Section 374. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to supporting United States citizens held hostage in the United States Embassy in Tehran, Iran, between November 3, 1979, and January 20, 1981.

Section 375. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to reasonable accommodations for pregnant workers.

Section 376. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to permanently eliminate the Federal estate tax.

Section 377. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to addressing climate change.

Section 378. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to regulation by the Environmental Protection Agency of greenhouse gas emissions.

Section 379. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to protecting privately held water rights and permits.

Section 380. Spending-neutral reserve fund relating to prohibiting awarding of construction contracts based on awardees entering or not entering into agreements with labor organizations.

Section 381. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to strengthening the United States Postal Service.

Section 382. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to prevent American jobs from being moved overseas by reducing the corporate income tax rate.

Section 383. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to ensuring equal treatment of married couples under the Social Security program and by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Section 384. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to increase wages for American workers.

Section 385. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to deterring the migration of unaccompanied children from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras.

Section 386. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to middle class tax relief.

Section 387. Spending-neutral reserve fund relating to ensuring proper economic consideration in designation of critical habitat.

Section 388. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to strengthen the national do-not-call registry.

Section 389. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to end ''too-big-to-fail'' bailouts for Wall Street mega-banks (over $500 billion in total assets).

Section 390. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to ending Washington's illegal exemption from the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Section 391. Spending-neutral reserve fund relating to increasing funding for the relocation of the United States Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

Section 392. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to revise or repeal sequestration.

Section 393. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to promoting the return of children who have been legally adopted by United States citizens from the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Section 394. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to development of a new nuclear-capable cruise missile by the Department of Defense and the National Nuclear Security Administration.

Section 395. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to provide equity in the tax treatment of public safety officer death benefits.

Section 396. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to eliminating the backlog of sexual assault evidence kits.

Section 397. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to mixed oxide fuel fabrication.

Section 398. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to reforming Offices of Inspectors General and preventing extended vacancies.

Section 399. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to improving retirement security.

Section 399a. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to improve the competitiveness of the United States.

Section 399b. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to ensuring that the conservation of northern long-eared bat populations and local economic development are compatible.

Section 399c. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to improve cybersecurity.

Section 399d. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to allow the Drug Enforcement Administration and Federal Bureau of Investigation to enter into joint task forces with tribal and local law enforcement agencies.

Section 399e. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to encouraging cost savings in office space used by Federal agencies.

Section 399f. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to providing technical assistance to small businesses and aspiring entrepreneurs through small business development centers.

Section 399g. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to ensuring that medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs meet the needs of women veterans.

Section 399h. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to supporting efficient resourcing for the Asia rebalance policy.

Section 399i. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to preventing access to marijuana edibles by children in States that have decriminalized marijuana.

Section 399j. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to providing mortgage lending to rural areas.

Section 399k. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to the construction of Arctic polar icebreakers.

Section 399l. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to researching health conditions of the descendants of veterans exposed to toxic substances during service in the Armed Forces.

Section 399m. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to raising the Family of Funds limit of the Small Business Investment Company Program.

Section 399n. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to detection, investigation, and prosecution of the owners and operators of websites who knowingly allow such websites to be used to advertise commercial sex with children over the Internet.

Section 399o. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to support State drought prevention plans.

Section 399p. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to protecting the reliability of the electricity grid.

Section 399q. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to preserve and protect the open Internet.

Section 399r. Spending-neutral reserve fund relating to reforming the Federal regulatory process.

Section 399s. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to providing coverage of virtual colonoscopies as a colorectal cancer screening test under the Medicare program.

Section 399t. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to strengthening waterborne commerce in our ports and harbors.

Section 399u. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to the modernization of the nuclear command, control, and communications architecture of the United States.

Section 399v. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to BARDA and the BioShield Special Reserve Fund.

Section 399w. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to improving the nuclear forces and missions of the Air Force.

Section 399x. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to promoting economic growth and job creation for small businesses.

Section 399y. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to the definition of full-time employee.

Section 399z. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the Federal regulatory process.

Section 399aa. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to expedite awards under the Internal Revenue Service whistleblower program.

Section 399bb. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to encouraging the increased use of performance contracting in Federal facilities.

Section 399cc. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to improving information sharing by the Inspector General of the Department of Veterans Affairs with respect to investigations relating to substandard health care, delayed and denied health care, patient deaths, other findings that directly relate to patient care, and other management issues of the department.

Section 399dd. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to address the disproportionate regulatory burdens of community banks and credit unions.

Section 399ee. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to protect the Corporation for National and Community Service.

Section 399ff. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to ensuring that Department of Justice attorneys comply with disclosure obligations in criminal prosecutions.

Section 399gg. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to promote biomedical research.

Section 399hh. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to address the heroin and methamphetamine abuse epidemic in the United States.

Section 399ii. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to providing access to necessary equipment for Medicare beneficiaries.

Section 399jj. Spending-neutral reserve fund relating to prioritizing the construction of infrastructure projects that are of national and regional significance and projects in high priority corridors.

Section 399kk. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to encouraging the United States' NATO allies to reverse declines in defense spending and bear a more proportionate burden for ensuring the security of NATO.

Section 399ll. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to the investigation and recovery of missing weapons and military equipment provided to the Government of Yemen by the United States Government.

Section 399mm. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to improving higher education data and transparency.

Section 399mm. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to supporting programs funded by the Older Americans Act of 1965.

Section 399oo. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to native children.

Section 399pp. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to protecting the personal information of consumers from data breaches.

Section 399qq. Deficit-reduction reserve fund for government reform and efficiency.

Section 399rr. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to medical treatment and compensation for first responders, survivors, and their families injured and made ill by the 9/11 attacks.

Section 399ss. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to construction of Native American schools.

Section 399tt. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to increasing the guarantee threshold for Surety Bond Guarantee Program.

Section 399uu. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to Indo-Pacific partner capacity building and strategy.

Section 399vv. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to addressing methamphetamine abuse in the United States.

Section 399ww. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to the National Guard State Partnership Program.

Section 399xx. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to improving the prevention and treatment of agricultural virus outbreaks.

Section 399yy. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to the importance of financial literacy education to allow individuals to make informed and effective decisions with their financial resources.

Section 399zz. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to comprehensive mental health reform.

Section 399aaa. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to improving oral health care for children and pregnant women under Medicaid.

Section 399bbb. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to the National Park Service Centennial.

Section 399ccc. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to increasing college completion.

Section 399ddd. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to encouraging freight planning and investment that incorporates all modes of transportation, including rail, waterways, ports, and highways.

Section 399eee. Deficit-neutral reserve fund related to providing for full funding for at-sea and dockside monitoring for certain fisheries.

Section 399fff. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to training and resources for first responders responding to hazardous materials incidents on railroads.

Section 399ggg. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to enhancing and improving the United States Patent and Trademark Office in order to reduce the application backlog.

Section 399hhh. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to providing additional funding for international strategic communications.

Section 399iii. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for elementary and secondary education.

Section 399jjj. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to investing in rural and tribal water infrastructure.

Section 399kkk. Deficit-neutral reserve fund related to sexual assault at institutions of higher education.

Section 399lll. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to simplifying and expanding tax incentives for higher education.

Section 399mmm. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to authorizing children eligible for health care under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to retain such eligibility until age 26.

Section 399nnn. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to supporting workforce development through apprenticeship programs.

Section 399ooo. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to the prioritization of broad-based criminal justice reform.

Section 399ppp. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to strengthening the economy by accelerating the transfer of technologies from laboratories of the Department of Energy and the Department of Defense to the marketplace.

Section 399qqq. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to supporting trade and travel at ports of entry.

Section 399rrr. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to imposing sanctions with respect to foreign persons responsible for gross violations of internationally recognized human rights or significant acts of corruption.

Section 399sss. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to reforming student loan programs.

Section 399ttt. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to increasing funding for the TIGER discretionary grant program of the Department of Transportation.

Section 399uuu. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to promoting the use of college savings accounts.

Section 399vvv. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to establishing a new outcome-based process for authorizing innovative higher education providers.

Section 399www. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to improving community relations with law enforcement officers.

Section 399xxx. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to support research.

Section 399yyy. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to support for Ukraine, which should include the provision of lethal defensive articles.

Section 399zzz. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to providing funding to combat anti-Semitism in Europe.

Section 399aaaa. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to provide students and families with transparent, easily understood postsecondary education financial aid information.

Section 399bbbb. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to providing adequate funding for the Contract Tower Program of the Federal Aviation Administration.

Section 399cccc. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to underground and surface mining safety and health research.

Section 399dddd. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to investing in advanced fossil energy technology research and development.

Section 399eeee. Deficit-neutral reserve funds relating to foreign persons.

Section 399ffff. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to special treatment of the income tax credit for research expenditures for startup companies.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

Section 501. Reserve fund for the repeal of the President's health care law. Section 501 permits the Chair of the Committee on the Budget to revise allocations of spending authority and other budgetary levels for a measure that fully repeals the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Public Law 111–148) and the health care-related provisions of the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010 [HCERA 2010] (Public Law 111–152). These are the health care bills enacted into law in 2010.

Legislation repealing the health care laws must solely achieve that purpose and may not include extraneous language, whether such language has a budgetary effect or not. These adjustments would not be available for legislation that only partially repeals these laws. The reserve fund is intended to only apply to the health care provisions and would not apply to the repeal of the education-related provisions of HCERA 2010. The adjustments may be made for bills, amendments thereto, or conference reports. Multiple measures may take advantage of the reserve fund, as long as each is for the specified purpose.

An amendment (or a motion to recommit), if it qualifies under the terms of this reserve fund, may be offered to an unrelated measure, but should such a measure, as amended, be returned to the House as a conference report or an amendment between the Houses, no adjustments would be made if that measure contained text unrelated to the purpose of this reserve fund. Adjustments may be made for amendments meeting the criteria, but the adjustment would not cover provisions in the underlying bill unrelated to repealing these laws.

A measure receiving an adjustment under the terms of this reserve fund may be open for amendment, subject to the special rule providing for its consideration, but the amendment, if it does not meet the terms outlined in this section, must be compliant with the Budget Act and the Rules of the House without regard to the adjustments made to the underlying measure.

Section 502. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for promoting real health care reform. Section 502 permits the Chair of the Committee on the Budget to revise allocations of spending authority, provided to committees of the House, and to adjust other budgetary levels for a measure that promotes real health care reform as long as the measure is deficit-neutral for the period of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

Section 503. Deficit-neutral reserve fund related to the Medicare provisions of the President's health care law. Section 503 permits the Chair of the Committee on the Budget to revise allocations of spending authority provided to committees of the House, and to adjust other budgetary levels for a measure that repeals the Medicare spending cuts in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Public Law 111–148) or the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010 (Public Law 111–152), as long as the measure is deficit-neutral for the period of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

A measure that repeals only part of these Medicare spending reductions is also eligible for these adjustments. A series of bills, joint resolutions, amendments, or conference reports may receive adjustments under this section, only limited by the cumulative amount of the Medicare spending reductions included in the public laws referenced, as estimated by the Chair of the Committee on the Budget. Once the limit is reached through enacted measures, no more adjustments may be made under this reserve fund. The amount necessary to repeal the Medicare spending cuts is a limit on the adjustments that may be made under this reserve fund, but as the House considers measures that meet these terms, the amount is not reduced until the enactment of such measure fulfilling this purpose.

Section 504. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for the State Children's Health Insurance Program. Section 504 permits the Chair of the Committee on the Budget to revise the allocations of spending authority provided to applicable committees and adjust other budgetary levels in this resolution for a measure that extends the State Children's Health Insurance Program as long as such measure does not increase the deficit over the period of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

Section 505. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for graduate medical education. Section 505 permits the Chair of the Committee on the Budget to revise the allocations of spending authority provided to applicable committees and adjust other budgetary levels in this resolution for a measure that reforms, expands, access to, and improves, as determined by such Chair, graduate medical education programs as long as such measure does not increase the deficit over the period of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

Section 506. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for trade agreements. Section 506 permits the Chair of the Committee on the Budget to revise the allocations of spending authority provided to the Committee on Ways and Means and to adjust other budgetary levels in this resolution for legislation that implements a trade agreement, as long as such a measure does not increase the deficit in the period of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

Section 507. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for reforming the tax code. Section 507 permits the Chair of the Committee on the Budget to revise the allocations of spending authority provided to the Committee on

Ways and Means and to adjust other budgetary levels in this resolution for legislation that reforms the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 as long as such legislation is deficit-neutral for the period of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

Section 508. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for revenue measures. Section 508 permits the Chair of the Committee on the Budget to revise the allocations of spending authority provided to the Committee on Ways and Means for legislation that causes a decrease in revenue. The Chair of the Committee on the Budget may adjust the allocations and aggregates in this resolution if the measure does not increase the deficit over the period of fiscal years 2016 through 2025. This allows the Committee on Ways and Means to report legislation that reduces revenue below the level provided for in this resolution but only if it decreases outlays by an equal or greater amount in the applicable period.

Section 509. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to reduce poverty and increase opportunity and upward mobility. Section 509 permits the Chair of the Committee on the Budget to revise the allocations of spending authority provided to applicable committees and adjust other budgetary levels in this resolution for a measure reforming policies and programs to reduce poverty and increase opportunity and upward mobility as long as such a measure neither adversely impacts job creation nor increases the deficit in the period of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

Section 510. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for transportation. Section 510 permits the Chair of the Committee on the Budget to revise the allocations of spending authority and to adjust other budgetary enforcement levels in this resolution for any bill or joint resolution to maintain the solvency of the Highway Trust Fund, as long as such a measure does not increase the deficit in the period of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

Section 511. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for Federal retirement reform. Section 511 permits the Chair of the Committee on the Budget to revise the allocations of spending authority provided to applicable committees and adjust other budgetary levels in this resolution for a measure that reforms, improves and updates, as determined by such Chair, the Federal retirement system as long as such measure does not increase the deficit over the period of fiscal years 2016 through 2025.

Section 512. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for national defense. Section 512 permits the Chair of the Committee on the Budget to revise the allocations of spending authority provided to applicable committees and adjust other budgetary levels in this resolution for any legislation that supports the activities specified below as long as such legislation is deficit-neutral (without counting any net revenue increases in that measure) for the periods of fiscal years 2016 through 2021 or fiscal years 2016 through 2025. The activities that may be supported in legislation under this reserve fund include Department of Defense training and maintenance associated with combat readiness, modernization of equipment, auditability of financial statements, or military compensation recommendations.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

The conference agreement contains the following reserve funds applicable in the Senate and the House:

Section 4101. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to reduce poverty and increase opportunity and upward mobility for struggling Americans.

The agreement contains the following reserve funds applicable in the Senate:

Section 4301. Spending-neutral reserve fund to increase the pace of economic growth and private sector job creation in the United States.

Section 4302. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to strengthen America's priorities.

Section 4303. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to protect flexible and affordable health care choices for all.

Section 4304. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for improving access to the State Children's Health Insurance Program.

Section 4305. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for other health reforms.

Section 4306. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for child welfare.

Section 4307. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for veterans and servicemembers.

Section 4308. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for tax reform and administration.

Section 4309. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to invest in the infrastructure in America.

Section 4310. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for air transportation.

Section 4311. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to promote jobs in the United States through international trade.

Section 4312. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to increase employment opportunities for disabled workers.

Section 4313. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for higher education act reform.

Section 4314. Spending-neutral reserve fund for energy legislation.

Section 4315. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to reform environmental statutes.

Section 4316. Spending-neutral reserve fund for water resources legislation.

Section 4317. Spending-neutral reserve fund on mineral security and mineral rights.

Section 4318. Spending-neutral reserve fund to reform the abandoned mine lands program.

Section 4319. Spending-neutral reserve fund to improve forest health.

Section 4320. Spending-neutral reserve fund to reauthorize funding for payments in lieu of taxes to counties and other units of local government.

Section 4321. Spending-neutral reserve fund for financial regulatory system reform.

Section 4322. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to improve Federal program administration.

Section 4323. Spending-neutral reserve fund to implement agreements with freely associated states.

Section 4324. Spending-neutral reserve fund to protect payments to rural hospitals and create sustainable access for rural communities.

Section 4325. Spending-neutral reserve fund to encourage state Medicaid demonstration programs to promote independent living and integrated work for the disabled.

Section 4326. Spending-neutral reserve fund to allow pharmacists to be paid for the provision of services under Medicare.

Section 4327. Spending-neutral reserve fund to improve our Nation's community health centers.

Section 4328. Spending-neutral reserve fund relating to the funding of independent agencies, which may include subjecting the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to the regular appropriations process.

Section 4329. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to reform, improve, and enhance section 529 college savings plans.

Section 4330. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to securing overseas diplomatic facilities of the United States.

Section 4331. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to expanding, enhancing, or otherwise improving science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

Section 4332. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to promoting manufacturing in the United States.

Section 4333. Spending-neutral reserve fund to prohibit aliens without legal status in the United States from qualifying for a refundable tax credit.

Section 4334. Deficit-reduction reserve fund for report elimination or modification.

Section 4335. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to address heroin, methamphetamine, and prescription opioid abuse.

Section 4336. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to strengthen our Department of Defense civilian workforce.

Section 4337. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for Department of Defense reform.

Section 4338. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to improve Federal workforce development, job training, and reemployment programs.

Section 4339. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to provide energy assistance and invest in energy efficiency and conservation.

Section 4340. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to end Operation Choke Point and protect the Second Amendment.

Section 4341. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to prevent the use of Federal funds for the bailout of improvident State and local governments.

Section 4342. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to improve health outcomes and lower the costs of caring for medically complex children in Medicaid.

Section 4343. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to maintain and enhance access, choice, and accountability in veterans care through the Veterans Choice Card program.

Section 4344. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to promoting equal pay.

Section 4345. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to legislation submitted to Congress by the President of the United States to protect and strengthen Social Security.

Section 4346. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to a simplified, income-driven student loan repayment option.

Section 4347. Spending-neutral reserve fund relating to keeping the Federal Water Pollution Control Act focused on the protection of water quality.

Section 4348. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to supporting Israel.

Section 4349. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for legislation regarding family and medical leave.

Section 4350. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to providing health care to veterans who have geographic inaccessibility to care.

Section 4351. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to increasing access to higher education for low-income Americans through the Federal Pell Grant program.

Section 4352. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to transparency in health premium billing.

Section 4353. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to carbon emissions.

Section 4354. Spending-neutral reserve fund relating to requiring the Federal Government to allow States to opt out of Common Core without penalty.

Section 4355. Spending-neutral reserve fund relating to the disposal of certain Federal land.

Section 4356. Spending-neutral reserve fund relating to prohibiting funding of international organizations during the implementation of the United Nations Arms Trade Treaty prior to Senate ratification and adoption of implementing legislation.

Section 4357. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to reimposing waived sanctions and imposing new sanctions against Iran for violations of the Joint Plan of Action or a comprehensive nuclear agreement.

Section 4358. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to supporting United States citizens held hostage in the United States Embassy in Tehran, Iran, between November 3, 1979, and January 20, 1981.

Section 4359. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to reasonable accommodations for pregnant workers.

Section 4360. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to permanently eliminate the Federal estate tax.

Section 4361. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to regulation by the Environmental Protection Agency of greenhouse gas emissions.

Section 4362. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to protecting privately held water rights and permits.

Section 4363. Spending-neutral reserve fund relating to prohibiting awarding of construction contracts based on awardees entering or not entering into agreements with labor organizations.

Section 4364. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to prevent American jobs from being moved overseas by reducing the corporate income tax rate.

Section 4365. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to increase wages for American workers.

Section 4366. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to deterring the migration of unaccompanied children from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras.

Section 4367. Spending-neutral reserve fund relating to ensuring proper economic consideration in designation of critical habitat.

Section 4368. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to end ''too big to fail'' bailouts for Wall Street mega-banks (over $500 billion in total assets).

Section 4369. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to ending Washington's illegal exemption from the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Section 4370. Spending-neutral reserve fund relating to increasing funding for the relocation of the United States Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

Section 4371. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to promoting the return of children who have been legally adopted by United States citizens from the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Section 4372. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to development of a new nuclear-capable cruise missile by the Department of Defense and the National Nuclear Security Administration.

Section 4373. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to provide equity in the tax treatment of public safety officer death benefits.

Section 4374. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to eliminating the backlog of sexual assault evidence kits.

Section 4375. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to mixed oxide fuel fabrication.

Section 4376. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to reforming Offices of Inspectors General and preventing extended vacancies.

Section 4377. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to improving retirement security.

Section 4378. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to improve the competitiveness of the United States.

Section 4379. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to ensuring that the conservation of northern long-eared bat populations and local economic development are compatible.

Section 4380. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to improve cybersecurity.

Section 4381. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to allow the Drug Enforcement Administration and Federal Bureau of Investigation to enter into joint task forces with tribal and local law enforcement agencies.

Section 4382. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to encouraging cost savings in office space used by Federal agencies.

Section 4383. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to providing technical assistance to small businesses and aspiring entrepreneurs through small business development centers.

Section 4384. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to ensuring that medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs meet the needs of women veterans.

Section 4385. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to supporting efficient resourcing for the Asia rebalance policy.

Section 4386. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to preventing access to marijuana edibles by children in states that have decriminalized marijuana.

Section 4387. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to providing mortgage lending to rural areas.

Section 4388. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to the construction of Arctic polar icebreakers.

Section 4389. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to researching health conditions of the descendants of veterans exposed to toxic substances during service in the Armed Forces.

Section 4390. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to raising the family of funds limit of the Small Business Investment Company program.

Section 4391. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to detection, investigation, and prosecution of the owners and operators of websites who knowingly allow such websites to be used to advertise commercial sex with children over the Internet.

Section 4392. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to protecting the reliability of the electricity grid.

Section 4393. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to preserve and protect the open Internet.

Section 4394. Spending-neutral reserve fund relating to reforming the Federal regulatory process.

Section 4395. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to providing coverage of virtual colonoscopies as a colorectal cancer screening test under the Medicare program.

Section 4396. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to the modernization of the nuclear command, control, and communications architecture of the United States.

Section 4397. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to BARDA and the BioShield special reserve fund.

Section 4398. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to improving the nuclear forces and missions of the Air Force.

Section 4399. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to promoting economic growth and job creation for small businesses and full funding for at-sea and dockside monitoring for certain fisheries.

Section 4400. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to the definition of full-time employee.

Section 4401. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the Federal regulatory process.

Section 4402. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to expedite awards under the Internal Revenue Service whistleblower program.

Section 4403. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to encouraging the increased use of performance contracting in Federal facilities.

Section 4404. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to improving information sharing by the Inspector General of the Department of Veterans Affairs with respect to investigations relating to substandard health care, delayed and denied health care, patient deaths, other findings that directly relate to patient care, and other management issues of the department.

Section 4405. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to address the disproportionate regulatory burdens on community banks and credit unions.

Section 4406. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to protect the Corporation for National and Community Service.

Section 4407. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to ensuring that Department of Justice attorneys comply with disclosure obligations in criminal prosecutions.

Section 4408. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to promote biomedical research.

Section 4409. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to providing access to necessary equipment for Medicare beneficiaries.

Section 4410. Spending-neutral reserve fund relating to prioritizing the construction of infrastructure projects that are of national and regional significance and projects in high-priority corridors.

Section 4411. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to encouraging the United States' NATO allies to reverse declines in defense spending and bear a more proportionate burden for ensuring the security of NATO.

Section 4412. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to the investigation and recovery of missing weapons and military equipment provided to the Government of Yemen by the United States Government.

Section 4413. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to improving higher education data and transparency.

Section 4414. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to native children.

Section 4415. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to provide additional funding for international strategic communications.

Section 4416. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for elementary and secondary education.

Section 4417. Deficit-neutral reserve fund to support research.

Section 4418. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to support for Ukraine.

Section 4419. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to underground and surface mining safety research.

Section 4420. Deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to saving Medicare.

The agreement contains the following reserve funds applicable in the House:

Section 4501. Reserve fund for the repeal of the President's health care law.

Section 4502. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for promoting real health care reform.

Section 4503. Deficit-neutral reserve fund related to the Medicare provisions of the President's health care law.

Section 4504. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for improving access to the State Children's Health Insurance Program.

Section 4505. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for graduate medical education.

Section 4506. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for trade agreements.

Section 4507. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for reforming the tax code.

Section 4508. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for revenue measures.

Section 4509. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for transportation.

Section 4510. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for Federal retirement reform.

Section 4511. Deficit-neutral reserve fund for national defense.

ESTIMATES OF DIRECT SPENDING IN THE HOUSE

SENATE RESOLUTION

No provision.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

This section is required under the Separate Orders of H. Res. 5 (114th Congress), which implements the Rules of the House of Representatives and is a requirement for the consideration of a concurrent resolution on the budget in the 114th Congress. It provides the average and estimated average rate of growth in means-tested and non-means-tested direct spending for the 10-year periods before and after fiscal year 2016, respectively, and proposes reforms of these two categories and direct spending.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

The conference agreement includes the House provision for the House.

TABLE 11.—HISTORICAL MEANS-TESTED AND NON MEANS-TESTED DIRECT SPENDING

[Outlays by fiscal year, billions of dollars]

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Estimated 2014	Estimated 2015	Average annual growth 2006–2015
Means-Tested Programs:												
Health Care Programs:												
Medicaid	182	181	191	201	251	273	275	251	265	301	335	6.3%
Medicare Part D Low-Income Subsidies	0	11	17	17	19	21	24	20	22	22	24	[a]8.9%
Health insurance subsidies [b,c]	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	28	n.a.
Children's Health Insurance Program	5	5	6	7	8	8	9	9	9	9	10	7.3%
Subtotal	187	197	213	225	277	302	308	279	297	346	397	7.8%
Income Security:												
SNAP	33	35	35	39	56	70	77	80	83	76	78	9.1%
Supplemental Security Income	38	37	36	41	45	47	53	47	53	54	55	3.7%
Earned income and child tax credits [c]	49	52	54	75	67	77	78	77	79	82	83	5.3%
Family support and foster care [d]	31	30	31	32	33	35	33	30	32	31	31	0.3%
Child nutrition	13	14	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	20	21	5.1%
Subtotal	163	168	170	202	217	247	260	254	266	263	268	5.1%
Veterans' pensions	4	4	3	4	4	4	5	5	5	6	6	5.0%
Pell Grants [e]	0	0	0	1	2	4	14	12	16	8	11	n.a.
Subtotal, Means-Tested Programs	354	369	386	431	501	557	587	550	584	623	683	6.8%
Non-Means-Tested Programs [f]	1,094	1,188	1,242	1,349	1,787	1,553	1,648	1,710	1,752	1,757	1,847	5.4%
Total Mandatory Outlays [g]	**1,448**	**1,556**	**1,628**	**1,780**	**2,288**	**2,110**	**2,236**	**2,260**	**2,336**	**2,380**	**2,530**	5.7%
Memorandum:												
Pell Grants (Discretionary)	13	13	13	15	13	20	21	21	17	23	20	4.3%

Source: Congressional Budget Office; staff of the Joint Committee on Taxation.

Notes: The average annual growth rate over the 2006-2015 period encompasses growth in outlays from the amount recorded in 2005 through the amount projected for 2015.

Data on spending for benefit programs in this table exclude administrative costs that are classified as discretionary but generally include administrative costs classified as mandatory.

SNAP = Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program; n.a. = not applicable.

Because October 1 fell on a weekend in 2006, 2007, and 2012, certain federal payments that were due on that date were instead made at the end of the preceding September and thus shifted into the previous fiscal year. Those shifts primarily affected outlays for Supplemental Security Income, veterans' compensation benefits and pensions, and Medicare.

a. The average annual growth rate reflects the program's growth from its inception in 2006 through 2015.

b. Differs from the amounts reported in Table 3-2 from The Budget and Economic Outlook: Fiscal Years 2015 to 2025 because it does not include payments to health insurance plans for risk adjustment (amounts paid to plans that attract less healthy enrollees) and reinsurance (amounts paid to plans that enroll individuals who end up with high costs). Spending for grants to states to establish exchanges is also excluded.

c. Does not include amounts that reduce tax receipts.

d. Includes the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, the Child Support Enforcement program, the Child Care Entitlement program, and other programs that benefit children.

e. Includes mandatory spending designed to reduce the discretionary budget authority needed to support the maximum award level set in the appropriation act plus mandatory spending that, by formula, increases the total maximum award above the amount set in the appropriation act.

f. Does not include offsetting receipts.

g. Does not include outlays associated with federal interest payments, which are not considered part of mandatory spending

TABLE 12.—PROJECTED MEANS-TESTED AND NON MEANS-TESTED DIRECT SPENDING

[Outlays by fiscal year, billions of dollars]

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Average annual growth 2016–2025
Means-Tested Programs:												
Health Care Programs:												
Medicaid	335	360	384	405	428	452	477	503	530	558	588	5.8%
Medicare Part D Low-Income Subsidies	24	28	28	28	32	34	37	44	46	46	54	8.4%
Health insurance subsidies [a,b]	28	55	75	86	89	91	97	102	105	109	112	15.1%
Children's Health Insurance Program	10	11	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	−5.9%
Subtotal	397	454	493	524	555	584	617	656	687	719	760	6.7%
Income Security:												
SNAP	78	78	76	75	74	74	74	73	74	74	75	−0.4%
Supplemental Security Income	55	60	57	54	61	63	64	71	68	65	72	2.7%
Earned income and child tax credits [b,c]	83	85	86	87	75	76	77	78	79	80	82	−0.1%
Family support and foster care [d]	31	32	32	32	33	33	33	34	34	34	35	1.0%
Child nutrition	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	31	32	4.3%
Subtotal	268	277	274	273	267	271	275	285	284	284	295	1.0%
Veterans' pensions	6	7	6	6	7	7	7	8	7	7	7	2.0%
Pell Grants [e]	11	6	7	9	9	9	9	9	10	10	10	−1.3%
Subtotal, Means-Tested Programs	683	744	781	811	838	871	909	957	988	1,019	1,072	4.6%
Non-Means-Tested Programs [f]	1,847	1,947	2,018	2,094	2,241	2,370	2,516	2,708	2,820	2,933	3,165	5.5%
Total Mandatory Outlays [g]	**2,530**	**2,691**	**2,799**	**2,905**	**3,079**	**3,241**	**3,425**	**3,666**	**3,808**	**3,952**	**4,237**	5.3%
Memorandum:												
Pell Grants (Discretionary) [h]	20	27	27	23	24	24	25	25	26	26	27	3.0%

Source: Congressional Budget Office; staff of the Joint Committee on Taxation.

Notes: The projections shown here are the same as those reported in Congressional Budget Office, The Budget and Economic Outlook: Fiscal Years 2015 to 2025 (January 2015). CBO recently updated its baseline projections as reported in Congressional Budget Office, Updated Budget Projections: 2015 to 2025 (March 2015). Some of the projections are different in the March baseline, but at the request of the committee staff, the projections shown are from the January baseline.

The average annual growth rate over the 2016-2025 period encompasses growth in outlays from the amount projected for 2015 through the amount projected for 2025.

Projections of spending for benefit programs in this table exclude administrative costs that are classified as discretionary but generally include administrative costs classified as mandatory.

SNAP = Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

Because October 1 will fall on a weekend in 2016, 2017, 2022, and 2023, certain federal payments that are due on that date will instead be made at the end of the preceding September and thus be shifted into the previous fiscal year.

Those shifts primarily affect outlays for Supplemental Security Income, veterans' compensation benefits and pensions, and Medicare.

a. Differs from the amounts reported in Table 3-2 from The Budget and Economic Outlook: Fiscal Years 2015 to 2025 because it does not include payments to health insurance plans for risk adjustment (amounts paid to plans that attract less healthy enrollees) and reinsurance (amounts paid to plans that enroll individuals who end up with high costs). Spending for grants to states to establish exchanges is also excluded.

b. Does not include amounts that reduce tax receipts.

c. Differs from the amounts reported on Table 3-2 from The Budget and Economic Outlook: Fiscal Years 2015 to 2025 because it does not include other tax credits that were included in that table.

d. Includes the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, the Child Support Enforcement program, the Child Care Entitlement program, and other programs that benefit children.

e. Includes mandatory spending designed to reduce the discretionary budget authority needed to support the maximum award level set in the appropriation act plus mandatory spending that, by formula, increases the total maximum award above the amount set in the appropriation act.

f. Does not include offsetting receipts.

g. Does not include outlays associated with federal interest payments, which are not considered part of mandatory spending.

h. The discretionary baseline does not represent a projection of expected costs for the discretionary portion of the Pell Grant program. As with all other discretionary programs, the budget authority is calculated by inflating the budget authority appropriated for fiscal year 2015. Outlays for future years are based on those amounts of budget authority and also reflect a temporary surplus of budget authority provided in 2015.

POLICY STATEMENTS

SENATE RESOLUTION

The Senate resolution contains no policy statements.

HOUSE AMENDMENT

The House amendment contains the following policy statements:

Section 801. Policy statement on balanced budget amendment.

Section 802. Policy statement on budget process and baseline reform.

Section 803. Policy statement on economic growth and job creation.

Section 804. Policy statement on tax reform.

Section 805. Policy statement on trade.

Section 806. Policy statement on Social Security.

Section 807. Policy statement on repealing the President's health care law and promoting real health care reform.

Section 808. Policy statement on Medicare.

Section 809. Policy statement on medical discovery, development, delivery and innovation.

Section 810. Policy statement on Federal regulatory reform.

Section 811. Policy statement on higher education and workforce development opportunity.

Section 812. Policy statement on Department of Veterans Affairs.

Section 813. Policy statement on Federal accounting methodologies.

Section 814. Policy statement on scorekeeping for outyear budgetary effects in appropriation acts.

Section 815. Policy statement on reducing unnecessary, wasteful, and unauthorized spending.

Section 816. Policy statement on deficit reduction through the cancellation of unobligated balances.

Section 817. Policy statement on agency fees and spending.

Section 818. Policy statement on responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars.

Section 819. Policy statement on ''No Budget, No Pay.''

Section 820. Policy statement on national security funding.

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT

The conference agreement contains the following policy statements of the House and Senate:

Section 6101. Policy statement on a balanced budget amendment.

Section 6102. Policy statement on Social Security.

The conference agreement also contains the following policy statements of the House:

Section 6201. Policy statement on budget process and baseline reform.

Section 6202. Policy statement on economic growth and job creation.

Section 6203. Policy statement on tax reform.

Section 6204. Policy statement on trade.

Section 6205. Policy statement on repealing the President's health care law and promoting real health care reform.

Section 6206. Policy statement on Medicare.

Section 6207. Policy statement on medical discovery, development, delivery, and innovation.

Section 6208. Policy statement on Federal regulatory reform.

Section 6209. Policy statement on higher education and workforce development opportunity.

Section 6210. Policy statement on the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Section 6211. Policy statement on Federal accounting methodologies.

Section 6212. Policy statement on reducing unnecessary, wasteful, and unnecessary spending.

Section 6213. Policy statement on deficit reduction through the cancellation of unobligated balances.

Section 6214. Policy statement on agency fees and spending.

Section 6215. Policy statement on responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars.

Section 6216. Policy statement on ''No Budget, No Pay.''

Section 6217. Policy statement on national security funding.

ALLOCATIONS

As required under section 302 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the joint statement of managers includes allocations of budget authority and outlays, based on the conference agreement, to each of the authorizing committees and the Committee on Appropriations of the House and Senate. This joint statement allocates to the Committee on Appropriations of the House and Senate a lump sum of discretionary budget authority assumed in the concurrent resolution and corresponding outlays for a single fiscal year. It also provides allocations for each of the authorizing committees in the House and Senate for fiscal year 2016, commencing on October 1, 2015, and the 9 ensuing fiscal years, fiscal years 2017 through 2025. These allocations are as follows:

TABLE 13.—ALLOCATION OF SPENDING AUTHORITY TO HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

[In millions of dollars]

	2016
Base Discretionary Action:	
BA	1,016,582
OT	1,156,644
Global War on Terrorism:	
BA	96,287
OT	48,798
Current Law Mandatory:	
BA	960,295
OT	952,912

TABLE 14.—ALLOCATION BY HOUSE AUTHORIZING COMMITTEE

[On-budget amounts in millions of dollars]

	2016	2016–2025
Agriculture:		
Current Law:		
BA	12,473	646,262
OT	12,775	640,246
Resolution Change:		
BA	−1,645	−302,149
OT	−347	−300,020
Total:		
BA	10,828	344,113
OT	12,428	340,226
Armed Services:		
Current Law:		
BA	155,312	1,806,198
OT	159,556	1,804,314
Resolution Change:		
BA	0	0
OT	0	0
Total:		
BA	155,312	1,806,198
OT	159,556	1,804,314
Financial Services:		
Current Law:		
BA	15,120	113,877
OT	4,182	−44,506
Resolution Change:		
BA	−7,334	−62,254
OT	−6,712	−62,056
Total:		
BA	7,786	51,623
OT	−2,530	−106,562
Education & Workforce:		
Current Law:		
BA	−3,756	40,769
OT	−6,552	25,954
Resolution Change:		
BA	−10,633	−249,574
OT	−5,017	−229,658
Total:		
BA	−14,389	−208,805
OT	−11,569	−203,704
Energy & Commerce:		
Current Law:		
BA	444,289	5,721,695
OT	441,174	5,715,531
Resolution Change:		
BA	−54,654	−1,379,704
OT	−49,173	−1,369,488
Total:		
BA	389,635	4,341,991

TABLE 14.—ALLOCATION BY HOUSE AUTHORIZING COMMITTEE—Continued

[On-budget amounts in millions of dollars]

	2016	2016–2025
OT	392,001	4,346,043
Foreign Affairs:		
Current Law:		
BA	28,183	232,212
OT	27,177	230,830
Resolution Change:		
BA	0	0
OT	0	0
Total:		
BA	28,183	232,212
OT	27,177	230,830
Oversight & Government Reform:		
Current Law:		
BA	113,380	1,339,277
OT	112,234	1,320,222
Resolution Change:		
BA	−9,188	−193,961
OT	−9,026	−193,896
Total:		
BA	104,192	1,145,316
OT	103,208	1,126,326
Homeland Security:		
Current Law:		
BA	1,988	23,061
OT	1,973	23,206
Resolution Change:		
BA	−180	−19,470
OT	−180	−19,470
Total:		
BA	1,808	3,591
OT	1,793	3,736
House Administration:		
Current Law:		
BA	41	353
OT	12	108
Resolution Change:		
BA	−31	−298
OT	−2	−53
Total:		
BA	10	55
OT	10	55
Natural Resources:		
Current Law:		
BA	5,392	58,170
OT	6,020	60,458
Resolution Change:		
BA	−569	−32,678
OT	−261	−32,483
Total:		
BA	4,823	25,492
OT	5,759	27,975
Judiciary:		
Current Law:		
BA	22,544	116,624
OT	13,185	122,005
Resolution Change:		
BA	−14,419	−24,949
OT	−868	−23,055
Total:		
BA	8,125	91,675
OT	12,317	98,950
Transportation & Infrastructure:		
Current Law:		
BA	70,089	718,468
OT	16,407	184,208
Resolution Change:		
BA	−12,114	−197,706
OT	0	0
Total:		
BA	57,975	520,762
OT	16,407	184,208
Science, Space & Technology:		
Current Law:		
BA	101	1,017
OT	101	1,017
Resolution Change:		
BA	0	0
OT	0	0
Total:		
BA	101	1,017
OT	101	1,017
Small Business:		
Current Law:		
BA	0	0
OT	0	0
Resolution Change:		
BA	0	0
OT	0	0
Total:		
BA	0	0
OT	0	0

TABLE 14.—ALLOCATION BY HOUSE AUTHORIZING COMMITTEE—Continued

[On-budget amounts in millions of dollars]

	2016	2016–2025
Veterans Affairs:		
Current Law:		
BA	3,094	96,599
OT	9,188	109,687
Resolution Change:		
BA	−31	−1,925
OT	−31	−1,925
Total:		
BA	3,063	94,674
OT	9,157	107,762
Ways & Means:		
Current Law:		
BA	1,022,809	14,818,985
OT	1,021,784	14,817,368
Resolution Change:		
BA	−60,004	−1,594,908
OT	−59,704	−1,594,408
Total:		
BA	962,805	13,224,077
OT	962,080	13,222,960

TABLE 15.—ALLOCATION OF SPENDING AUTHORITY
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

[Fiscal year 2016, $ billions]

Appropriations	Budget authority	Outlays
Revised Security Category Discretionary Budget Authority [1]	523.091	n/a
Revised Nonsecurity Category Discretionary Budget Authority [1]	493.491	n/a
General Purpose Outlays [1]	n/a	1,156.644
Memorandum:		
Subtotal	1,016.582	1,156.644
On-budget	1,011.307	1,151.295
Off-budget	5.275	5.349
Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism [2]	96.287	48.798
Mandatory	964.049	956.128

[1] The allocation will be adjusted following the reporting of bills, offering of amendments, or submission of conference reports that qualify for adjustments to the discretionary spending limits as outlined in sections 251(b)(2)(A)(i), 251(b)(2)(B), 251(b)(2)(C), and 251(b)(2)(D) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

[2] The allocation may be adjusted pursuant to section 3102 of the conference report to accompany S. Con. Res. 11, the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2016.

TABLE 16.—ALLOCATION OF SPENDING AUTHORITY
SENATE COMMITTEES OTHER THAN APPROPRIATIONS

[Fiscal year 2016, $ billions]

	2016	2016–2020	2016–2025
Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry:			
Budget Authority	128.680	654.944	1,322.686
Outlays	121.723	606.817	1,228.931
Armed Services:			
Budget Authority	159.207	848.760	1,851.710
Outlays	163.446	848.187	1,849.802
Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs:			
Budget Authority	24.680	116.744	214.389
Outlays	3.848	−7.666	−42.938
Commerce, Science, and Transportation:			
Budget Authority	17.905	100.960	205.334
Outlays	14.188	77.987	154.802
Energy and Natural Resources:			
Budget Authority	4.454	24.474	48.985
Outlays	4.465	24.478	49.211
Environment and Public Works:			
Budget Authority	41.672	211.645	420.414
Outlays	2.543	13.680	30.750
Finance:			
Budget Authority	2,179.304	12,340.566	29,433.590
Outlays	2,169.584	12,321.005	29,408.581
Foreign Relations:			
Budget Authority	28.342	125.601	233.802
Outlays	27.336	124.464	232.420
Homeland Security and Government Affairs:			
Budget Authority	134.948	729.195	1,577.588
Outlays	133.802	720.862	1,558.533
Judiciary:			
Budget Authority	24.816	79.449	143.856
Outlays	15.443	81.087	149.155
Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:			
Budget Authority	12.137	87.301	174.372
Outlays	14.271	87.783	182.631
Rules and Administration:			
Budget Authority	0.067	0.334	0.666
Outlays	0.038	0.197	0.421
Intelligence:			
Budget Authority	0.514	2.570	5.140
Outlays	0.514	2.570	5.140
Veterans' Affairs:			
Budget Authority	97.631	483.601	1,026.432
Outlays	103.480	494.772	1,037.000
Indian Affairs:			
Budget Authority	0.491	2.191	4.741
Outlays	0.942	3.551	5.982
Small Business:			
Budget Authority	0.000	0.000	0.000
Outlays	0.000	0.000	0.000
Unassigned to Committee:			
Budget Authority	−930.099	−6,014.283	−15,268.775
Outlays	−884.618	−5,887.158	−14,949.026
Total:			
Budget Authority	1,924.749	9,794.052	21,394.930

TABLE 16.—ALLOCATION OF SPENDING AUTHORITY
SENATE COMMITTEES OTHER THAN APPROPRIATIONS—Continued
[Fiscal year 2016, $ billions]

	2016	2016–2020	2016–2025
Outlays	1,891.005	9,512.616	20,901.395

Includes entitlements funded in annual appropriations acts.

TOM PRICE,
TODD ROKITA,
MARIO DIAZ-BALART,
DIANE BLACK,
JOHN R. MOOLENAAR,
Managers on the Part of the House.

MICHAEL B. ENZI,
CHUCK GRASSLEY,
JEFF SESSIONS,
MIKE CRAPO,
LINDSEY GRAHAM,
ROB PORTMAN,
PATRICK J. TOOMEY,
RON JOHNSON,
KELLY AYOTTE,
ROGER F. WICKER,
BOB CORKER,
DAVID PERDUE,
Managers on the Part of the Senate.

RESIGNATION AS MEMBER OF COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following resignation as a member of the Committee on Financial Services:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, April 27, 2015.

Attn: Trevor Kolego,
Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
The Capitol, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: It is a tremendous privilege to represent the people of the Tenth District of Illinois in the U.S. House of Representatives.

I have greatly appreciated the opportunity to serve on the Financial Services Committee. However, due to my appointment to the Committee on Ways and Means, I hereby resign my seat on the Financial Services Committee.

I believe that this new position will better allow me to represent the interests of my constituents, and I look forward to getting to work with my colleagues on the Ways and Means Committee.

Very truly yours,
ROBERT J. DOLD,
Member of Congress.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the resignation is accepted.

There was no objection.

ELECTING MEMBERS TO CERTAIN STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the House Republican Conference, I send to the desk a privileged resolution and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 229

Resolved, That the following named Members be, and are hereby, elected to the following standing committees of the House of Representatives:

COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION: Mr. Walker.

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS: Mr. Dold.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2016

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DENT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 2029 and that I may include tabular material on the same.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 223 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 2029.

The Chair appoints the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1430

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 2029) making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes, with Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. DENT) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BISHOP) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. DENT. Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Today, it is my honor and privilege to bring H.R. 2029, the fiscal year 2016 Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, to the House of Representatives.

I present this bill alongside my good friend and ranking member on the subcommittee, SANFORD BISHOP from Georgia, who has been an essential partner all along the way. I greatly appreciate the participation and support of our committee members, both sides of the aisle, as we considered priorities and funding levels for the important programs in our bill.

We analyzed the budget request, developed questions, held oversight hearings to hear directly from members of all the services, the Department of Defense leadership, the Secretary of the VA, the VA inspector general, and the directors of four related agencies. We received over 700 requests from Members—again, from both sides of the aisle—and gave full consideration to each one. It has been a busy spring, and we did our best to accommodate those Member requests.

As we consider this bill, I can't proceed further without noticing that this subcommittee has a formidable level of support from the chair and ranking member of the full committee. Thank you, Chairman ROGERS and Mrs. LOWEY. Your attention to oversight and genuine care for the military and veterans has been inspiring.

To round out our team, we have some great support from our professional staff: Sue Quantius, Sarah Young, Tracey Russell, Maureen Holohan, and Matt Washington on the committee staff and Heather Smith, Drew Kent, and Sean Snyder on my personal staff. We couldn't do it without all of them.

H.R. 2029 demonstrates our firm commitment to fully supporting the Nation's veterans and servicemembers. Our investment of nearly $77 billion for military construction and Veterans Affairs that is 6 percent—6 percent—over last year's level is unprecedented. This bill provides comprehensive support for servicemembers, military families, and veterans. It supports our troops with facilities and services necessary to maintain readiness and morale at bases here in the States and around the world.

It provides for Defense Department schools and health clinics that take care of our military families, and the bill funds our veterans health care systems to ensure that our promise to care for those who have sacrificed in defense of this great Nation continues as those men and women return home. We owe this to our veterans and are committed to sustained oversight so that programs deliver what they promise and taxpayers are well served by the investments we make.

On the military construction side, this bill provides a total of $7.7 billion for military construction projects and family housing, including base and overseas contingency operations funding, an increase of $904 million. That is nearly 12 percent above the enacted fiscal year 2015 level and $755 million

below the President's request. This funding meets DOD's most critical needs, including priorities for the combatant commanders in EUCOM, CENTCOM, AFRICOM, and PACOM.

It provides $607 million for military medical facilities, including the one at Landstuhl, Germany. It provides $334 million for the Department of Defense education facilities, for construction or renovation of 10 schools. It supports our Guard and Reserve through $512 million for facilities in 28 States. It fully funds military family housing at $1.4 billion. And it provides $150 million for the NATO security investment program, which is $30 million over the budget request.

On the Veterans Affairs side, the legislation includes a total of $163.2 billion in combined discretionary and mandatory funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs. Discretionary funding alone for veterans programs in the bill is $68.7 billion. Total fiscal year 2016 discretionary funding is $3.6 billion above 2015. It is a 5.6 percent increase and $1.4 billion below the request. Three billion dollars of this increase was advance funded.

On the VA medical services side, the bill funds VA medical services at $48.6 billion. That includes $970 million that the VA came back and asked for on top of the advanced funding from last year. We stretched pretty far to do this, and we haven't funded this second bite in the House before. It is tough to find $970 million in any budget environment, but this committee did, showing again the level of bipartisan commitment we have to our veterans.

For disability claims, we provide the full request for the Veterans Benefits Administration, which is a $163 million increase over fiscal year 2015, and the full request for the Board of Veterans Appeals.

The bill will enhance transparency and accountability at the VA through further oversight and an increase for the VA Office of Inspector General's independent audits and investigations. I can assure you the inspector general's office has been very, very busy.

This legislation also contains $233 million for the modernization of the VA electronic health record and includes language restricting funding until the VA demonstrates progress on the system's functionality and interoperability. This is a major concern to all of us on both sides of the aisle, and I know the chairman, in particular, has been outspoken about this matter, but it is something that all of us, Republican and Democrat, want to see fixed.

On construction issues, major construction within the VA is funded at $562 million, which is the same level as fiscal year 2015. The bill provides funding for hospital replacement and allows the VA to continue to correct seismic safety issues and deficiencies. We did not fund the more-than-double budget request for construction, as we face the impact of gross mismanagement of the Colorado VA Hospital construction, which resulted in a $930 million cost overrun. That is not a typo: a $930 million cost overrun, which is nearly twice the entire VA major construction line item. We have also cracked down on oversight with multiple restrictions.

We fund the American Battle Monuments Commission, the Armed Forces Retirement Home, Arlington National Cemetery, and the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims at the requested funding levels.

In closing, this is a very solid bipartisan bill that is focused on the needs of servicemembers, veterans, and all their families. We are $4.6 billion over the fiscal year 2015 level; again, a nearly 6 percent increase. Not a cut. We have provided for our military and veterans to the very best level we can.

Did we fund every last dime requested? No. Not every idea has merit, and not every project is mission critical. We did not fund some projects. We cut some requested increases, and we rescinded funds. These were fair decisions and part of our responsibility as appropriators.

We have received a lot of criticism for the actions we have taken very recently. It started with an email campaign from the VA legislative affairs office; then a Statement of Administration Policy; and last, some of the VSOs have joined in. Let me tell you, in my time, before I was chairman of the subcommittee, and certainly in my time since I took over this position, I can say with absolute certainty, the VA's problems stem from poor management, not too little money. Poor management, not too little money. I will say that again. The problems we encounter at the VA time after time—whether it is the Phoenix patient wait list scandal, the claims and benefits mess in Philadelphia, or the Denver hospital construction debacle—show that the VA's problem is management, not money, and for the VA to complain about a 6 percent increase rather than an 8 percent increase and to call a 6 percent increase a cut—they call that a cut.

Only in Washington, D.C., can someone call a 6 percent increase over last year a cut. Everywhere else in America it is a 6 percent increase, but not in this town. Amazing to me, and particularly from a Department that has so many severe managerial problems at this time. We need to be diligent with oversight and at the same time be a helping hand to the Department. There is a way out of the morass, but more money without the necessary management reforms is not the answer.

I have talked to many Members about the VA, and just last night in the Committee on Rules, I got quite an earful there. Truly, Members are in agreement that we must help the VA transform because that transformation is crucial to serve veterans properly and to respect the taxpayers footing the bill. By the way, that frustration I have heard from Members is from both sides of the aisle, as was the case I heard last night in the Committee on Rules.

We will do a lot of good with this bill. It is fair, it is balanced, and, at a 6 percent increase over last year, it is generous. On behalf of our servicemembers, military families, and veterans, I urge your support of this legislation. Let's take care of those who sacrifice for our country. It is time to do the right thing and support the bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, FY 2016 (H.R. 2029)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2015 Enacted	FY 2016 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
TITLE I - DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE					
Military construction, Army	528,427	743,245	663,245	+134,818	-80,000
Military construction, Navy and Marine Corps	1,018,772	1,669,239	1,349,678	+330,906	-319,561
Military construction, Air Force	811,774	1,389,185	1,237,055	+425,281	-152,130
Military construction, Defense-Wide	1,991,690	2,300,767	1,931,456	-60,234	-369,311
Total, Active components	4,350,663	6,102,436	5,181,434	+830,771	-921,002
Military construction, Army National Guard	128,920	197,237	167,437	+38,517	-29,800
Military construction, Air National Guard	92,663	138,738	138,738	+46,075	---
Military construction, Army Reserve	103,946	113,595	104,295	+349	-9,300
Military construction, Navy Reserve	51,528	36,078	36,078	-15,450	---
Military construction, Air Force Reserve	49,492	65,021	65,021	+15,529	---
Total, Reserve components	426,549	550,669	511,569	+85,020	-39,100
Total, Military construction	4,777,212	6,653,105	5,693,003	+915,791	-960,102
North Atlantic Treaty Organization Security Investment Program	199,700	120,000	150,000	-49,700	+30,000
Family housing construction, Army	78,609	99,695	99,695	+21,086	---
Family housing operation and maintenance, Army	350,976	393,511	393,511	+42,535	---
Family housing construction, Navy and Marine Corps	16,412	16,541	16,541	+129	---
Family housing operation and maintenance, Navy and Marine Corps	354,029	353,036	353,036	-993	---
Family housing construction, Air Force	---	160,498	160,498	+160,498	---
Family housing operation and maintenance, Air Force	327,747	331,232	331,232	+3,485	---
Family housing operation and maintenance, Defense-Wide	61,100	58,668	58,668	-2,432	---
Department of Defense Family Housing Improvement Fund	1,662	---	---	-1,662	---
Total, Family housing	1,190,535	1,413,181	1,413,181	+222,646	---
Chemical demilitarization construction, Defense-Wide	38,715	---	---	-38,715	---
Department of Defense Base Closure Account	315,085	251,334	251,334	-63,751	---
ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS					
Military Construction - fiscal year 2014 (Sec. 127)	125,000	---	---	-125,000	---
Military Construction - fiscal year 2015 (Sec. 128)	117,000	---	---	-117,000	---
Military Construction, Army (Sec. 125)	-49,533	---	-96,000	-46,467	-96,000
Military Construction, Navy and Marine Corps (Sec. 130)	-25,522	---	---	+25,522	---
Defense Access Roads (Sec. 131)	---	---	30,000	+30,000	+30,000
Military Construction, Air Force (Sec. 126)	-41,392	---	-52,600	-11,208	-52,600
Military Construction, Defense-Wide (Sec. 127)	---	---	-134,000	-134,000	-134,000
NATO Security Investment Program (Sec. 132)	-25,000	---	---	+25,000	---
42 USC 3374 (Sec. 128)	-63,800	---	-103,918	-40,118	-103,918
Total, Administrative Provisions	36,753	---	-356,518	-393,271	-356,518
Appropriations	(242,000)	---	(30,000)	(-212,000)	(+30,000)
Rescissions	(-205,247)	---	(-386,518)	(-181,271)	(-386,518)
Total, title I, Department of Defense	6,558,000	8,437,620	7,151,000	+593,000	-1,286,620
Appropriations	(6,763,247)	(8,437,620)	(7,537,518)	(+774,271)	(-900,102)
Rescissions	(-205,247)	---	(-386,518)	(-181,271)	(-386,518)
TITLE II - DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS					
Veterans Benefits Administration					
Compensation and pensions	79,071,000	79,124,675	79,124,675	+53,675	---
Advance appropriation, FY 2017	---	87,146,761	87,146,761	+87,146,761	---

Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, FY 2016 (H.R. 2029)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2015 Enacted	FY 2016 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
Readjustment benefits	14,997,136	15,344,922	15,344,922	+347,786	---
Advance appropriation, FY 2017	---	16,743,904	16,743,904	+16,743,904	---
Veterans insurance and indemnities	63,257	77,160	77,160	+13,903	---
Advance appropriation, FY 2017	---	91,920	91,920	+91,920	---
Veterans housing benefit program fund:					
(indefinite)	---	---	---	---	---
(Limitation on direct loans)	(500)	(500)	(500)	---	---
Administrative expenses	160,881	164,558	164,558	+3,677	---
Vocational rehabilitation loans program account	10	31	31	+21	---
(Limitation on direct loans)	(2,877)	(2,952)	(2,952)	(+75)	---
Administrative expenses	361	367	367	+6	---
Native American veteran housing loan program account	1,130	1,134	1,134	+4	---
Total, Veterans Benefits Administration	94,293,775	198,695,432	198,695,432	+104,401,657	---
Appropriations	(94,293,775)	(94,712,847)	(94,712,847)	(+419,072)	---
Advance appropriations, FY 2017	---	(103,982,585)	(103,982,585)	(+103,982,585)	---
Veterans Health Administration					
Medical services:					
Advance from prior year	(45,015,527)	(47,603,202)	(47,603,202)	(+2,587,675)	---
Current year request	209,189	1,124,197	969,554	+760,365	-154,643
Advance appropriation, FY 2017	47,603,202	51,673,000	51,673,000	+4,069,798	---
Subtotal	47,812,391	52,797,197	52,642,554	+4,830,163	-154,643
Medical support and compliance:					
Advance from prior year	(5,879,700)	(6,144,000)	(6,144,000)	(+264,300)	---
Current year request	---	69,961	---	---	-69,961
Advance appropriation, FY 2017	6,144,000	6,524,000	6,524,000	+380,000	---
Subtotal	6,144,000	6,593,961	6,524,000	+380,000	-69,961
Medical facilities:					
Advance from prior year	(4,739,000)	(4,915,000)	(4,915,000)	(+176,000)	---
Current year request	---	105,132	---	---	-105,132
Advance appropriation, FY 2017	4,915,000	5,074,000	5,074,000	+159,000	---
Subtotal	4,915,000	5,179,132	5,074,000	+159,000	-105,132
Medical and prosthetic research	588,922	621,813	621,813	+32,891	---
Medical care cost recovery collections:					
Offsetting collections	-2,456,000	-2,445,000	-2,445,000	+11,000	---
Appropriations (indefinite)	2,456,000	2,445,000	2,445,000	-11,000	---
Subtotal	---	---	---	---	---
DoD-VA Joint Medical Funds (transfers out)	(-276,251)	(-286,000)	(-286,000)	(-9,749)	---
DoD-VA Joint Medical Funds (by transfer)	(276,251)	(286,000)	(286,000)	(+9,749)	---
DoD-VA Health Care Sharing Incentive Fund (Transfer out)	(-15,000)	(-15,000)	(-15,000)	---	---
DoD-VA Health Care Sharing Incentive Fund (by transfer)	(15,000)	(15,000)	(15,000)	---	---
Total, Veterans Health Administration	59,460,313	65,192,103	64,862,367	+5,402,054	-329,736
Appropriations	(798,111)	(1,921,103)	(1,591,367)	(+793,256)	(-329,736)
Advance appropriations, FY 2017	(58,662,202)	(63,271,000)	(63,271,000)	(+4,608,798)	---
Advances from prior year appropriations	(55,634,227)	(58,662,202)	(58,662,202)	(+3,027,975)	---
National Cemetery Administration					
National Cemetery Administration	256,800	266,220	266,220	+9,420	---

Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, FY 2016 (H.R. 2029)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2015 Enacted	FY 2016 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
Departmental Administration					
General administration	321,591	346,659	336,659	+15,068	-10,000
Board of Veterans Appeals	99,294	107,884	107,884	+8,590	---
General operating expenses, VBA	2,534,254	2,697,734	2,697,734	+163,480	---
Information technology systems	3,903,344	4,133,363	4,038,363	+135,019	-95,000
Office of Inspector General	126,411	126,766	131,766	+5,355	+5,000
Construction, major projects	561,800	1,143,800	561,800	---	-582,000
Construction, minor projects	495,200	406,200	406,200	-89,000	---
Grants for construction of State extended care facilities	90,000	80,000	80,000	-10,000	---
Grants for the construction of veterans cemeteries	46,000	45,000	45,000	-1,000	---
Total, Departmental Administration	8,177,894	9,087,406	8,405,406	+227,512	-682,000
Administrative Provisions					
Section 226					
Medical services	1,400,000	1,400,000	1,400,000	---	---
(Rescission)	-1,400,000	-1,400,000	-1,400,000	---	---
Medical support and compliance	100,000	100,000	100,000	---	---
(Rescission)	-100,000	-100,000	-100,000	---	---
Medical facilities	250,000	250,000	250,000	---	---
(Rescission)	-250,000	-250,000	-250,000	---	---
Bonus limit rescission (Sec. 233)	-41,000	---	-101,000	-60,000	-101,000
JIF rescission (Sec. 238)	-15,000	---	-15,000	---	-15,000
Contract disability exams	40,000	---	---	-40,000	---
Payraise absorption (Sec. 240 and 241)	---	---	-313,626	-313,626	-313,626
Total. Administrative Provisions	-16,000	---	-429,626	-413,626	-429,626
Total, title II	162,172,782	273,241,161	271,799,799	+109,627,017	-1,441,362
Appropriations	(105,316,580)	(107,737,576)	(106,412,214)	(+1,095,634)	(-1,325,362)
Rescissions	(-1,806,000)	(-1,750,000)	(-1,866,000)	(-60,000)	(-116,000)
Advance Appropriations, FY 2017:					
Mandatory	---	103,982,585	103,982,585	+103,982,585	---
Discretionary	(58,662,202)	(63,271,000)	(63,271,000)	(+4,608,798)	---
Advances from prior year appropriations:					
Mandatory	---	---	---	---	---
Discretionary	(55,634,227)	(58,662,202)	(58,662,202)	(+3,027,975)	---
(Limitation on direct loans)	(3,377)	(3,452)	(3,452)	(+75)	---
Discretionary	(68,041,389)	(74,711,819)	(73,270,457)	(+5,229,068)	(-1,441,362)
Advances from prior year less FY 2017 advances	(-3,027,975)	(-4,608,798)	(-4,608,798)	(-1,580,823)	---
Net discretionary	(65,013,414)	(70,103,021)	(68,661,659)	(+3,648,245)	(-1,441,362)
Mandatory	(94,131,393)	(198,529,342)	(198,529,342)	(+104,397,949)	---
Advances from prior year less FY 2017 advances	---	(-103,982,585)	(-103,982,585)	(-103,982,585)	---
Net mandatory	(94,131,393)	(94,546,757)	(94,546,757)	(+415,364)	---
Total mandatory and discretionary	159,144,807	164,649,778	163,208,416	+4,063,609	-1,441,362
TITLE III - RELATED AGENCIES					
American Battle Monuments Commission					
Salaries and expenses	74,100	75,100	75,100	+1,000	---

Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, FY 2016 (H.R. 2029)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2015 Enacted	FY 2016 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
Foreign currency fluctuations account	1,900	2,000	2,000	+100	---
Total, American Battle Monuments Commission	76,000	77,100	77,100	+1,100	---
U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims					
Salaries and expenses	31,386	32,141	32,141	+755	---
Department of Defense - Civil					
Cemeterial Expenses, Army					
Salaries and expenses	65,800	70,800	70,800	+5,000	---
Armed Forces Retirement Home - Trust Fund					
Operation and maintenance	62,400	63,300	63,300	+900	---
Capital program	1,000	1,000	1,000	---	---
Total, Armed Forces Retirement Home	63,400	64,300	64,300	+900	---
Total, title III	236,586	244,341	244,341	+7,755	---
TITLE IV - OVERSEAS CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS					
Military Construction, Navy and Marine Corps	---	---	244,004	+244,004	+244,004
Military Construction, Air Force	---	---	75,000	+75,000	+75,000
Military Construction, Defense-Wide	46,000	---	212,996	+166,996	+212,996
European Reassurance Initiative Military Construction	175,000	---	---	-175,000	---
Total, title IV	221,000	---	532,000	+311,000	+532,000
Grand total	169,188,368	281,923,122	279,727,140	+110,538,772	-2,195,982
Appropriations	(112,316,413)	(116,419,537)	(114,194,073)	(+1,877,660)	(-2,225,464)
Rescissions	(-2,011,247)	(-1,750,000)	(-2,252,518)	(-241,271)	(-502,518)
Advance appropriations, FY 2017	(58,662,202)	(167,253,585)	(167,253,585)	(+108,591,383)	---
Overseas contingency operations	(221,000)	---	(532,000)	(+311,000)	(+532,000)
Advances from prior year appropriations	(55,634,227)	(58,662,202)	(58,662,202)	(+3,027,975)	---
(By transfer)	(291,251)	(301,000)	(301,000)	(+9,749)	---
(Transfer out)	(-291,251)	(-301,000)	(-301,000)	(-9,749)	---
(Limitation on direct loans)	(3,377)	(3,452)	(3,452)	(+75)	---

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Chair, let me say that I am delighted to have the opportunity to work with Chairman DENT of the subcommittee as well as the chairman and ranking member of the full committee.

Madam Chair, as you know, this bill has a strong reputation for common ground and bipartisanship. We are pleased with several aspects of the bill. For example, the bill maintains tough but fair reporting requirements for VistA modernization, which closely tracks the VA's development of its electronic health record.

The bill continues to prioritize the elimination of the veterans claims backlog by fully funding the fiscal year 2016 requests: $18.3 million for a centralized mail initiative which consolidates inbound paper mail from regional offices to a centralized intake site, as well as $140.8 million for the Veterans Claims Intake Program to scan and convert paper claims into a digital format. I believe that these are all positive steps to making the VA function better.

Furthermore, Chairman DENT has avoided including contentious legislative riders, which is very much appreciated. Unfortunately, however, the chairman was forced to write a bill under the majority's fiscal year 2016 budget resolution, which chose to lock in the Budget Control Act levels and to use gimmicks to boost defense funding. Because of the budget resolution's failure to provide relief from these budget caps—which were established in 2011 and later adjusted in 2013—the chairman was forced to make some tough choices due to the allocation that he was given.

While military construction is provided $7.2 billion, an increase of $593 million above 2015, it is still $1.2 billion below the budget request. In an effort to avoid the defense budget cap, the bill shifts $532 million to the overseas contingency operations funding stream, even though the fiscal year 2016 budget request did not include an OCO request. This is a gimmick, purely a gimmick to boost defense spending by pumping up the OCO budget, which is not limited by the budget law.

The Department of Veterans Affairs is funded at $68.7 billion, and while it is $3.6 billion above fiscal year 2015, the enacted level, it is also $1.4 billion below the fiscal year 2016 budget request. The inadequate fiscal year 2016 allocation again forced the chairman to slice the request for military construction by $582 billion. That is hospital construction.

Furthermore, the bill includes language that directs that only replacement, safety, and security projects can receive budgeted funding. This is troubling language, and it eliminates all national cemetery projects for fiscal year 2016 and puts several other projects in jeopardy.

□ 1445

The majority claims they reduced the construction account because the half-built Veterans Affairs Denver hospital project is drastically over budget and riddled with mistakes.

I certainly agree that the VA needs to be held accountable for the poor job in managing the Denver hospital project; however, no funds for the Denver hospital were allocated within the MILCON-VA bill.

Additionally, I am not aware of any similar issues with any of the other requested projects in the bill for FY12, including replacement, clinic construction, seismic improvements, or cemetery construction.

I believe the majority's budget caps and resulting inadequate allocation—not the problems in Denver—led to cutting construction in half. I am concerned that, if the reduction stands, it will further contribute to the gaps in access, utilization, and safety that were already identified in the VA's annual Strategic Capital Investment program process.

Madam Chair, this committee can no longer afford to function under the Budget Control Act caps. The reductions to VA will cause gaps in access, utilization, and safety and could lower the standard of care due our veterans.

Madam Chairman, as I pointed out during the MILCON-VA markup, the FY 2017 advance funding will consume $4.6 billion of the nondefense discretionary cap next year, so this problem will only get worse. Certainly, the Department of Defense cannot be the only winner.

Using the FY 2016 budget levels will produce a long summer and an early fall, with no real progress on the FY 2016 bills. If so, it is inevitable that a continuing resolution or a series of continuing resolutions will be needed to keep the government open and running in place long past the new fiscal year starts on October 1.

We cannot continue to govern in this fashion. I believe that it is well past time to be strategic about how we handle our Federal budget, and now, we need to take the next step toward a more responsible budget process so we can eventually stop lurching from one crisis to the next.

I believe that Chairman DENT crafted the best bill he could with the allocation he was given. I also believe that this is the first step in a long process, and I am concerned about the impact these reductions to the VA construction account could have, and we believe they will have to be addressed before the process.

To that end, I am prepared to offer an amendment to the bill restoring the full funding of the request so that we can, in fact, do justice by our veterans and do what is necessary for our military construction without using budget gimmicks. At the appropriate time, I will offer an amendment to do that.

Madam Chairman, at this time, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DENT. Madam Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. ROGERS), the full committee chairman, and I want to thank him for all his support and leadership in putting this bill together.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Chairman, thank you for yielding time.

Madam Chairman, I rise in support of this bill, the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs bill for 2016. In doing that, I want to congratulate Chairman DENT, the new chairman of this subcommittee. This is his maiden voyage as chairman of this subcommittee. He is a cardinal now. He has done a great job putting together this bill.

I also want to thank Mr. BISHOP, the ranking member on the other side, for his cooperation in making this bill what it is today.

This is the first bill of the process, and I am pleased that we are off to a very early start—I am told the earliest start since 1974—continuing our good work from last year. I am optimistic that we are going to have a successful appropriations year, finishing on time and under regular order.

We are beginning the year on the right foot with a bipartisan bill, Madam Chairman, that I believe we can all get behind. The FY 2016 Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations bill includes, as has been said, $76.6 billion in discretionary funding for important veterans benefits and services and for the infrastructure that supports the brave men and women serving in our Armed Forces and their families.

This is a total of $4.6 billion over last year. No one can call this a cut and be realistic about it. We have increased the funding by $4.6 billion year-to-year. We can't say that for all the other bills. Yes, we went overboard with what we had to work with in providing funds for the veterans and for military construction. That is a demonstration of our commitment to our warfighters and to our veterans and their loved ones, who sacrifice so much to protect this great Nation.

Within the total, the bill includes $7.7 billion for the DOD's construction projects in the U.S. and around the world, which provide our servicemembers with the infrastructure they need to remain at the ready.

The legislation also provides a total of $68.7 billion in discretionary funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs. That is a 5.6 percent increase over last year to guarantee the VA has the resources they need to care for every single qualified veteran, including meeting growing healthcare needs.

To that end, VA medical services are funded at $3.8 billion above the current level. That will treat 6.9 million eligible patients, providing mental health care, helping prevent suicide, and supporting research into prosthetics and traumatic brain injuries, among numerous other health initiatives. However, it is critical that we make sure the VA is being responsible with these taxpayer dollars.

It is clear that the VA is facing some considerable management challenges,

and so this bill provides the oversight that will hold the Department accountable for its mistakes and takes the necessary steps to address and correct these problems.

For instance, the bill keeps a close eye on how the VA is spending its construction dollars by requiring reports on construction costs, savings, and changes in scope.

This is a good bill, Madam Chairman. I urge its adoption.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Madam Chair, at this time, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. LOWEY), the full committee ranking member.

Mrs. LOWEY. Madam Chair, before I begin, I would like to thank Subcommittee Chairman DENT and Ranking Member BISHOP, who worked so well together, and full Committee Chairman ROGERS.

The House Republican ''work harder for less'' budget resolution was opposed by every Member on my side of the aisle, in part because it makes it impossible to provide the funding necessary in the 12 appropriations bills to grow our economy and give hard-working Americans the opportunity to succeed.

Democrats preferred the approach taken by the President, calling for an end to sequestration and more reasonable and realistic budgeting that can help families afford college, a home, and a secure retirement.

Refusing to adopt a sufficient overall allocation for discretionary investments has a significant impact on the initiatives in all the appropriation bills that grow the economy and create jobs.

The bill we consider today presents a false choice. The VA needs more resources in 2016 than 2015 to sustain its level of services for the brave men and women it serves. The majority invests a disproportionate share of the allocation's nondefense funds in the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs bill; yet it still falls far short of meeting VA's actual needs.

The equivalent of 70,000 fewer veterans would receive medical care under this bill, compared to the President's request. In addition, it further reduces funds available for priorities in the other spending bills for transportation infrastructure, job training, higher education, biomedical research, and clean energy, just as an example. All these initiatives are key to economic growth and creating opportunity for hard-working Americans, especially veterans.

Additionally, $532 million in today's bill would be shifted to overseas contingency operations in a gimmick to boost defense spending.

Even with these tricks, the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs bill would have a profound impact on military families and veterans, forcing a $2.7 billion cut below what the President says is necessary, including $754 million less for military construction, $155 million less for medical services, $70 million less for medical support and compliance, $105 million less for medical facilities, and $582 million less for VA construction projects.

These cuts, which hurt those who have sacrificed for our country, are unacceptable. Not everything requested by the President is sacrosanct, and Congress has a duty—it is an important part of our responsibility—to evaluate each and every line item in a budget proposal. Such an assessment of this bill makes clear that many accounts are clearly underfunded.

Despite the abundant shortcomings, there are some positive aspects, including reporting requirements for electronic health records and prioritizing the elimination of the veterans claims backlog.

It is imperative that, as the bill progresses toward enactment, improvements are made and that, as the entire appropriations process continues, we reach an agreement that will ensure these bills invest in our hard-working families' economic security.

Mr. DENT. Madam Chair, at this time, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Alabama (Mrs. ROBY), who has been a tireless advocate for the needs of the veterans in her community in Alabama.

Mrs. ROBY. First, I thank the chairman and the ranking member for their hard work on this bill, and I thank the chairman for yielding.

Madam Chairman, I am so grateful for this opportunity to stand here today in support of H.R. 2029, the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations Act.

This bill undeniably provides much-needed funding for both our veterans programs and military projects, while staying within the strict limits of our House-passed budget resolution.

I am especially proud because there is funding that we were able to secure in this bill for the folks in Alabama, right at home, including new school construction both at Fort Rucker, the home of Army aviation excellence, and $33 million for new school construction at Maxwell Air Force Base, much-needed dollars for our military families at this post and this base, and also funding for a new squadron operations facility at Dannelly Field.

These are all extremely important to our critical military functions in Alabama. Anybody who has been on post at Rucker or at the base at Maxwell knows that these schools are in disrepair and are in need of replacing.

Our military families deserve quality on-base facilities, and these projects are going to go a long way to help improve their quality of life right there in Alabama.

I want to address, though, what I was struck with—and everyone else in this institution—when I woke up this morning, Madam Chair. I was extremely disappointed, alongside my colleagues, to see that the President, yet again, has threatened to veto this bill.

This bill provides critical, much-needed funding for our military families and our veterans, and the President should not play around with that.

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Under this administration we have failed our veterans miserably. And only in Washington, D.C., when you see an increase of $3.6 billion for our VA to provide these critical needs for our men and women who have worn the uniform and put their lives on the line for the freedom and liberty that allow us to stand in this room today, only in Washington, D.C., will a $3.6 billion increase on behalf of our veterans be called a cut.

You know why, Madam Chair?

It is being called a cut because it is the only way to shift the blame away from this administration's failure to our veterans back to the Republican-led House. It is clearly politics that is driving us, and I am asking, Madam Chair, that the President seriously rethink his position.

The administration needs to take responsibility, and they are trying, once again, to point fingers at leadership in this House that is doing all that we can to ensure that our veterans get timely care and the best care that we can provide them. This is cynical, and it is shameful, and I believe—I believe—that the American people can see straight through it.

So I hope, again, Madam Chair, that the President will reconsider this position because there is no place—no place—here in this bill for political gamesmanship when it comes to our military families and our veterans.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Madam Chair, at this time I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE), a member of the Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs.

Ms. LEE. Madam Chairman, let me thank the ranking member for yielding, for his unwavering leadership for our veterans on this committee, and for your friendship. Thank you very much, Mr. BISHOP.

Let me also thank Chairman DENT, in addition to Ranking Member BISHOP, really for working very hard in a bipartisan way on a variety of issues facing our veterans, including empowering our vets in their transition back to civilian life and ensuring adequate and accessible access to care.

As the daughter of a veteran, I understand the enormous sacrifices that our servicemembers and their families make to serve our Nation, so this subcommittee is extremely important.

I want to thank the ranking member and chair for working with me and my colleagues on the subcommittee to include important report language on the backlog at the Oakland VA regional office, which is, of course, one of the worst in the Nation.

I want to thank our ranking member, Congresswoman BROWN, who is here today, for her leadership on the committee in shedding some light also on

what is taking place at the Oakland VA regional office.

This language will ensure that the Oakland office not only has to provide Congress with accurate information on what has happened with these backlogged claims, but it will require the Veterans Benefits Administration to outline the lessons learned and what the new protocols are to ensure that no veteran faces delays in accessing care.

Yet, of course, insufficient allocations in this bill leave much work to be done. The 2016 MILCON-VA approps bill includes a $582 million cut from the major construction account. Now, that is half of the President's request of $1.1 billion.

Simply put, the level of funds allocated in this bill is totally insufficient and, yes, it undermines the responsibility we have to provide our veterans with the best and most innovative care. As a result, the construction of vital medical facilities that will serve our veterans will be delayed. This includes the initial phase of construction for the state-of-the-art Alameda Point outpatient clinic in my own congressional district, which serves thousands of veterans in the northern California area.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. I yield the gentlewoman an additional 1 minute.

Ms. LEE. Thank you very much.

I just want to thank the ranking member and the chair for continuing to work with me to ensure that the limitation language in the report with regard to major construction funds for the VA does not preclude clinics like, for example, the Alameda Point outpatient clinic.

Addressing the limitation language and restoring funding to the President's request level for major construction is really vital to ensuring that our Nation keeps the promise that we have made to our brave veterans to give them access to the best care.

Madam Chair, we really can't afford what these cuts will do with our veterans. We can't afford to allow this dangerous and harmful impact of sequestration now to be locked in by these allocations before us today. These dismal numbers, they directly affect our veterans' access to care that they need and that they have earned.

So I hope that, as this process moves forward, these insufficient allocations are resolved.

Mr. DENT. I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. DENHAM) for a colloquy.

Mr. DENHAM. Madam Chair, every Member of this body recognizes the special obligation this House has to take care of our veterans. We also have an obligation to ensure that the funds we entrust to the Department of Veterans Affairs are actually properly spent.

The shocking waste of funds at the Aurora Hospital in Denver has rightly earned the outrage of both this body and the American public. The $930 million in cost overruns in Denver will have to be paid for by taking funds that could otherwise have accelerated critical access projects across the country or assisted the Department as it attempts to tackle the backlog in claims at the Veterans Benefits Administration.

I am particularly concerned that the complete failure of project management of the Denver hospital is negatively impacting veterans in my district. They have already suffered from a lack of access to care.

Specifically, I am seeking clarity on what the committee intends with the major construction funding appropriated under this bill. The Committee report includes language requiring the funding provided for major construction to be used for new hospital construction and seismic corrections.

One of the projects included in this request is the Livermore Realignment and Closure project. This project would utilize FY 2016 funding to provide for the complete construction of a new medical facility at French Camp in the Central Valley. The facility would provide direct medical care to more than 87,000 veterans in its service area and dramatically reduce the nearly 6-hour commute faced by veterans in my district for even routine health care.

Madam Chairman, does the Livermore Realignment and Closure project, a project that was authorized more than a decade ago by this Congress, meet the criteria for funding set by the committee in the report accompanying this appropriations bill?

Mr. DENT. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. DENHAM. I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. DENT. Madam Chair, I thank the gentleman from California for offering this opportunity to clarify the meaning of our report language. I do share your concern about the mismanagement of construction projects by the VA. It is delaying vital projects such as Livermore.

In this report, we simply made clear the priority for funding hospital construction and seismic corrections. Within the funds provided in the bill, unallocated major construction funding remains available, and the VA has the ability to allocate those funds towards French Camp as well as other projects in the budget request. The report instructs the VA to make that determination and provide a list of projects to this committee.

I have heard similar concerns from other Members, including the gentlelady, Ms. LEE, who just spoke a few moments ago, who have projects included in this request, such as Alameda Clinic and a rehabilitative therapy clinic in St. Louis, which the administration could also choose to fund.

I appreciate these concerns and the opportunity to provide some clarity. I hope that is helpful. But nothing precludes funding.

Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Madam Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. BROWN), who is the ranking member of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee and a strong supporter of our veterans.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Madam Chair and Members of the House, I rise in strong opposition to the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations bill.

After taking steps forward with the new Choice Act program, this Republican budget takes two steps back with its cuts to veterans health care, just another example of Republicans talking the talk but not walking the walk. But don't take my word for it. If you ask the veterans service organizations who represent the interests of veterans, every one of them is opposing this bill.

The national commanders of the Veterans of Foreign Wars said the following about the Republican Veterans bill:

> The VA cannot fulfill its mission without proper funding, but the House, for whatever reason, now wants to ration care, eliminate infrastructure projects, and stop improving upon the programs and services that the VA was created to provide. This is a bad bill for veterans, and anyone that votes for it should really take a second look.

And let me just say one other thing. I often say, if you are not in the room, you are on the menu, and I am sure that veterans never thought that Republicans would put them on the menu.

Mr. DENT. Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I just want to respond to the gentlewoman from Florida's comments.

You know, a lot of people have been saying that we cut spending in this bill. The President requested an 8 percent increase. We provided for a 6 percent increase.

You know, because the President makes a request does not mean that Congress has to behave like potted plants and simply accede to every item that the President has asked for. That is not our role as Members of Congress.

Our job is to provide some real serious oversight over a department that has failed in many respects. And Members on both sides of the aisle agree with that, given the problems of Denver, Phoenix, Philadelphia, Oakland, and elsewhere. I can go through a long list.

But some of the oversight mechanisms in this bill, I should mention, include things like requiring a spending plan before construction dollars can be spent. We did that because of what has happened all across the country.

We prohibit increases in the scope of construction projects. We prohibit transfer of funds between construction projects. We fence 75 percent of funding until conditions are met, cut funding for poorly performing offices, require detailed quarterly reports regarding disability compensation claims. We have tightened restrictions on reprogramming. We have also rescinded

$415 million from VA pay accounts, that is pay and bonuses, limiting the amount of money available for pay increases and bonuses.

Should we reward failure at the VA?

I mean, there are management problems at the VA. It is not simply about money. We all know this. And given you can open up a newspaper every day, just 2 weeks ago in the city of Philadelphia, at the regional office there, a scathing inspector general's report about the failures, and to simply reward that would be unconscionable on our part.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. DENT. I yield to the gentlewoman.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. My question is: Will you admit that this budget will deny 70,000 veterans from receiving health care?

Mr. DENT. Reclaiming my time, I will tell you that this budget adequately meets—more than adequately meets—the needs of our servicemembers and our veterans and their families.

Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Madam Chair, I have no further speakers.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DENT. Madam Chair, again, just urging all Members to support this important legislation. It is the right thing to do. We have no further speakers at this time.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule.

During consideration of the bill for amendment each amendment shall be debatable for 10 minutes equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent and shall not be subject to amendment. No pro forma amendment shall be in order except that the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations or their respective designees may offer up to 10 pro forma amendments each at any point for the purpose of debate. The Chair of the Committee of the Whole may accord priority in recognition on the basis of whether the Member offering an amendment has caused it to be printed in the portion of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD designated for that purpose. Amendments so printed shall be considered read.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 2029

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the following sums are appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes, namely:

TITLE I

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, ARMY

For acquisition, construction, installation, and equipment of temporary or permanent public works, military installations, facilities, and real property for the Army as currently authorized by law, including personnel in the Army Corps of Engineers and other personal services necessary for the purposes of this appropriation, and for construction and operation of facilities in support of the functions of the Commander in Chief, $663,245,000, to remain available until September 30, 2020: *Provided*, That of this amount, not to exceed $109,245,000 shall be available for study, planning, design, architect and engineer services, and host nation support, as authorized by law, unless the Secretary of the Army determines that additional obligations are necessary for such purposes and notifies the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress of the determination and the reasons therefor.

□ 1515

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. BISHOP OF GEORGIA

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Madam Chairman, I rise to offer an amendment.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 2, line 18, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $1) (increased by $1)''.

Page 27, line 9, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $154,643,000)''.

Page 28, line 15, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $69,691,000)''.

Page 29, line 9, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $105,132,000)''.

Page 30, line 15, after the first dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $10,000,000)''.

Page 32, line 5, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $95,000,000)''.

Page 36, line 5, after the first dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $582,000,000)''.

Strike section 233.

Strike section 238.

Strike section 240.

Strike section 241.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia (during the reading). Madam Chair, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading.

The CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

Mr. DENT. Madam Chairman, I reserve a point of order on the gentleman's amendment.

The CHAIR. A point of order is reserved.

Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Georgia and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Madam Chair, the amendment that I am offering should be supported by every Member of this House. Very simply, it would restore the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs funding bill to the full amount requested by the administration and to the full amount deemed necessary by the affected agencies.

Last night, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, one of the largest veterans service organizations in the United States, put out a letter calling this year's MILCON-VA bill ''bad for veterans.'' They oppose the bill.

The Independent Budget group, which consists of the AMVETS, the Disabled American Veterans, the Paralyzed Veterans of America, and Veterans of Foreign Wars, expressed serious concerns with this bill. The Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America also expressed their serious concerns with this bill. In their letter, they called on Congress to provide the entire $1.5 billion that was cut from the budget request for the VA, which this House should do immediately.

Without this necessary funding, much-needed investments in veterans health care will be shortchanged, and important services will be compromised.

I understand that House rules make it difficult to add money to a spending bill's allocation, but I sincerely hope that we don't hide behind that as an excuse.

We should be doing the right thing on behalf of our Nation's veterans. We have the power to do it. We need to pass a law to change the law which limits us and puts this cap on what we can do to take care of our veterans and our military construction. This amendment addresses that, and I urge all of my colleagues to vote ''yes'' and to demonstrate to the veteran community that the message has been received.

Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Madam Chair, I rise in strong support of this amendment, which increases funding for all the VA programs that the Republicans cut in this year's Mil Con-VA Appropriations bill.

Our troops continue the fight to keep our country safe and to ensure the blessings of liberty that we enjoy. And after their service in the military ends, many are in desperate need of quality health care to make a healthy transition to civilian life.

As Members of Congress, it is our job to make sure that the men and women who fought for our freedom have access to high quality, comprehensive health care services. One of our first obligations to meeting this demand is ensuring that the Department of Veteran's Affairs (VA) has the resources it needs to provide top-notch care to our veterans. Just a few months ago, President Barack Obama proposed a budget for 2016 which will help to meet the needs of the VA by providing $70.2 billion in discretionary funding for VA, a 7.5 percent increase from 2015. This proposed budget would also provide $3.2 billion in estimated medical care collections and $95.3 billion for VA's mandatory benefit programs.

However, I am deeply disappointed in that H.R. 2029, the House MilCon, VA and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee's proposal cuts $1.4 billion from the President's budget request. This is simply a desperate attempt to balance our nation's budget on the backs of our veterans, and it is not acceptable.

The Veterans have fought for our nation, and now is the time we need to fight for them.

I ask my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to stand with me and the millions of our

nations' veterans and support this amendment to appropriately fund the VA and provide services to our veterans that they earned from their years of service.

[April 28, 2015]

VFW CALLS NEW VA APPROPRIATIONS BILL 'BAD FOR VETERANS'

WASHINGTON.—The national commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States said the U.S. House of Representatives is set to penalize disabled veterans this week if it votes to reduce the Department of Veterans Affairs budget request by more than $1.5 billion.

''The nationwide crisis in care and confidence that erupted in the VA last year was caused in many ways by a lack of adequate resourcing that only Congress is authorized to provide,'' said John W. Stroud, who leads the 1.9 million-member VFW and its Auxiliaries. ''That's why the VFW is demanding that the House amend this bill to appropriate a funding level that fully funds VA.''

In its current form, the fiscal year 2016 Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Bill makes across-the-board cuts to all VA discretionary accounts, and drastically underfunds medical care, major construction and Information Technology accounts. Stroud said across-the-board cuts to discretionary spending is what Congress created back in 2011, but by another name, sequestration. Now the House wants to impose its own sequester on a federal department whose sole mission is to care for wounded, ill and injured veterans.

''The VA cannot fulfill its mission without proper funding, but the House for whatever reason now wants to ration care, eliminate infrastructure projects, and stop improving upon the programs and services that the VA was created to provide,'' said the VFW national commander. ''This bill is bad for veterans and any vote for it is unconscionable, which is why we want veterans and advocates everywhere to get involved by urging their elected officials to fully fund the VA.''

IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN VETERANS OF AMERICA,
April 28, 2015.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.
Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Minority Leader, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER AND MADAM MINORITY LEADER: On behalf of the 400,000 members of Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA), we write to express concern over the House Committee on Appropriations' April 22, 2015 markup and vote on the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) appropriations bill for Fiscal Year (FY) 2016.

Over the expressed objections of the administration, the committee reduced the president's FY 2016 VA budget request by more than $1.4 billion. If allowed, this cut could hamper the services ten of thousands of veterans receive, and impact VA's ability to activate new and replacement facilities with sufficient staff and equipment and to adequately maintain facility infrastructure.

Secretary McDonald has been upfront and, above all, realistic in asking for full funding of the president's FY 2016 VA request. Reform of the VA, its facilities and its infrastructure are monumental tasks. Unfortunately these challenges become almost unobtainable with a reduction in funding outlined in the House's mark.

During Congress' first 100 days, great strides have been made to address the needs of our nation's veterans. Passage of the Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans (SAV) Act was a huge bipartisan victory in the House and Senate. It showed the American people what is possible if we work together.

In that same vein, we ask that you again work in a bipartisan manner and request the House, in making its final adjustments or as a part of a conference on this legislation, to find the means to fund the VA's realistic request so that the institution can meet its congressional mandate next year. To that end, we ask the leadership of the House to restore VA's overall funding at least to the level recommended by the administration in its FY 2016 budget.

Sincerely,

MATTHEW M. MILLER,
Chief Policy Officer, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA).

THE INDEPENDENT BUDGET,
April 27, 2015.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.
Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Minority Leader, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER AND MADAM MINORITY LEADER: As partner organizations in the Independent Budget for Fiscal Year 2016, we write to express our concerns about the results of the Committee on Appropriations' April 22, 2015 markup and vote on the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) appropriations bill for Fiscal Year (FY) 2016.

Over the expressed objections of the Administration, the Committee made a rushed determination to reduce the President's FY 2016 VA Medical Care request by over $600 million. This reduction is equivalent to the cost of providing care for tens of thousands of veterans next year. If enacted, the bill would harm these services and others, including reducing VA's ability to activate new and replacement facilities with sufficient staff and equipment and to adequately maintain facility infrastructure.

In the separate capital infrastructure accounts (for major and minor projects as well as for state veterans home construction grants), the Committee reduced the Administration's request by $582 million. We are deeply concerned that VA will not receive enough resources to enable the system to properly maintain its existing health care facilities, nor to build any new ones. Despite the VA's well publicized deficits in addressing the overdue and over-budget medical center construction project in Denver, dozens of other VA centers are much older and in poorer condition than the Colorado facility that is being replaced, but no funds would be made available in the FY 2016 appropriation to begin these priority projects. Also, lack of maintenance, repairs, and improvements in existing VA facilities now carrying backlogged projects costing billions of dollars would be much more expensive in future years due to funding inadequacies brought about by this bill. The Congress should note that over the past decade, Congress has funded VA infrastructure needs at a level that was $7.9 billion less than what we collectively recommended in Independent Budgets over that period.

In the long run, Congress will be forced to appropriate much larger sums to enable VA to catch up to the deficits being created by this bill. In a related vein, please see VA's letter to the Speaker and President of the Senate, dated April 14, 2015, requesting several high priority construction authorizations and supportive appropriations, and the expenditure of unobligated balances from section 801 of Public Law 113–146, to be used to complete the construction of the Denver facility, and for other purposes that we strongly support.

Strangling the VA's appropriated accounts for infrastructure, but refusing to allow any flexibility in the use of funds already provided by Congress in prior acts, places VA in double jeopardy. It means VA simply cannot build, and cannot expand—even when funds are available and could be used. This barrier penalizes and denies care in some way to every veteran who relies on VA. As VA Secretary McDonald said last week, this situation will ''harm veterans.'' We agree.

On the topic of VA's Medical and Prosthetic Research program, we appreciate the Committee's approval of an amendment to match the Administration's request of $622 million for FY 2016. Without these new funds, VA clinician-scientists would have needed to significantly reduce recruitment and analysis in the Million Veteran Program, delaying the benefits of precision medicine to veterans. Also, these funds will be used for completion of genetic studies on functional disability in schizophrenia and bipolar disorder; to initiate studies aimed at finding the root cause of a known genetic susceptibility to post-traumatic stress disorder; and, to conduct new studies aimed at predicting susceptibility to opioid abuse. Despite this good news, as advocates we are concerned that these funds were shifted in an unprecedented manner from the VA information technology (IT) account—an appropriation that was already reduced $80 million from the President's requested level during the Committee's consideration. Also, holding VA accountable for making significant progress in developing the next generation of electronic health records in coordination with the Department of Defense, while suppressing the IT funding to make that very progress possible, is deeply troubling.

In addition to these concerns, we note that in the bill's administrative provisions, the Appropriations Committee would further reduce VA funding, even when it appears that the bill would be providing higher levels at the top line. For example, if this administrative language is adopted by Congress, VA will find itself in the odd position come January 2016 of needing to decide (in the Committee's words, ''if it chooses to do so'') whether over 300,000 VA employees will be due a comparability increase, without any funding appropriated for it. We know of no statute that makes federal employee comparability increases discretionary once the President announces the comparability rate. In the research program, for example, the appropriation would be reduced by a rescission of over $3 million even while the Committee voted to approve an amendment to restore the account to the Administration's full requested level. Other administrative provisions have similar effects, all deleterious to any VA flexibility in funding its many requirements in FY 2016. In fact the total rescissions from these administrative provisions would be more than $400 million, with nearly $200 million directed at the Medical Services account atop the $600 million discussed above.

This is a particularly important moment in VA history, given the events of the past year. Suffocating the system now with a dearth of funding (well over $1 billion less than requested by the Administration), and restricting or rescinding the use of available funds—even those to be appropriated in this bill—while demanding reforms, only proves to make VA's intended and ongoing efforts more challenging.

As indicated, we respectfully request the House, in making its final adjustments, or as a part of a conference on this legislation, to find the means to sufficiently fund these crucial VA accounts so that the institution can meet its Congressional mandate next year. To that end, we ask the Leadership of the

House to restore VA's overall funding at least to the level recommended by the Administration in its FY 2016 budget, although even that level is almost $1.4 billion below our joint recommendations in the Independent Budget for next year.

When the nation sends our soldiers and Marines into live combat in hostile territory, we do not skimp on their training, weapons, or ammunition for the fight. Now that these veterans are home, we should do no less.

On behalf of the millions of veterans who make up our memberships, we will appreciate the House Leadership and Members taking into account our concerns about funding levels needed by the VA in FY 2016, and acting to fully fund the VA system.

Sincerely,

STEWART M. HICKEY,
National Executive Director, AMVETS.

HOMER S. TOWNSEND, JR.,
Executive Director, Paralyzed Veterans of America.

GARRY J. AUGUSTINE,
Executive Director, Washington Headquarters, DAV (Disabled American Veterans).

ROBERT E. WALLACE,
Executive Director, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. DENT. Madam Chairman, I make a point of order against the amendment because it proposes to amend portions of the bill not yet read.

Section 17 of chapter 2 of the House Practice book states in part:

''It is not in order to strike out or otherwise amend portions of a bill not yet read for amendment.''

I ask for a ruling from the Chair.

The CHAIR. Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order?

Mrs. LOWEY. I wish to be heard on the point of order.

The CHAIR. The gentlewoman from New York is recognized to be heard on the point of order.

Mrs. LOWEY. Madam Chair, I rise in strong support of the amendment.

The bill falls far short of providing the resources that the President requested and veterans earned. The National Commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars has demanded that ''the House amend the bill to appropriate a funding level that fully funds the VA.'' The gentleman from Georgia's (Mr. BISHOP) amendment does just that.

The VFW went on to say the bill ''drastically underfunds medical care, major construction, and information technology accounts. . . . The VA cannot fulfill its mission without proper funding; but the House, for whatever reason, now wants to''———

The CHAIR. The gentlewoman will suspend.

The gentlewoman must confine her remarks to the point of order.

Does the gentlewoman wish to be heard on the point of order?

Mrs. LOWEY. Yes.

I just want to emphasize that the VFW strongly supports the amendment for the reasons that I suggested.

The CHAIR. Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order?

If not, the Chair is prepared to rule.

To be considered en bloc pursuant to clause 2(f) of rule XXI, an amendment must propose only to transfer appropriations among objects in the bill. Because the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia proposes also another kind of change in the bill, namely: striking sections from the bill, it may not avail itself of clause 2(f) to address portions of the bill not yet read.

The point of order is sustained.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Madam Chair, I move to appeal the ruling of the Chair.

The CHAIR. The question is, Shall the decision of the Chair stand as the judgment of the Committee?

The question was taken; and the Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Madam Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 237, noes 180, not voting 14, as follows:

[Roll No. 178]

AYES—237

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Russell
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOES—180

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
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)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Love
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—14

Beyer
Cleaver
Guinta
Hastings
Meeks
Palazzo
Payne
Peterson
Poe (TX)
Rangel
Roskam
Royce
Rush
Smith (WA)

□ 1545

Mr. QUIGLEY changed his vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

Messrs. HURT of Virginia, MEADOWS, and LABRADOR changed their vote from ''no'' to ''aye.''

So the decision of the Chair stands as the judgment of the Committee.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, NAVY AND MARINE CORPS

For acquisition, construction, installation, and equipment of temporary or permanent public works, naval installations, facilities, and real property for the Navy and Marine Corps as currently authorized by law, including personnel in the Naval Facilities Engineering Command and other personal services necessary for the purposes of this appropriation, $1,349,678,000, to remain available until September 30, 2020: *Provided*, That of this amount, not to exceed $91,649,000 shall be available for study, planning, design, and architect and engineer services, as authorized by law, unless the Secretary of the Navy determines that additional obligations are necessary for such purposes and notifies the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress of the determination and the reasons therefor.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, AIR FORCE

For acquisition, construction, installation, and equipment of temporary or permanent public works, military installations, facilities, and real property for the Air Force as currently authorized by law, $1,237,055,000, to remain available until September 30, 2020: *Provided*, That of this amount, not to exceed $89,164,000 shall be available for study, planning, design, and architect and engineer services, as authorized by law, unless the Secretary of the Air Force determines that additional obligations are necessary for such purposes and notifies the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress of the determination and the reasons therefor.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, DEFENSE-WIDE

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For acquisition, construction, installation, and equipment of temporary or permanent public works, installations, facilities, and real property for activities and agencies of the Department of Defense (other than the military departments), as currently authorized by law, $1,931,456,000, to remain available until September 30, 2020: *Provided*, That such amounts of this appropriation as may be determined by the Secretary of Defense may be transferred to such appropriations of the Department of Defense available for military construction or family housing as the Secretary may designate, to be merged with and to be available for the same purposes, and for the same time period, as the appropriation or fund to which transferred: *Provided further*, That of the amount appropriated, not to exceed $160,404,000 shall be available for study, planning, design, and architect and engineer services, as authorized by law, unless the Secretary of Defense determines that additional obligations are necessary for such purposes and notifies the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress of the determination and the reasons therefor: *Provided further*, That none of the funds made available by this title may be used to construct any fiscal year 2016 special operations command military construction projects until the Commander of the Special Operations Command has certified in writing and submits to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress a report that includes the following:

(1) A definition of ''Special Operations Forces-peculiar'' as it applies to the use of United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) funding to meet military construction requirements for facilities that provide healthcare services or support fitness activities.

(2) A description of the decision-making process used to determine whether a military construction project that provides healthcare facilities or supports fitness activities should be funded by the USSOCOM or the military departments.

(3) Provides a schematic of the human performance centers by installation, a listing of the planned equipment related to training and resiliency and a description of the mission-critical benefit of each item, an explanation of why the unique physical and psychological health services incorporated could not be provided by the Defense Health Agency or military services, and a planned staffing breakdown.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MS. STEFANIK

Ms. STEFANIK. Madam Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

page 4, line 14, insert after the dollar amount ''(reduced by $30,000,000)(increased by $30,000,000)'' and insert on line 23, after the dollar amount ''(increased by $30,000,000)''.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentlewoman from New York and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York.

Ms. STEFANIK. Madam Chair, I would like to thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. DENT) and his staff for allowing this important discussion of an east coast missile defense site, as well as the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TURNER) for his continued efforts and support.

Madam Chair, my amendment would provide for the planning, design, and construction of an additional missile defense site. Simply put, missile defense shields our Nation from hostile incoming warheads. And with the escalation of threats of rogue nations like North Korea and Iran, the United States must be ready not just to retaliate, but to actually stop an attack. We must be able to defend our Nation and shoot it down. North Korea does, indeed, have a nuclear weapons capability and is a real concern, given their unstable and erratic behavior. Iran has clearly demonstrated key technologies required for ICBM development.

This is about maintaining our Nation's readiness, and an east coast missile defense site provides increased battle space, more decision time, increased reliability, more inventory, and a different angle of intercept.

General Jacoby stated that a third site would give him an increased battle space and increased opportunity for him to engage threats from either Iran or North Korea. An east coast missile defense site would increase our Nation's defense capability against those very real threats.

Madam Chair, this amendment provides for the security and protection that our Nation needs.

I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TURNER).

Mr. TURNER. Madam Chair, I want to thank Congresswoman STEFANIK and also Chairman DENT for their support for this amendment providing funding for the planning, design, and construction of an additional missile defense site capable of protecting the homeland from a long-range ballistic missile attack.

As Congresswoman STEFANIK is very well aware, we currently possess only two sites, both located on the west coast, limiting our ability to target and intercept incoming ICBMs either that are targeting the east coast or that are originating from the east.

Dating back to 2007, the United States Northern Command in charge of defending the homeland recommended the construction of the east coast site. One thing that we know: under President Obama's plan for missile defense, he canceled President Bush's third site that was to be located in Poland and provide ICBM coverage for the east coast of the United States continental. He then canceled phase 4 of his own phase adaptive approach that would have similarly provided that coverage.

The only opportunity that we have left with those two options gone is to look to the east coast site. Two Presidents and three Secretaries of Defense have all recognized the advantages of an additional missile coast defense site in order to provide further protection against long-range ballistic missile threats from regions such as the Middle East.

As China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea push for more advanced launch vehicles, the construction of an east coast site will dramatically improve the ability of our military to intercept incoming threats by increasing the opportunity to engage and defeat those threats.

I urge support for this amendment.

Mr. DENT. Will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. STEFANIK. I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. DENT. Madam Chair, I rise in support of the gentlewoman's amendment.

With advantages in launch capabilities, we should explore protecting the east coast from our adversaries, as Mr. TURNER and Ms. STEFANIK have stated. She has been very articulate and a great advocate for her district in Fort Drum.

Ms. STEFANIK. Madam Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. STEFANIK).

The amendment was agreed to.

Ms. LEE. Madam Chair, as the designee of the ranking member, I move to strike the last word.

The CHAIR. The gentlewoman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. LEE. Madam Chair, I am first seeking clarity from Chairman DENT on what the committee intends with the major construction account funding in this bill.

Included in the committee report is language that the funding provided for major construction be used for hospital construction and seismic corrections. One of the projects in the request is the Alameda Clinic. This clinic would provide direct medical care to veterans in my district.

Mr. Chairman, does the Alameda Clinic project meet the criteria for funding set by the committee in the report accompanying this bill?

Mr. DENT. Will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. LEE. I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. DENT. It does, yes.

Ms. LEE. I want to thank the gentleman for this clarification, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

For construction, acquisition, expansion, rehabilitation, and conversion of facilities for the training and administration of the Army National Guard, and contributions therefor, as authorized by chapter 1803 of title 10, United States Code, and Military Construction Authorization Acts, $167,437,000, to remain available until September 30, 2020: *Provided*, That of the amount appropriated, not to exceed $20,337,000 shall be available for study, planning, design, and architect and engineer services, as authorized by law, unless the Director of the Army National Guard determines that additional obligations are necessary for such purposes and notifies the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress of the determination and the reasons therefor.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, AIR NATIONAL GUARD

For construction, acquisition, expansion, rehabilitation, and conversion of facilities for the training and administration of the Air National Guard, and contributions therefor, as authorized by chapter 1803 of title 10, United States Code, and Military Construction Authorization Acts, $138,738,000, to remain available until September 30, 2020: *Provided*, That of the amount appropriated, not to exceed $5,104,000 shall be available for study, planning, design, and architect and engineer services, as authorized by law, unless the Director of the Air National Guard determines that additional obligations are necessary for such purposes and notifies the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress of the determination and the reasons therefor.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, ARMY RESERVE

For construction, acquisition, expansion, rehabilitation, and conversion of facilities for the training and administration of the Army Reserve as authorized by chapter 1803 of title 10, United States Code, and Military Construction Authorization Acts, $104,295,000, to remain available until September 30, 2020: *Provided*, That of the amount appropriated, not to exceed $9,318,000 shall be available for study, planning, design, and architect and engineer services, as authorized by law, unless the Chief of the Army Reserve determines that additional obligations are necessary for such purposes and notifies the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress of the determination and the reasons therefor.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, NAVY RESERVE

For construction, acquisition, expansion, rehabilitation, and conversion of facilities for the training and administration of the reserve components of the Navy and Marine Corps as authorized by chapter 1803 of title 10, United States Code, and Military Construction Authorization Acts, $36,078,000, to remain available until September 30, 2020: *Provided*, That of the amount appropriated, not to exceed $2,208,000 shall be available for study, planning, design, and architect and engineer services, as authorized by law, unless the Secretary of the Navy determines that additional obligations are necessary for such purposes and notifies the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress of the determination and the reasons therefor.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, AIR FORCE RESERVE

For construction, acquisition, expansion, rehabilitation, and conversion of facilities for the training and administration of the Air Force Reserve as authorized by chapter 1803 of title 10, United States Code, and Military Construction Authorization Acts, $65,021,000, to remain available until September 30, 2020: *Provided*, That of the amount appropriated, not to exceed $13,400,000 shall be available for study, planning, design, and architect and engineer services, as authorized by law, unless the Chief of the Air Force Reserve determines that additional obligations are necessary for such purposes and notifies the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress of the determination and the reasons therefor.

NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION SECURITY INVESTMENT PROGRAM

For the United States share of the cost of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Security Investment Program for the acquisition and construction of military facilities and installations (including international military headquarters) and for related expenses for the collective defense of the North Atlantic Treaty Area as authorized by section 2806 of title 10, United States Code, and Military Construction Authorization Acts, $150,000,000, to remain available until expended.

FAMILY HOUSING CONSTRUCTION, ARMY

For expenses of family housing for the Army for construction, including acquisition, replacement, addition, expansion, extension, and alteration, as authorized by law, $99,695,000, to remain available until September 30, 2020.

FAMILY HOUSING OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, ARMY

For expenses of family housing for the Army for operation and maintenance, including debt payment, leasing, minor construction, principal and interest charges, and insurance premiums, as authorized by law, $393,511,000.

FAMILY HOUSING CONSTRUCTION, NAVY AND MARINE CORPS

For expenses of family housing for the Navy and Marine Corps for construction, including acquisition, replacement, addition, expansion, extension, and alteration, as authorized by law, $16,541,000, to remain available until September 30, 2020.

FAMILY HOUSING OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, NAVY AND MARINE CORPS

For expenses of family housing for the Navy and Marine Corps for operation and maintenance, including debt payment, leasing, minor construction, principal and interest charges, and insurance premiums, as authorized by law, $353,036,000.

FAMILY HOUSING CONSTRUCTION, AIR FORCE

For expenses of family housing for the Air Force for construction, including acquisition, replacement, addition, expansion, extension, and alteration, as authorized by law, $160,498,000, to remain available until September 30, 2020.

FAMILY HOUSING OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, AIR FORCE

For expenses of family housing for the Air Force for operation and maintenance, including debt payment, leasing, minor construction, principal and interest charges, and insurance premiums, as authorized by law, $331,232,000.

FAMILY HOUSING OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, DEFENSE-WIDE

For expenses of family housing for the activities and agencies of the Department of Defense (other than the military departments) for operation and maintenance, leasing, and minor construction, as authorized by law, $58,668,000.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE BASE CLOSURE ACCOUNT

For deposit into the Department of Defense Base Closure Account, established by section 2906(a) of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990 (10 U.S.C. 2687 note), $251,334,000, to remain available until expended.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

SEC. 101. None of the funds made available in this title shall be expended for payments under a cost-plus-a-fixed-fee contract for construction, where cost estimates exceed $25,000, to be performed within the United States, except Alaska, without the specific approval in writing of the Secretary of Defense setting forth the reasons therefor.

SEC. 102. Funds made available in this title for construction shall be available for hire of passenger motor vehicles.

SEC. 103. Funds made available in this title for construction may be used for advances to the Federal Highway Administration, Department of Transportation, for the construction of access roads as authorized by section 210 of title 23, United States Code, when projects authorized therein are certified as important to the national defense by the Secretary of Defense.

SEC. 104. None of the funds made available in this title may be used to begin construction of new bases in the United States for which specific appropriations have not been made.

SEC. 105. None of the funds made available in this title shall be used for purchase of land or land easements in excess of 100 percent of the value as determined by the Army Corps of Engineers or the Naval Facilities Engineering Command, except: (1) where there is a determination of value by a Federal court; (2) purchases negotiated by the Attorney General or the designee of the Attorney General; (3) where the estimated value is less than $25,000; or (4) as otherwise determined by the Secretary of Defense to be in the public interest.

SEC. 106. None of the funds made available in this title shall be used to: (1) acquire land; (2) provide for site preparation; or (3) install utilities for any family housing, except housing for which funds have been made available in annual Acts making appropriations for military construction.

SEC. 107. None of the funds made available in this title for minor construction may be used to transfer or relocate any activity from one base or installation to another, without prior notification to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress.

SEC. 108. None of the funds made available in this title may be used for the procurement

of steel for any construction project or activity for which American steel producers, fabricators, and manufacturers have been denied the opportunity to compete for such steel procurement.

SEC. 109. None of the funds available to the Department of Defense for military construction or family housing during the current fiscal year may be used to pay real property taxes in any foreign nation.

SEC. 110. None of the funds made available in this title may be used to initiate a new installation overseas without prior notification to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress.

SEC. 111. None of the funds made available in this title may be obligated for architect and engineer contracts estimated by the Government to exceed $500,000 for projects to be accomplished in Japan, in any North Atlantic Treaty Organization member country, or in countries bordering the Arabian Gulf, unless such contracts are awarded to United States firms or United States firms in joint venture with host nation firms.

SEC. 112. None of the funds made available in this title for military construction in the United States territories and possessions in the Pacific and on Kwajalein Atoll, or in countries bordering the Arabian Gulf, may be used to award any contract estimated by the Government to exceed $1,000,000 to a foreign contractor: *Provided*, That this section shall not be applicable to contract awards for which the lowest responsive and responsible bid of a United States contractor exceeds the lowest responsive and responsible bid of a foreign contractor by greater than 20 percent: *Provided further*, That this section shall not apply to contract awards for military construction on Kwajalein Atoll for which the lowest responsive and responsible bid is submitted by a Marshallese contractor.

SEC. 113. The Secretary of Defense shall inform the appropriate committees of both Houses of Congress, including the Committees on Appropriations, of plans and scope of any proposed military exercise involving United States personnel 30 days prior to its occurring, if amounts expended for construction, either temporary or permanent, are anticipated to exceed $100,000.

SEC. 114. Funds appropriated to the Department of Defense for construction in prior years shall be available for construction authorized for each such military department by the authorizations enacted into law during the current session of Congress.

SEC. 115. For military construction or family housing projects that are being completed with funds otherwise expired or lapsed for obligation, expired or lapsed funds may be used to pay the cost of associated supervision, inspection, overhead, engineering and design on those projects and on subsequent claims, if any.

SEC. 116. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any funds made available to a military department or defense agency for the construction of military projects may be obligated for a military construction project or contract, or for any portion of such a project or contract, at any time before the end of the fourth fiscal year after the fiscal year for which funds for such project were made available, if the funds obligated for such project: (1) are obligated from funds available for military construction projects; and (2) do not exceed the amount appropriated for such project, plus any amount by which the cost of such project is increased pursuant to law.

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 117. Subject to 30 days prior notification, or 14 days for a notification provided in an electronic medium pursuant to sections 480 and 2883 of title 10, United States Code, to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress, such additional amounts as may be determined by the Secretary of Defense may be transferred to: (1) the Department of Defense Family Housing Improvement Fund from amounts appropriated for construction in ''Family Housing'' accounts, to be merged with and to be available for the same purposes and for the same period of time as amounts appropriated directly to the Fund; or (2) the Department of Defense Military Unaccompanied Housing Improvement Fund from amounts appropriated for construction of military unaccompanied housing in ''Military Construction'' accounts, to be merged with and to be available for the same purposes and for the same period of time as amounts appropriated directly to the Fund: *Provided*, That appropriations made available to the Funds shall be available to cover the costs, as defined in section 502(5) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, of direct loans or loan guarantees issued by the Department of Defense pursuant to the provisions of subchapter IV of chapter 169 of title 10, United States Code, pertaining to alternative means of acquiring and improving military family housing, military unaccompanied housing, and supporting facilities: *Provided further*, That the transfer authority in this provision shall also be applicable to amounts appropriated for construction in ''Family Housing'' accounts in section 2002 of Public Law 112–10.

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 118. In addition to any other transfer authority available to the Department of Defense, amounts may be transferred from the Department of Defense Base Closure Account to the fund established by section 1013(d) of the Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 3374) to pay for expenses associated with the Homeowners Assistance Program incurred under 42 U.S.C. 3374(a)(1)(A). Any amounts transferred shall be merged with and be available for the same purposes and for the same time period as the fund to which transferred.

SEC. 119. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, funds made available in this title for operation and maintenance of family housing shall be the exclusive source of funds for repair and maintenance of all family housing units, including general or flag officer quarters: *Provided*, That not more than $15,000 per unit may be spent annually for the maintenance and repair of any general or flag officer quarters without 30 days prior notification, or 14 days for a notification provided in an electronic medium pursuant to sections 480 and 2883 of title 10, United States Code, to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress, except that an after-the-fact notification shall be submitted if the limitation is exceeded solely due to costs associated with environmental remediation that could not be reasonably anticipated at the time of the budget submission.

SEC. 120. Amounts contained in the Ford Island Improvement Account established by subsection (h) of section 2814 of title 10, United States Code, are appropriated and shall be available until expended for the purposes specified in subsection (i)(1) of such section or until transferred pursuant to subsection (i)(3) of such section.

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 121. During the 5-year period after appropriations available in this Act to the Department of Defense for military construction and family housing operation and maintenance and construction have expired for obligation, upon a determination that such appropriations will not be necessary for the liquidation of obligations or for making authorized adjustments to such appropriations for obligations incurred during the period of availability of such appropriations, unobligated balances of such appropriations may be transferred into the appropriation ''Foreign Currency Fluctuations, Construction, Defense'', to be merged with and to be available for the same time period and for the same purposes as the appropriation to which transferred.

SEC. 122. (a) Except as provided in subsection (b), none of the funds made available in this Act may be used by the Secretary of the Army to relocate a unit in the Army that—

(1) performs a testing mission or function that is not performed by any other unit in the Army and is specifically stipulated in title 10, United States Code; and

(2) is located at a military installation at which the total number of civilian employees of the Department of the Army and Army contractor personnel employed exceeds 10 percent of the total number of members of the regular and reserve components of the Army assigned to the installation.

(b) EXCEPTION.—Subsection (a) shall not apply if the Secretary of the Army certifies to the congressional defense committees that in proposing the relocation of the unit of the Army, the Secretary complied with Army Regulation 5–10 relating to the policy, procedures, and responsibilities for Army stationing actions.

SEC. 123. Amounts appropriated or otherwise made available in an account funded under the headings in this title may be transferred among projects and activities within the account in accordance with the reprogramming guidelines for military construction and family housing construction contained in Department of Defense Financial Management Regulation 7000.14–R, Volume 3, Chapter 7, of February 2009, as in effect on the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 124. None of the funds made available in this title may be obligated or expended for planning and design and construction of projects at Arlington National Cemetery.

(RESCISSION OF FUNDS)

SEC. 125. Of the unobligated balances available for ''Military Construction, Army'', from prior appropriation Acts (other than appropriations designated by law as being for contingency operations directly related to the global war on terrorism or as an emergency requirement), $96,000,000 are hereby rescinded.

(RESCISSION OF FUNDS)

SEC. 126. Of the unobligated balances available for ''Military Construction, Air Force'', from prior appropriation Acts (other than appropriations designated by law as being for contingency operations directly related to the global war on terrorism or as an emergency requirement), $52,600,000 are hereby rescinded.

(RESCISSION OF FUNDS)

SEC. 127. Of the unobligated balances available for ''Military Construction, Defense-Wide'', from prior appropriation Acts (other than appropriations designated by law as being for contingency operations directly related to the global war on terrorism or as an emergency requirement), $134,000,000 are hereby rescinded.

(RESCISSION OF FUNDS)

SEC. 128. Of the unobligated balances made available in prior appropriation Acts for the fund established in section 1013(d) of the Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 3374) (other than appropriations designated by law as being for contingency operations directly related to the global war on terrorism or as an emergency requirement), $103,918,000 are hereby rescinded.

SEC. 129. For the purposes of this Act, the term ''congressional defense committees'' means the Committees on Armed Services of the House of Representatives and the Senate, the Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs of the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate, and the Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs of the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives.

SEC. 130. None of the funds made available by this title may be used to carry out the closure or realignment of Lajes Air Force Base, Azores, and, unless and until the Secretary of Defense certifies in writing to the congressional defense committees that, based on operational requirements, Lajes Air Force Base is not an optimal location for the Joint Intelligence Analysis Complex, none of the funds made available by this title may be used to construct phase two of the Joint Intelligence Analysis Complex Consolidation at Royal Air Force Croughton, United Kingdom.

SEC. 131. Notwithstanding section 124, for an additional amount for ''Military Construction, Army'' in this title, $30,000,000 is provided for advances to the Federal Highway Administration, Department of Transportation, for construction of access roads as authorized by section 210 of title 23, United States Code.

TITLE II

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION

COMPENSATION AND PENSIONS

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For the payment of compensation benefits to or on behalf of veterans and a pilot program for disability examinations as authorized by section 107 and chapters 11, 13, 18, 51, 53, 55, and 61 of title 38, United States Code; pension benefits to or on behalf of veterans as authorized by chapters 15, 51, 53, 55, and 61 of title 38, United States Code; and burial benefits, the Reinstated Entitlement Program for Survivors, emergency and other officers' retirement pay, adjusted-service credits and certificates, payment of premiums due on commercial life insurance policies guaranteed under the provisions of title IV of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. App. 541 et seq.) and for other benefits as authorized by sections 107, 1312, 1977, and 2106, and chapters 23, 51, 53, 55, and 61 of title 38, United States Code, $166,271,436,000, to remain available until expended, of which $87,146,761,000 shall become available on October 1, 2016: *Provided*, That not to exceed $15,562,000 of the amount made available for fiscal year 2016 and $16,021,000 of the amount made available for fiscal year 2017 under this heading shall be reimbursed to ''General Operating Expenses, Veterans Benefits Administration'', and ''Information Technology Systems'' for necessary expenses in implementing the provisions of chapters 51, 53, and 55 of title 38, United States Code, the funding source for which is specifically provided as the ''Compensation and Pensions'' appropriation: *Provided further*, That such sums as may be earned on an actual qualifying patient basis, shall be reimbursed to ''Medical Care Collections Fund'' to augment the funding of individual medical facilities for nursing home care provided to pensioners as authorized.

READJUSTMENT BENEFITS

For the payment of readjustment and rehabilitation benefits to or on behalf of veterans as authorized by chapters 21, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, 36, 39, 41, 51, 53, 55, and 61 of title 38, United States Code, $32,088,826,000, to remain available until expended, of which $16,743,904,000 shall become available on October 1, 2016: *Provided*, That expenses for rehabilitation program services and assistance which the Secretary is authorized to provide under subsection (a) of section 3104 of title 38, United States Code, other than under paragraphs (1), (2), (5), and (11) of that subsection, shall be charged to this account.

VETERANS INSURANCE AND INDEMNITIES

For military and naval insurance, national service life insurance, servicemen's indemnities, service-disabled veterans insurance, and veterans mortgage life insurance as authorized by chapters 19 and 21, title 38, United States Code, $169,080,000, to remain available until expended, of which $91,920,000 shall become available on October 1, 2016.

VETERANS HOUSING BENEFIT PROGRAM FUND

For the cost of direct and guaranteed loans, such sums as may be necessary to carry out the program, as authorized by subchapters I through III of chapter 37 of title 38, United States Code: *Provided*, That such costs, including the cost of modifying such loans, shall be as defined in section 502 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974: *Provided further*, That during fiscal year 2016, within the resources available, not to exceed $500,000 in gross obligations for direct loans are authorized for specially adapted housing loans.

In addition, for administrative expenses to carry out the direct and guaranteed loan programs, $164,558,000.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION LOANS PROGRAM ACCOUNT

For the cost of direct loans, $31,000, as authorized by chapter 31 of title 38, United States Code: *Provided*, That such costs, including the cost of modifying such loans, shall be as defined in section 502 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974: *Provided further*, That funds made available under this heading are available to subsidize gross obligations for the principal amount of direct loans not to exceed $2,952,000.

In addition, for administrative expenses necessary to carry out the direct loan program, $367,000, which may be paid to the appropriation for ''General Operating Expenses, Veterans Benefits Administration''.

NATIVE AMERICAN VETERAN HOUSING LOAN PROGRAM ACCOUNT

For administrative expenses to carry out the direct loan program authorized by subchapter V of chapter 37 of title 38, United States Code, $1,134,000.

VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

MEDICAL SERVICES

For necessary expenses for furnishing, as authorized by law, inpatient and outpatient care and treatment to beneficiaries of the Department of Veterans Affairs and veterans described in section 1705(a) of title 38, United States Code, including care and treatment in facilities not under the jurisdiction of the Department, and including medical supplies and equipment, bioengineering services, food services, and salaries and expenses of healthcare employees hired under title 38, United States Code, aid to State homes as authorized by section 1741 of title 38, United States Code, assistance and support services for caregivers as authorized by section 1720G of title 38, United States Code, loan repayments authorized by section 604 of the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010 (Public Law 111–163; 124 Stat. 1174; 38 U.S.C. 7681 note), and hospital care and medical services authorized by section 1787 of title 38, United States Code; $969,554,000, which shall be in addition to funds previously appropriated under this heading that became available on October 1, 2015; and, in addition, $51,673,000,000, plus reimbursements, shall become available on October 1, 2016, and shall remain available until September 30, 2017: *Provided*, That notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish a priority for the provision of medical treatment for veterans who have service-connected disabilities, lower income, or have special needs: *Provided further*, That notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall give priority funding for the provision of basic medical benefits to veterans in enrollment priority groups 1 through 6: *Provided further*, That notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs may authorize the dispensing of prescription drugs from Veterans Health Administration facilities to enrolled veterans with privately written prescriptions based on requirements established by the Secretary: *Provided further*, That the implementation of the program described in the previous proviso shall incur no additional cost to the Department of Veterans Affairs.

□ 1600

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. GOSAR

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. HULTGREN). The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 27, line 9, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $2,031,000)''.

Page 30, line 15, after the first dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $2,031,000)''.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order on the gentleman's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. A point of order is reserved.

Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Arizona and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Chairman, I rise to offer an amendment which seeks to provide additional resources for the mental health services for our Nation's veterans.

By way of background, the VA's budget justification for FY16 requests an increase of $3,231,000 over the enacted fiscal year '15 levels for its Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs, but on the very next page of that document, the VA only mentions that it needs ''$1.2 million to address increased congressional and legislative workload.''

My amendment simply transfers the remaining $2,031,000 unaccounted for from this request and prioritizes it to address the ongoing problems our veterans face from returning from combat.

Traumatic brain injuries and posttraumatic stress disorder have been consistently contributing to behavioral issues with our veterans, and, all too often, these ongoing mental health issues result in suicide. With an average of 18 to 20 veteran suicides per day, more resources are desperately needed. The Congressional Budget Office says the amendment would have no impact on the budget authority or outlays.

The VA does not need more money to hire more paper pushers to send letters to Capitol Hill to attempt to explain its inappropriate actions. Instead, let's

appropriate the money to those whom the VA was created to serve, and let's help improve the mental health of our Nation's heroes.

I ask my colleagues to support this commonsense amendment. I thank Chairman DENT and Ranking Member BISHOP for their time.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, I wish to speak on the point of order.

The amendment proposes to amend portions of the bill not yet read.

The amendment may not be considered en bloc under clause 2(f) of rule XXI because the amendment proposes to increase the level of outlays in the bill.

I ask for a ruling from the Chair.

The Acting CHAIR. Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order?

To be considered en bloc pursuant to clause 2(f) of rule XXI, an amendment must not propose to increase the levels of budget authority or outlays in the bill. Because the amendment offered by the gentleman from Arizona proposes a net increase in the level of outlays in the bill, as argued by the chairman of the Subcommittee on Appropriations, it may not avail itself of clause 2(f) to address portions of the bill not yet read.

The point of order is sustained. The amendment is not in order.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

MEDICAL SUPPORT AND COMPLIANCE

For necessary expenses in the administration of the medical, hospital, nursing home, domiciliary, construction, supply, and research activities, as authorized by law; administrative expenses in support of capital policy activities; and administrative and legal expenses of the Department for collecting and recovering amounts owed the Department as authorized under chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code, and the Federal Medical Care Recovery Act (42 U.S.C. 2651 et seq.), $6,524,000,000, plus reimbursements, shall become available on October 1, 2016, and shall remain available until September 30, 2017.

MEDICAL FACILITIES

For necessary expenses for the maintenance and operation of hospitals, nursing homes, domiciliary facilities, and other necessary facilities of the Veterans Health Administration; for administrative expenses in support of planning, design, project management, real property acquisition and disposition, construction, and renovation of any facility under the jurisdiction or for the use of the Department; for oversight, engineering, and architectural activities not charged to project costs; for repairing, altering, improving, or providing facilities in the several hospitals and homes under the jurisdiction of the Department, not otherwise provided for, either by contract or by the hire of temporary employees and purchase of materials; for leases of facilities; and for laundry services, $5,074,000,000, plus reimbursements, shall become available on October 1, 2016, and shall remain available until September 30, 2017.

MEDICAL AND PROSTHETIC RESEARCH

For necessary expenses in carrying out programs of medical and prosthetic research and development as authorized by chapter 73 of title 38, United States Code, $621,813,000, plus reimbursements, shall remain available until September 30, 2017.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Pennsylvania is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, exactly 2 weeks ago, the VA Office of the Inspector General released its report on the gross mismanagement and claims manipulation that has long corroded the Philadelphia VA Regional Office. The issues revealed through that report reflect some of the worst instances of neglect and lack of accountability I have seen. These issues are unacceptable for our Nation's veterans. I have personally seen the consequences firsthand through my constituency served by the Philadelphia VA.

This bill takes a number of steps to address the issues raised by the inspector general and help to ensure that they will not be repeated at any VA facility. I remain steadfast in my work to bring accountability and reform to the VA.

Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MEEHAN).

Mr. MEEHAN. I want to thank the gentleman, and I want to thank him for his hard work on this bill.

Mr. Chairman, the gentleman from Pennsylvania has put together a fiscally responsible piece of legislation that will support the U.S. military, the military families, and the veterans who have served our country.

As you have heard in the discussions that have taken place with other colleagues, particularly with those from Pennsylvania, when red tape and mismanagement stand between a veteran and his or her care, we all have a responsibility to blow the whistle and to call for appropriate reforms.

The inspector general for Veterans Affairs released a report 2 weeks ago on the Philadelphia Veterans Affairs Regional Office, as my colleague identified, and the report was even more scathing than we were led to believe it would be. It confirmed our worst fears—that the Philadelphia VA Regional Office is rife with systematic mismanagement, poor morale, the deliberate manipulation of data, and individuals who are more focused on misleading the Nation than on serving our veterans.

I would like to thank Chairman MILLER on the Veterans' Affairs Committee for convening a hearing on these reports just last week in order to explore these matters in greater detail. Out of those hearings, we learned that the VA isn't planning on holding anyone responsible until after the completion of yet another report. This may be the nature of the process, but it is deeply troubling.

What the VA needs is not an endless loop of bureaucratic reviews and inquires—it is competent management that is needed, management that will hold the employees and the other management accountable. While we wait for the next report, with this bill, Congress has an opportunity to take reform action with VA H.R. 2029, which will give the VA employees the tools they need to expedite the veterans benefits and care process.

One of the findings from the IG report that stuck out at me was that, in Philadelphia, the average response time for some 31,000 inquiries was 312 days. According to policy, that response should have happened within 5 days. I asked the Director of the VA: What do you tell the veterans? He had no answer. That response time is completely unacceptable. The funding in this bill will provide additional staff to expedite the processing of these claims and get those veterans the benefits they deserve.

Again, I want to thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. DENT) for his hard work on this bill. I look forward to continuing to work with him, as well as with other colleagues, to bring about the important reforms that are needed at the Philadelphia benefits office.

Mr. DENT. I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania for his dedication and determination to right the situation.

Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from Chester County, Pennsylvania (Mr. COSTELLO).

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, I rise today regarding Congressman DENT's fiscally responsible appropriations legislation and the positive impact it will have on the Philadelphia VA Regional Office.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Pennsylvania is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from Chester County, Pennsylvania (Mr. COSTELLO), who has been deeply concerned about this issue of the Philadelphia Veterans Affairs Regional Office.

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, I rise today regarding Congressman DENT's fiscally responsible appropriations legislation and the positive impact it will have on the Philadelphia VA Regional Office.

As you know, the Philadelphia VA has been plagued with a dysfunctional and toxic work environment, with management purposefully and blatantly displaying managerial wrongdoing. Mr. Chairman, it is our duty to right these wrongdoings and to ensure that the best care is provided to our veterans. This appropriations bill is a great start, and it gives Congress the opportunity to act on behalf of our veterans. Let's talk about this appropriations bill and the specifics of it.

It fully funds the Veterans Benefits Management System, which will result

in cutting the average processing time of a veteran's filed claim. It fully funds the Veterans Benefits Administration with an additional $163 million to allow for more staffing for the processing of appeals claims. We have already heard about the backlog of the claims. This seeks to address that. It allocates funding for IT to permit the electronic modernization of appeals claims, and it allocates full funding for digital scanning and centralized mail. Lastly, this bill establishes strike force response teams to bring in experienced managers to implement corrective actions at struggling and low-performing VA facilities, like the Philadelphia VA.

Mr. Chairman, it is time for change at the Philadelphia VA RO, and I am fully committed to ensuring that there is a course correction of the wrongdoings there and that we effectively and expeditiously resolve the problems. I encourage my colleagues to do the same and support this bill.

I will also want to particularly thank Congressman DENT for his hard work on this bill. I look forward to continuing to work with you and with your respective committees to provide the best for the veterans in our Commonwealth and across the Nation.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION

For necessary expenses of the National Cemetery Administration for operations and maintenance, not otherwise provided for, including uniforms or allowances therefor; cemeterial expenses as authorized by law; purchase of one passenger motor vehicle for use in cemeterial operations; hire of passenger motor vehicles; and repair, alteration or improvement of facilities under the jurisdiction of the National Cemetery Administration, $266,220,000, of which not to exceed $26,600,000 shall remain available until September 30, 2017.

DEPARTMENTAL ADMINISTRATION

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For necessary operating expenses of the Department of Veterans Affairs, not otherwise provided for, including administrative expenses in support of Department-wide capital planning, management and policy activities, uniforms, or allowances therefor; not to exceed $25,000 for official reception and representation expenses; hire of passenger motor vehicles; and reimbursement of the General Services Administration for security guard services, $336,659,000, of which not to exceed $10,100,000 shall remain available until September 30, 2017: *Provided*, That funds provided under this heading may be transferred to ''General Operating Expenses, Veterans Benefits Administration''.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. MCNERNEY

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 30, line 15, after the first dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $15,068,000)''.

Page 31, line 9, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $27,213,000)''.

Page 32, lines 5 and 9, after each dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $135,019,000)''.

Page 36, line 5, after the first dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $177,300,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from California and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

□ 1615

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank Chairman DENT and Ranking Member BISHOP for all their hard work on this year's military construction and Veterans Affairs funding bill. I know that both of you had to make difficult decisions to get under the current financial constraints.

The President's budget included $1.4 billion in funding for VA major construction projects. Unfortunately, this bill only includes $561 million, which is $582 million less than the request. This severely impacts access to care for veterans.

My amendment increases the VA major construction by $177 million, although I would still prefer to restore full funding for major construction with the President's fiscal year 2016 budget request. The amendment is offset by reductions to the VA administration IT accounts, bringing them in line with the fiscal year 2015 enacted levels. In addition, the general operating expenses account would be reduced by $27 million.

However, my amendment will ensure that more VA construction projects are funded, including the outpatient clinic and national cemetery in Alameda, California, and a 187,000-square-foot community-based outpatient clinic in French Camp, California.

Without this funding, more than 87,000 veterans in and around my district will have to continue to wait for the quality medical care that they have earned. For example, I recently drove with a veteran to the nearest VA medical center. His appointment was only 30 minutes, but including travel, it took us 8 hours. It took all day. This cannot continue.

The VA buildings are an average of 60 years old. Since 2004, use of Department facilities has risen 80 percent to 120 percent, while the condition of these facilities deteriorated over the same period of time. There are more than 3,900 infrastructure gaps that will cost between $54 billion and $66 billion to close, including $10 billion in activation costs.

Moreover, the Veterans Health Administration has over 21 major construction projects dating to 2007 that have been only partially funded. To complete existing projects and to close future gaps, the VA will need to invest at least $23 billion over the next 10 years. At current requested funding levels, it will take more than 67 years to complete the 10-year capital investment plan of the Department.

Our brave men and women deserve access to the best healthcare system our Nation has to offer, and that is the VA healthcare system. Not adequately funding our future construction projects is a disservice to our Nation's heroes.

Now I share my colleagues' outrage at the VA boondoggle in Aurora, Colorado. This is unacceptable to taxpayers, to veterans and their families, and an embarrassment to the VA. While we are all frustrated with how this process has gone, further funding reductions to major construction does not help build additional facilities on schedule, fails to provide additional oversight of construction projects, and does nothing to reform VA construction processes. I am pleased that both the chairman and ranking member recognize the need to address this issue and have included important language to that effect, but there is still more work to be done, and that is something we plan to address in the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

In addition, the VA announced last week that it is working with the Army Corps of Engineers to identify projects in which the Corps will serve as the construction agent. The VA and the Corps are still working on the exact projects and criteria, but this is a step in the right direction.

Mr. Chairman, I understand the frustration, really, but cutting funding right now to these projects doesn't solve the problem. It is hurting our veterans. We need to think outside of that box. Let's focus on improving our construction process and not punishing the veterans across the country because of what occurred in Denver. I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, I must rise reluctantly in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Pennsylvania is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DENT. I know the gentleman and others are disappointed that we did not provide the full administration request for major construction, but we felt that it was more important to provide necessary health services for veterans than to add to the poorly managed major construction account. This amendment, I believe, proves the wisdom of our choice.

To provide enough money for the French Camp project Mr. MCNERNEY is interested in, we would have to gut the VA IT program, which is already $195 million below the request. I don't think many Members would be willing to accept the cuts that would need to be made to the electronic medical records system or the paperless disability claims processing system. We can't afford to sacrifice the good of the many veterans to accommodate a local or parochial project construction request.

I understand the gentleman's concern and frustration, but I do believe that this request would do a lot of damage to the IT program and affect a lot of

things that all of us are deeply concerned about in terms of an A-rated health record, EMR, and other important disability issues.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. MCNERNEY).

The amendment was rejected.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. GOSAR

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 30, line 15, after the first dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $8,000,000) (increased by $8,000,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Arizona and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Chairman, I rise to offer an amendment that would transfer $8 million within this bill to hire and train personnel for the purposes of reducing the veterans' disability claims backlog.

By way of background, the VA's budget justification for the fiscal year 2016 requests an increase of $12 million for its Office of General Counsel, but on the very next page of that document, it says it needs $4 million to ''address increases in the legal workload.''

The VA budget justification also says that the VA's goal is to have an additional 45 full-time equivalent lawyers for its Office of General Counsel, which would take the total number of attorneys up to 757. According to the committee report for the last 5 years, the committee has fully funded the President's budget request for additional full-time equivalents, and yet the claim backlogs remain.

My amendment seeks to reprogram money within the Veterans Benefits Administration from the Office of General Counsel and put it towards the hiring and training of personnel who will work to reduce the VA claims backlog. The Congressional Budget Office says this amendment has no score.

I think most of us can agree that the appropriations would be better spent on the VA claims backlog reduction rather than hiring more lawyers. I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

Mr. DENT. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. GOSAR. I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. DENT. I agree with Mr. GOSAR that eliminating the backlog should be the VA's highest priority. The bill provides the entire administration request for claims processing activities, and I would support your amendment.

Mr. GOSAR. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GOSAR).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MS. TITUS

Ms. TITUS. I rise to offer an amendment. It is at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 30, line 15, after the first dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $500,000) (increased by $500,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentlewoman from Nevada and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Nevada.

Ms. TITUS. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chair, I rise today in support of my amendment, which is designed to focus the VA's attention on a critical issue, the treatment of our female veterans.

The population of women veterans is rapidly growing. Today women constitute approximately 20 percent of new recruits, 14.5 percent of the Active Duty component, and 18 percent of the Reserve component. Almost 280,000 women have served post-9/11 in Afghanistan and Iraq. While the number of male veterans is expected to decline by 2020, the number of women veterans is expected to grow dramatically to 11 percent of the veteran population.

From health care to child care, the needs of women veterans are different from those of their male counterparts. Unfortunately, the VA has faced challenges in meeting these needs. There are far too few OB/GYNs and a dearth of women's healthcare clinics. Where clinics do exist, many lack sufficient privacy protections for the patient. The VA has also struggled to address shortages in mental health, child care, and housing services for female veterans.

Too many women who served either do not identify themselves as veterans or they lack sufficient information about the benefits and services that the VA provides. Fortunately, the VA has started to put an increased focus on this population. The VA Center for Women Veterans is charged with monitoring and coordinating VA's administration of health care, benefits services, and programs for women veterans, as well as with raising awareness within the Department for their special needs.

In 2012 the Women Veterans Task Force published a report outlining strategies to meet the needs of our female veterans. The report highlighted barriers to providing services to women veterans, including a lack of data collection and analysis. Without knowing how to best serve and meet expectations of female veterans, the VA will never be able to give these heroes the care and support that they earned and deserve.

My amendment is designed simply to encourage the VA to fill the two unfunded data collection and analysis positions in the Center for Women Veterans to ensure that the VA is able to identify and fulfill the needs of our Nation's female heroes.

I thank the chairman and the ranking member for working with me on this amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Chair, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Chair, thank you for allowing me to respond. I support the gentlewoman's efforts to highlight the importance of women's health. The VA women's center has been underfunded for the last few years. As the gentlewoman correctly pointed out, their most recent working group recommends that they fill two statistician positions that have not yet been filled due to lack of budget.

Without these positions, it is challenging for the VA to get good data about female veterans, so many programs are shaped using faulty assumptions. I believe that these positions are very important for the VA when it comes to providing care for our female veterans. I support these efforts, and I urge all Members to support it.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chair, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment, but I am not opposed to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman from Pennsylvania is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chair, I commend the gentlelady for her work to improve the services VA provides to our women veterans. You really ought to be commended. I know your work on the authorizing committee is very important to you. Since women comprise nearly 15 percent of the Active-Duty military forces, VA must improve its services and infrastructure to accommodate gender-specific needs. I certainly strongly support the gentlelady's amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Chairman, I just want to close by asking my other colleagues to support this amendment so we can send a strong message to our female veterans that the U.S. Congress is committed to ensuring that the VA is meeting their unique needs. It is critical that the VA is able to accurately look forward to the future and shape their programs so it is welcoming and supporting of all our veterans. I thank you for your support.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. TITUS).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. GOSAR

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 30, line 15, after the first dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $2,000,000)''.

Page 30, line 22, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $2,000,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Arizona and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona.

□ 1630

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Chairman, I rise to offer a straightforward amendment that would strengthen the ability of the Board of Veterans Appeals to reduce its backlog.

I applaud the committee for taking on the difficult task of prioritizing limited resources for our veterans. The committee rightfully recommends the budget request level for the Board of Veterans Appeals, but I will note that one of the primary concerns I hear from my casework staff and directly from the veterans is the need for increased resources to the Board of Veterans Appeals.

According to the committee report accompanying this bill, ''appeals received by BVA are projected to increase from 49,611 in 2012 to 81,640 cases in 2016.'' That is a 65 percent increase in just 4 short years.

With our troops returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, it is no wonder why there is such a significant spike in the claims and appeals. I simply want to heed the call of the veterans in my district and across this country and ensure that the Board of Veterans Appeals has the resources necessary to address the seemingly endless backlog.

CBO says this amendment would have no impact on budget authority or outlays.

I encourage my colleagues to support this amendment. I thank the chairman and the ranking member for their diligent efforts.

Mr. DENT. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. GOSAR. I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. DENT. I agree with the gentleman from Arizona's emphasis on maximizing funding for the Board of Veterans Appeals. The board will be facing an enormous increase in caseload as the backlog of initial disability claims is cleared and veterans appeals those decisions.

We have provided a $9 million, or 8.6 percent, increase in the board's funding, as well as additional information technology funds to help modernize the board's paperbound processing system.

I support the gentleman's amendment.

Mr. GOSAR. I thank the gentleman and the ranking member, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GOSAR).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MS. SINEMA

Ms. SINEMA. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk, which I will offer at this time.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 30, line 15, after the first dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $50,000) (increased by $50,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentlewoman from Arizona and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Arizona.

Ms. SINEMA. Mr. Chairman, the Sinema amendment is a commonsense fix that helps improve the transparency of the VA and the quality of services provided to veterans.

I appreciate Chairman DENT and Ranking Member BISHOP for all of the work that they are doing to pass this bill and for being so kind about this amendment.

The underlying bill requires quarterly reports on the financial status of the Veterans Health Administration. My amendment requires the VA to include, as part of these quarterly payments, any outstanding payments owed to contracted entities older than 60 days and a justification for the delay in payments.

Over the last year, we have seen that the VA is unable to provide the timely, high-quality care our veterans deserve on their own. By leveraging community providers and creating a seamless relationship between internal VA care providers and external non-VA care providers, we can ensure that veterans receive the timely access to quality care they deserve.

That is what the Choice Act is trying to create. That is what the Secretary hopes to build through the MyVA initiative.

Unfortunately, the VA continues to struggle with paying its bills in a timely way. In my district, I have heard from large hospitals and small businesses alike who don't receive prompt payments from the VA.

A small business in my district, Interim HealthCare, provides home care, skilled medical care, and staffing services for the VA. Despite efforts by the Phoenix VA hospital, the larger VA system has failed to pay Interim HealthCare and others in a timely way. This threatens small businesses and the care that they provide to Arizona veterans. Ultimately, this undermines the seamless care we are attempting to provide to veterans.

Understanding why the VA struggles to provide timely payments to contracted service providers will help the VA address this issue and improve the quality of services for our veterans.

Additionally, we have learned that in 2014, over 55 percent of all veterans calling a national hotline for care never got through to a representative. Thus far, in 2015, that number has risen to 59 percent. This amendment would also allow the VA to provide a report on how many individuals who reached the call center are dropped and how many get the care they receive.

The Sinema amendment, Mr. Chair and others, which will improve oversight and accountability at the VA, is a step towards restoring the trust that we so dearly owe to our veterans.

I thank the chairman and ranking member for their support and their dedication to our Nation's veterans.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time in opposition to the amendment, but I am not opposed the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Pennsylvania is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, I support the amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. GOSAR

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 30, line 15, after the first dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $3,200,000)''.

Page 32, line 5, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $3,200,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Arizona and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Chairman, I rise to offer an amendment to provide additional resources for the information technology systems at the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Updates and upgrades to IT systems at the VA are paramount to meeting the goals of veterans claims backlog reduction.

I applaud the committee for recommending resources above and beyond last year's enacted levels, but the recommended levels are significantly beneath the President's budget request levels.

Last year, I offered an amendment to this same appropriation bill, House amendment 635, which transferred just over $3.2 million from the general administration account at the VA to the IT systems account. That amendment was agreed to by a voice vote. Today, I offer essentially the same amendment.

I just want to note, as I have before, that many of our veterans are simply giving up. They are either giving up on trying to obtain the benefits they deserve or, worse, some of them are giving up on life altogether. It is a travesty, and this is an appalling trend that must be reversed.

I appreciate the committee's hard work and its acknowledgment of the importance of reducing the backlog in this bill. Having said that, I think we can do more and should focus on

prioritizing funding for efforts that will lead to timelier care for our Nation's heroes, as opposed to administrative expenses.

My commonsense amendment proposes redirecting a fraction of the funds in the general administration account away from things like funding for conference expenses and bureaucrats and shifting those funds toward reducing the VA claims backlog.

I urge my colleagues to support this simple amendment to improve IT systems at the VA.

Mr. DENT. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. GOSAR. I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. DENT. I understand the gentleman's focus on providing information technology resources for the VA in order to meet the goals of eliminating the backlog. I have no objection to the amendment.

Mr. GOSAR. I certainly thank the distinguished chair and the ranking member, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GOSAR).

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

BOARD OF VETERANS APPEALS

For necessary operating expenses of the Board of Veterans Appeals, $107,884,000, of which not to exceed $10,788,000 shall remain available until September 30, 2017.

GENERAL OPERATING EXPENSES, VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION

For necessary operating expenses of the Veterans Benefits Administration, not otherwise provided for, including hire of passenger motor vehicles, reimbursement of the General Services Administration for security guard services, and reimbursement of the Department of Defense for the cost of overseas employee mail, $2,697,734,000: *Provided*, That expenses for services and assistance authorized under paragraphs (1), (2), (5), and (11) of section 3104(a) of title 38, United States Code, that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs determines are necessary to enable entitled veterans: (1) to the maximum extent feasible, to become employable and to obtain and maintain suitable employment; or (2) to achieve maximum independence in daily living, shall be charged to this account: *Provided further*, That of the funds made available under this heading, not to exceed $134,800,000 shall remain available until September 30, 2017.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. RUIZ

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 31, line 9, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $5,000,000) (increased by $5,000,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from California and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Chairman, I will start off by saying thank you to Chairman DENT and Ranking Member BISHOP for their hard work on this appropriations bill.

I rise today to offer an amendment to H.R. 2029, the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations Act for 2016. This amendment is for the brave men and women who have served and sacrificed for our country, our veterans.

California is home to almost 2 million veterans, and I am proud to represent more than 54,000 veterans in my district alone. There are 40,000 veterans expected to return to California every year for the next several years, including the fastest growing group of returning veterans, women.

As our troops come home and assimilate back into civilian life, it is critical that we do not abandon our veterans when they put down their weapons; instead, we must ensure they have timely access to the critical benefits they have earned and deserve.

Unconscionably, thousands of veterans who have sacrificed for our country are struggling to access benefits they have already earned. Due to the lingering claims backlog at the Veterans Health Administration, veterans across our Nation are waiting for pensions, prescription drugs, and even lifesaving medical care.

Veterans are still waiting for the VA to process 448,000 benefit claims, and 176,000 of those veterans have been waiting longer than 125 days for a decision. Our work to clear this harmful backlog is not finished, and we owe it to these courageous men and women to do so as soon as possible.

These figures are staggering, but the people this is affecting are not mere statistics. They are men and women like retired Air Force Master Sergeant Andrew Walker and his family from Beaumont, California.

Mr. Walker and his family waited years on end without receiving the critical health care he was promised, earned, and desperately needed. While I am heartened that I was able to help resolve Mr. Walker's claim, the backlog remains an enduring nightmare for too many veterans across the country.

Reduced to a claim number and a seemingly endless line, veterans experience pain, frustration, hopelessness, and despair. Although the backlog has shrunk since Congress last passed a similar appropriations bill, we must not lose sight of the importance of getting veterans like Andrew Walker their hard-earned benefits as soon as possible.

As a member of the VA Committee, I am fighting to change the culture at the VA from the inside out. By focusing on veteran-centered care and ensuring that the VA continues working to eliminate this backlog, we can take much-needed steps in keeping faith with our veterans and getting them the benefits they have earned.

That is why I am offering this amendment to advocate for an additional $5 million to fund the digital scanning of health and benefits files to reduce the backlog by redirecting funding within the general operating expenses account of the Veterans Benefits Administration.

This amendment simply directs funds toward the digital scanning of health and benefit files that will reduce the claims backlog without any new spending.

As an emergency medicine physician, I understand the importance of efficiency in health care, and I know how dangerous such tribulations can be for a person with PTSD or depression.

By committing resources to digitizing health and benefits files, we will further increase VA's capacity to tackle the claims backlog, ensuring veterans receive the benefits they have earned in a timely manner.

Let us continue to bear in mind that these men and women have served this country and they have put their lives on the line. We must service them by making certain that Congress focuses on eliminating the claims backlog for good.

I encourage my colleagues to stand up for veterans and support my pragmatic amendment to reduce veterans claims processing times.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. RUIZ).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. WALBERG

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 31, line 9, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $5,000,000) (increased by $5,000,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Michigan and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Chairman, I would like to start by thanking subcommittee Chairman DENT and Chairman ROGERS for their work in developing this legislation to address the current and future needs of our Nation's veterans.

I rise today to offer an amendment that highlights the need for veterans job training as part of this appropriations bill. Simply, my amendment would designate $5 million within the general operating expenses of the Veterans Benefits Administration account to support programs that help our veterans transition to the workforce.

Michigan is home to more than 660,000 veterans who contribute every day to the vitality of our communities.

□ 1645

These men and women have developed marketable skills, from technical training in mechanics, IT, and health care, to leadership qualities, ethics,

and problem-solving abilities, yet too many of them struggle to find employment after they have completed their service.

Those veterans recently returned from Iraq and Afghanistan face unique challenges to finding employment, as those who served in Active Duty since September 20, 2001, face a jobless rate that is 1.7 percentage points higher—7.2 percent veterans versus 5.5 percent national—than the general population.

The House has taken a number of good steps toward helping veterans transition to the civilian sector, from passing the Hire More Heroes Act to remove costly ObamaCare mandates that discourage the hiring of veterans, to working with employers to help them understand the benefits of hiring veterans. We can certainly do more to ensure these brave men and women have the opportunity for gainful employment when they return to our communities.

The VA should use these designated funds to focus on difficulties veterans face translating their valuable skills to suitable employment in the civilian sector. For example, as the committee rightly highlights in their report, the VA should refine and upgrade its Military Skills Translator tool to more accurately reflect the transferable skills of transitioning military veterans. The VA should also increase public awareness and access to this tool for our Nation's employers.

If we are to develop the 21st century workforce, our Nation cannot afford to leave our veterans behind; and if we are to meet our obligation to those who have put their lives on the line in service to our country, we must work to improve the transition from military service to the career field.

I hope my colleagues will support this commonsense amendment to help our veterans get back to work.

Mr. DENT. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. WALBERG. I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. DENT. I know the gentleman from Michigan has a deep commitment to providing job training and employment assistance for our returning veterans, and I support the amendment, which highlights the importance of VA programs that provide this assistance.

Mr. WALBERG. I thank the chairman.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. WALBERG).

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SYSTEMS

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For necessary expenses for information technology systems and telecommunications support, including developmental information systems and operational information systems; for pay and associated costs; and for the capital asset acquisition of information technology systems, including management and related contractual costs of said acquisitions, including contractual costs associated with operations authorized by section 3109 of title 5, United States Code, $4,038,363,000, plus reimbursements: *Provided*, That $1,115,757,000 shall be for pay and associated costs, of which not to exceed $34,800,000 shall remain available until September 30, 2017: *Provided further*, That $2,417,863,000 shall be for operations and maintenance, of which not to exceed $167,900,000 shall remain available until September 30, 2017: *Provided further*, That $504,743,000 shall be for information technology systems development, modernization, and enhancement, and shall remain available until September 30, 2017: *Provided further*, That amounts made available for information technology systems development, modernization, and enhancement may not be obligated or expended until the Secretary of Veterans Affairs or the Chief Information Officer of the Department of Veterans Affairs submits to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress a certification of the amounts, in parts or in full, to be obligated and expended for each development project: *Provided further*, That amounts made available for salaries and expenses, operations and maintenance, and information technology systems development, modernization, and enhancement may be transferred among the three subaccounts after the Secretary of Veterans Affairs requests from the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress the authority to make the transfer and an approval is issued: *Provided further*, That amounts made available for the ''Information Technology Systems'' account for development, modernization, and enhancement may be transferred among projects or to newly defined projects: *Provided further*, That no project may be increased or decreased by more than $1,000,000 of cost prior to submitting a request to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress to make the transfer and an approval is issued, or absent a response, a period of 30 days has elapsed: *Provided further*, That funds under this heading may be used by the Interagency Program Office through the Department of Veterans Affairs to define data standards, code sets, and value sets used to enable interoperability: *Provided further*, That of the funds made available for information technology systems development, modernization, and enhancement for VistA Evolution, not more than 25 percent may be obligated or expended until the Secretary of Veterans Affairs submits to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress, and such Committees approve, a report that describes: (1) the status of and changes to the VistA Evolution program plan dated March 24, 2014 (hereinafter referred to as the ''Plan''), the VistA 4 product roadmap dated February 26, 2015 (''Roadmap''), and the VistA 4 Incremental Life Cycle Cost Estimate, dated October 26, 2014; (2) any changes to the scope or functionality of projects within the VistA Evolution program as established in the Plan; (3) actual program costs incurred to date; (4) progress in meeting the schedule milestones that have been established in the Plan; (5) a Project Management Accountability System (PMAS) Dashboard Progress report that identifies each VistA Evolution project being tracked through PMAS, what functionality it is intended to provide, and what evaluation scores it has received throughout development; (6) the definition being used for interoperability between the electronic health record systems of the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs, the metrics to measure the extent of interoperability, the milestones and timeline associated with achieving interoperability, and the baseline measurements associated with interoperability; (7) progress toward developing and implementing all components and levels of interoperability, including semantic interoperability; (8) the change management tools in place to facilitate the implementation of VistA Evolution and interoperability; and (9) any changes to the governance structure for the VistA Evolution program and its chain of decisionmaking authority: *Provided further*, That the funds made available under this heading for information technology systems development, modernization, and enhancement, shall be for the projects, and in the amounts, specified under this heading in the report accompanying this Act.

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

For necessary expenses of the Office of Inspector General, to include information technology, in carrying out the provisions of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.), $131,766,000, of which not to exceed $12,600,000 shall remain available until September 30, 2017.

CONSTRUCTION, MAJOR PROJECTS

For constructing, altering, extending, and improving any of the facilities, including parking projects, under the jurisdiction or for the use of the Department of Veterans Affairs, or for any of the purposes set forth in sections 316, 2404, 2406 and chapter 81 of title 38, United States Code, not otherwise provided for, including planning, architectural and engineering services, construction management services, maintenance or guarantee period services costs associated with equipment guarantees provided under the project, services of claims analysts, offsite utility and storm drainage system construction costs, and site acquisition, where the estimated cost of a project is more than the amount set forth in section 8104(a)(3)(A) of title 38, United States Code, or where funds for a project were made available in a previous major project appropriation, $561,800,000, of which $527,800,000 shall remain available until September 30, 2020, and of which $34,000,000 shall remain available until expended: *Provided*, That except for advance planning activities, including needs assessments which may or may not lead to capital investments, and other capital asset management related activities, including portfolio development and management activities, and investment strategy studies funded through the advance planning fund and the planning and design activities funded through the design fund, including needs assessments which may or may not lead to capital investments, and salaries and associated costs of the resident engineers who oversee those capital investments funded through this account, and funds provided for the purchase of land for the National Cemetery Administration through the land acquisition line item, none of the funds made available under this heading shall be used for any project which has not been approved by the Congress in the budgetary process: *Provided further*, That funds made available under this heading for fiscal year 2016, for each approved project shall be obligated: (1) by the awarding of a construction documents contract by September 30, 2016; and (2) by the awarding of a construction contract by September 30, 2017: *Provided further*, That the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall promptly submit to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress a written report on any approved major construction project for which obligations are not incurred within the time limitations established above.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MS. BROWNLEY OF CALIFORNIA

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

In the ''Department of Veterans Affairs—Departmental Administration—Construction, Major Projects'' account, strike the aggregate dollar amount and insert ''$1,143,800,000''.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order on the gentlewoman's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. A point of order is reserved.

Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentlewoman from California and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Chairman, I rise this afternoon to offer an amendment to H.R. 2029. My amendment would restore the funding for major construction projects in the Department of Veterans Affairs to $1.14 billion to meet the level that the VA has requested.

As ranking member of the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Health, I share the outrage of many of my colleagues over the unacceptable mismanagement of the VA's major construction program.

I agree that VA management must be held accountable for their failure to manage construction costs for the Denver hospital. Congress must reform the VA construction program so that it uses taxpayer dollars wisely and efficiently. However, we cannot continue to ignore the sad state of disrepair in VA hospitals and clinics across our country which are in desperate need of funding for modernization and health and safety improvements.

Most of the VA's medical infrastructure is old and outdated. The average building age is approaching 60 years. Many VA health facilities urgently need seismic retrofitting or emergency repairs. Others are too small to accommodate the growing population of veterans returning home from Iraq and Afghanistan, and the aging population of veterans who served in Vietnam continues to put great stress on the VA.

Many veterans in underserved communities like Ventura County are counting on us, on Congress, to ensure that new construction projects are delivered and that their health care needs will be met. The funding levels in the bill would delay VA plans to expand health care facilities in many locations, harming VA's ability to provide care to veterans.

If the current funding level in this bill is made law, the VA would have to scuttle plans for a rehabilitative therapy building in St. Louis, Missouri, two outpatient clinics in Alameda and French Camp in California, and a community living center in Perry Point, Maryland. Delaying these projects is not the right way to honor our commitment to our Nation's veterans.

Mr. Chair, draconian funding cuts to the VA's major construction program are not the only way that veterans are being shortchanged in this bill before us today. The majority's bill also fails to meet the administration's budget requests in other areas, including medical services, medical facilities, and information technology.

For example, the VA estimates that at the bill's current funding level, over 70,000 fewer veterans will receive medical care compared to the administration's request. In addition, the VA will not be able to pay for cemetery expansions in St. Louis, Portland, Riverside, Puerto Rico, and Pensacola, which would have enabled the Department to serve 18,000 veterans and their family members annually.

Veteran advocates, including AMVETS, Disabled American Veterans, Paralyzed Veterans of America, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, agree that, in the long run, Congress will be forced to appropriate much larger sums to enable the VA to catch up on the deficits being created by this bill, not only in capital infrastructure, but in critical investments in other VA services in health care.

If we really want to change the culture of the VA and ensure that veterans everywhere can get the services and benefits they have earned, Congress must do its part by investing in our veterans.

When Congress cuts corners, we put the health and well-being of the men and women who have served this country at risk.

I realize, Mr. Chairman, that my amendment is subject to a point of order, so I intend to withdraw my amendment, but we must fix this bill before it moves forward.

Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw my amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

CONSTRUCTION, MINOR PROJECTS

For constructing, altering, extending, and improving any of the facilities, including parking projects, under the jurisdiction or for the use of the Department of Veterans Affairs, including planning and assessments of needs which may lead to capital investments, architectural and engineering services, maintenance or guarantee period services costs associated with equipment guarantees provided under the project, services of claims analysts, offsite utility and storm drainage system construction costs, and site acquisition, or for any of the purposes set forth in sections 316, 2404, 2406, and chapter 81 of title 38, United States Code, not otherwise provided for, where the estimated cost of a project is equal to or less than the amount set forth in section 8104(a)(3)(A) of title 38, United States Code, $406,200,000, to remain available until September 30, 2020, along with unobligated balances of previous ''Construction, Minor Projects'' appropriations which are hereby made available for any project where the estimated cost is equal to or less than the amount set forth in such section: *Provided*, That funds made available under this heading shall be for: (1) repairs to any of the nonmedical facilities under the jurisdiction or for the use of the Department which are necessary because of loss or damage caused by any natural disaster or catastrophe; and (2) temporary measures necessary to prevent or to minimize further loss by such causes.

GRANTS FOR CONSTRUCTION OF STATE EXTENDED CARE FACILITIES

For grants to assist States to acquire or construct State nursing home and domiciliary facilities and to remodel, modify, or alter existing hospital, nursing home, and domiciliary facilities in State homes, for furnishing care to veterans as authorized by sections 8131 through 8137 of title 38, United States Code, $80,000,000, to remain available until expended.

GRANTS FOR CONSTRUCTION OF VETERANS CEMETERIES

For grants to assist States and tribal organizations in establishing, expanding, or improving veterans cemeteries as authorized by section 2408 of title 38, United States Code, $45,000,000, to remain available until expended.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 201. Any appropriation for fiscal year 2016 for ''Compensation and Pensions'', ''Readjustment Benefits'', and ''Veterans Insurance and Indemnities'' may be transferred as necessary to any other of the mentioned appropriations: *Provided*, That before a transfer may take place, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall request from the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress the authority to make the transfer and such Committees issue an approval, or absent a response, a period of 30 days has elapsed.

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 202. Amounts made available for the Department of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2016, in this or any other Act, under the ''Medical Services'', ''Medical Support and Compliance'', and ''Medical Facilities'' accounts may be transferred among the accounts: *Provided*, That any transfers between the ''Medical Services'' and ''Medical Support and Compliance'' accounts of 1 percent or less of the total amount appropriated to the account in this or any other Act may take place subject to notification from the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress of the amount and purpose of the transfer: *Provided further*, That any transfers between the ''Medical Services'' and ''Medical Support and Compliance'' accounts in excess of 1 percent, or exceeding the cumulative 1 percent for the fiscal year, may take place only after the Secretary requests from the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress the authority to make the transfer and an approval is issued: *Provided further*, That any transfers to or from the ''Medical Facilities'' account may take place only after the Secretary requests from the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress the authority to make the transfer and an approval is issued.

SEC. 203. Appropriations available in this title for salaries and expenses shall be available for services authorized by section 3109 of title 5, United States Code; hire of passenger motor vehicles; lease of a facility or land or both; and uniforms or allowances therefore, as authorized by sections 5901 through 5902 of title 5, United States Code.

SEC. 204. No appropriations in this title (except the appropriations for ''Construction, Major Projects'', and ''Construction, Minor Projects'') shall be available for the purchase of any site for or toward the construction of any new hospital or home.

SEC. 205. No appropriations in this title shall be available for hospitalization or examination of any persons (except beneficiaries entitled to such hospitalization or examination under the laws providing such benefits to veterans, and persons receiving such treatment under sections 7901 through 7904 of title 5, United States Code, or the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.)), unless reimbursement of the cost of such hospitalization or examination is made to the ''Medical Services'' account at such rates as may be fixed by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

SEC. 206. Appropriations available in this title for ''Compensation and Pensions'', ''Readjustment Benefits'', and ''Veterans Insurance and Indemnities'' shall be available for payment of prior year accrued obligations required to be recorded by law against the corresponding prior year accounts within the last quarter of fiscal year 2015.

SEC. 207. Appropriations available in this title shall be available to pay prior year obligations of corresponding prior year appropriations accounts resulting from sections 3328(a), 3334, and 3712(a) of title 31, United States Code, except that if such obligations are from trust fund accounts they shall be payable only from ''Compensation and Pensions''.

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 208. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, during fiscal year 2016, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, from the National Service Life Insurance Fund under section 1920 of title 38, United States Code, the Veterans' Special Life Insurance Fund under section 1923 of title 38, United States Code, and the United States Government Life Insurance Fund under section 1955 of title 38, United States Code, reimburse the ''General Operating Expenses, Veterans Benefits Administration'' and ''Information Technology Systems'' accounts for the cost of administration of the insurance programs financed through those accounts: *Provided*, That reimbursement shall be made only from the surplus earnings accumulated in such an insurance program during fiscal year 2016 that are available for dividends in that program after claims have been paid and actuarially determined reserves have been set aside: *Provided further*, That if the cost of administration of such an insurance program exceeds the amount of surplus earnings accumulated in that program, reimbursement shall be made only to the extent of such surplus earnings: *Provided further*, That the Secretary shall determine the cost of administration for fiscal year 2016 which is properly allocable to the provision of each such insurance program and to the provision of any total disability income insurance included in that insurance program.

SEC. 209. Amounts deducted from enhanced-use lease proceeds to reimburse an account for expenses incurred by that account during a prior fiscal year for providing enhanced-use lease services, may be obligated during the fiscal year in which the proceeds are received.

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 210. Funds available in this title or funds for salaries and other administrative expenses shall also be available to reimburse the Office of Resolution Management of the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Office of Employment Discrimination Complaint Adjudication under section 319 of title 38, United States Code, for all services provided at rates which will recover actual costs but not to exceed $43,700,000 for the Office of Resolution Management and $3,400,000 for the Office of Employment Discrimination Complaint Adjudication: *Provided*, That payments may be made in advance for services to be furnished based on estimated costs: *Provided further*, That amounts received shall be credited to the ''General Administration'' and ''Information Technology Systems'' accounts for use by the office that provided the service.

SEC. 211. No appropriations in this title shall be available to enter into any new lease of real property if the estimated annual rental cost is more than $1,000,000, unless the Secretary of Veterans Affairs submits a request to enter into such lease to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress and (1) the Committees approve the request; or (2) the Committees have not rejected the request before the date that is 15 days after the date on which the request is received.

SEC. 212. No funds of the Department of Veterans Affairs shall be available for hospital care, nursing home care, or medical services provided to any person under chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code, for a non-service-connected disability described in section 1729(a)(2) of such title, unless that person has disclosed to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in such form as the Secretary may require, current, accurate third-party reimbursement information for purposes of section 1729 of such title: *Provided*, That the Secretary may recover, in the same manner as any other debt due the United States, the reasonable charges for such care or services from any person who does not make such disclosure as required: *Provided further*, That any amounts so recovered for care or services provided in a prior fiscal year may be obligated by the Secretary during the fiscal year in which amounts are received.

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 213. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, proceeds or revenues derived from enhanced-use leasing activities (including disposal) may be deposited into the ''Construction, Major Projects'' and ''Construction, Minor Projects'' accounts and be used for construction (including site acquisition and disposition), alterations, and improvements of any medical facility under the jurisdiction or for the use of the Department of Veterans Affairs. Such sums as realized are in addition to the amount provided for in ''Construction, Major Projects'' and ''Construction, Minor Projects''.

SEC. 214. Amounts made available under ''Medical Services'' are available—

(1) for furnishing recreational facilities, supplies, and equipment; and

(2) for funeral expenses, burial expenses, and other expenses incidental to funerals and burials for beneficiaries receiving care in the Department.

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 215. Such sums as may be deposited to the Medical Care Collections Fund pursuant to section 1729A of title 38, United States Code, may be transferred to ''Medical Services'', to remain available until expended for the purposes of that account.

SEC. 216. The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may enter into agreements with Indian tribes and tribal organizations which are party to the Alaska Native Health Compact with the Indian Health Service, and Indian tribes and tribal organizations serving rural Alaska which have entered into contracts with the Indian Health Service under the Indian Self Determination and Educational Assistance Act, to provide healthcare, including behavioral health and dental care. The Secretary shall require participating veterans and facilities to comply with all appropriate rules and regulations, as established by the Secretary. The term ''rural Alaska'' shall mean those lands sited within the external boundaries of the Alaska Native regions specified in sections 7(a)(1)–(4) and (7)–(12) of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, as amended (43 U.S.C. 1606), and those lands within the Alaska Native regions specified in sections 7(a)(5) and 7(a)(6) of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, as amended (43 U.S.C. 1606), which are not within the boundaries of the municipality of Anchorage, the Fairbanks North Star Borough, the Kenai Peninsula Borough or the Matanuska Susitna Borough.

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 217. Such sums as may be deposited to the Department of Veterans Affairs Capital Asset Fund pursuant to section 8118 of title 38, United States Code, may be transferred to the ''Construction, Major Projects'' and ''Construction, Minor Projects'' accounts, to remain available until expended for the purposes of these accounts.

SEC. 218. None of the funds made available in this title may be used to implement any policy prohibiting the Directors of the Veterans Integrated Service Networks from conducting outreach or marketing to enroll new veterans within their respective Networks.

SEC. 219. The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress a quarterly report on the financial status of the Veterans Health Administration.

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 220. Amounts made available under the ''Medical Services'', ''Medical Support and Compliance'', ''Medical Facilities'', ''General Operating Expenses, Veterans Benefits Administration'', ''General Administration'', and ''National Cemetery Administration'' accounts for fiscal year 2016 may be transferred to or from the ''Information Technology Systems'' account: *Provided*, That such transfers may not result in a more than 10 percent aggregate increase in the total amount made available by this Act for the ''Information Technology Systems'' account: *Provided further*, That before a transfer may take place, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall request from the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress the authority to make the transfer and an approval is issued.

SEC. 221. Of the amounts made available to the Department of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2016, in this or any other Act, under the ''Medical Facilities'' account for nonrecurring maintenance, not more than 20 percent of the funds made available shall be obligated during the last 2 months of that fiscal year: *Provided*, That the Secretary may waive this requirement after providing written notice to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress.

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 222. Of the amounts appropriated to the Department of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2016 for ''Medical Services'', ''Medical Support and Compliance'', ''Medical Facilities'', ''Construction, Minor Projects'', and ''Information Technology Systems'', up to $266,303,000, plus reimbursements, may be transferred to the Joint Department of Defense-Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Facility Demonstration Fund, established by section 1704 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010 (Public Law 111–84; 123 Stat. 3571) and may be used for operation of the facilities designated as combined Federal medical facilities as described by section 706 of the Duncan Hunter National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009 (Public Law 110–417; 122 Stat. 4500): *Provided*, That additional funds may be transferred from accounts designated in this section to the Joint Department of Defense-Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Facility Demonstration Fund upon

written notification by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress: *Provided further*, That section 223 of Title II of Division I of Public Law 113-235 is repealed.

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 223. Of the amounts appropriated to the Department of Veterans Affairs which become available on October 1, 2016, for ''Medical Services'', ''Medical Support and Compliance'', and ''Medical Facilities'', up to $265,675,000, plus reimbursements, may be transferred to the Joint Department of Defense-Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Facility Demonstration Fund, established by section 1704 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010 (Public Law 111–84; 123 Stat. 3571) and may be used for operation of the facilities designated as combined Federal medical facilities as described by section 706 of the Duncan Hunter National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009 (Public Law 110–417; 122 Stat. 4500): *Provided*, That additional funds may be transferred from accounts designated in this section to the Joint Department of Defense-Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Facility Demonstration Fund upon written notification by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress.

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 224. Such sums as may be deposited to the Medical Care Collections Fund pursuant to section 1729A of title 38, United States Code, for healthcare provided at facilities designated as combined Federal medical facilities as described by section 706 of the Duncan Hunter National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009 (Public Law 110–417; 122 Stat. 4500) shall also be available: (1) for transfer to the Joint Department of Defense-Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Facility Demonstration Fund, established by section 1704 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010 (Public Law 111–84; 123 Stat. 3571); and (2) for operations of the facilities designated as combined Federal medical facilities as described by section 706 of the Duncan Hunter National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009 (Public Law 110–417; 122 Stat. 4500).

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 225. Of the amounts available in this title for ''Medical Services'', ''Medical Support and Compliance'', and ''Medical Facilities'', a minimum of $15,000,000 shall be transferred to the DOD–VA Health Care Sharing Incentive Fund, as authorized by section 8111(d) of title 38, United States Code, to remain available until expended, for any purpose authorized by section 8111 of title 38, United States Code.

(INCLUDING RESCISSIONS OF FUNDS)

SEC. 226. (a) Of the funds appropriated in title II of division I of Public Law 113–235, the following amounts which became available on October 1, 2015, are hereby rescinded from the following accounts in the amounts specified:

(1) ''Department of Veterans Affairs, Medical Services'', $1,400,000,000.

(2) ''Department of Veterans Affairs, Medical Support and Compliance'', $100,000,000.

(3) ''Department of Veterans Affairs, Medical Facilities'', $250,000,000.

(b) In addition to amounts provided elsewhere in this Act, an additional amount is appropriated to the following accounts in the amounts specified to remain available until September 30, 2017:

(1) ''Department of Veterans Affairs, Medical Services'', $1,400,000,000.

(2) ''Department of Veterans Affairs, Medical Support and Compliance'', $100,000,000.

(3) ''Department of Veterans Affairs, Medical Facilities'', $250,000,000.

SEC. 227. The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall notify the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress of all bid savings for a major construction project within 15 days of being identified that total at least $5,000,000, or 5 percent of the programmed amount of the project, whichever is less.

SEC. 228. None of the funds made available for ''Construction, Major Projects'' may be used for a project in excess of the scope specified for that project in the original justification data provided to the Congress as part of the request for appropriations unless the Secretary of Veterans Affairs receives approval from the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress.

SEC. 229. The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress a quarterly report that contains the following information from each Veterans Benefits Administration Regional Office: (1) the average time to complete a disability compensation claim; (2) the number of claims pending more than 125 days; (3) error rates; (4) the number of claims personnel; (5) any corrective action taken within the quarter to address poor performance; (6) training programs undertaken; and (7) the number and results of Quality Review Team audits: *Provided*, That each quarterly report shall be submitted no later than 30 days after the end of the respective quarter.

□ 1700

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. LAMALFA

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 53, line 2, strike ''and'' after the semicolon.

Page 53, line 3, insert the following before the colon: ''; and (8) the number of informal claims that are unprocessed''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from California and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Chair, each quarter the Secretary of Veterans Affairs must submit a report that includes several metrics from every VA regional office to the House and Senate Appropriations Committees. The report includes the average time to complete a disability claim, the backlog, error rates, and other important details.

With this amendment, the Secretary of VA must also include the number of informal claims that are unprocessed. This amendment allows Congress to receive a more complete picture of the regional office's workload.

We have seen troubling instances in Oakland and other VA regional offices of informal claims not being handled properly and even waiting decades for some of those claims to be processed.

Informal claims should be included in this quarterly report from the Secretary, and this amendment simply requires that that be done; therefore, giving Congress and veterans a better picture of what that load would be and then we can address that appropriately. So that is the amendment.

Mr. DENT. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. LAMALFA. I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. DENT. I support the amendment.

Mr. LAMALFA. Again, Mr. Chair, it is a very simple amendment, and it will make a clear picture of what the real backlog is of informal claims, which has not gotten enough attention in the work of the VA in recent years. Again, we keep finding that it is an issue of importance and one of great concern as we have discovered what some of the regional offices have to deal with.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA).

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

SEC. 230. The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress a reprogramming request if at any point during fiscal year 2016 the funding allocated for a medical care program that is not estimated through the Enrollee Health Care Projection Model is adjusted by more than $25,000,000 from the allocation shown in the corresponding congressional budget justification. Amounts may only be reprogrammed as requested under this section if (1) the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress approve the request; or (2) the Committees have not rejected the request before the date that is 15 days after the date on which the request is received.

SEC. 231. Of the funds provided to the Department of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2016 for ''Medical Services'' and ''Medical Support and Compliance'', a maximum of $5,000,000 may be obligated from the ''Medical Services'' account and a maximum of $154,596,000 may be obligated from the ''Medical Support and Compliance'' account for the VistA Evolution and electronic health record interoperability projects: *Provided*, That funds in addition to these amounts may be obligated for the VistA Evolution and electronic health record interoperability projects upon written notification by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress.

SEC. 232. The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall provide written notification to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress 15 days prior to organizational changes which result in the transfer of 25 or more full-time equivalents from one organizational unit of the Department of Veterans Affairs to another.

(RESCISSION OF FUNDS)

SEC. 233. (a) There is hereby rescinded an aggregate amount of $101,000,000 from the total budget authority provided for fiscal year 2016 for discretionary accounts of the Department of Veterans Affairs in—

(1) this Act; or

(2) any advance appropriation for fiscal year 2016 in prior appropriation Acts.

(b) The Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress a report specifying the account and amount of each rescission not later than 20 days following enactment of this Act.

SEC. 234. The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall provide on a quarterly basis to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress notification of any single national outreach and awareness marketing campaign in which obligations exceed $2,000,000.

SEC. 235. None of the funds available to the Department of Veterans Affairs, in this or any other Act, may be used to replace the current system by which the Veterans Integrated Service Networks select and contract for diabetes monitoring supplies and equipment.

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 236. The Secretary of Veterans Affairs, upon determination that such action is necessary to address needs of the Veterans Health Administration, may transfer to the ''Medical Services'' account any discretionary appropriations made available for fiscal year 2016 in this title (except appropriations made to the ''General Operating Expenses, Veterans Benefits Administration'' account) or any discretionary unobligated balances within the Department of Veterans Affairs, including those appropriated for fiscal year 2016, that were provided in advance by appropriations Acts: *Provided*, That transfers shall be made only with the approval of the Office of Management and Budget: *Provided further*, That the transfer authority provided in this section is in addition to any other transfer authority provided by law: *Provided further*, That no amounts may be transferred from amounts that were designated by Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to a concurrent resolution on the budget or the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985: *Provided further*, That such authority to transfer may not be used unless for higher priority items, based on emergent healthcare requirements, than those for which originally appropriated and in no case where the item for which funds are requested has been denied by Congress: *Provided further*, That, upon determination that all or part of the funds transferred from an appropriation are not necessary, such amounts may be transferred back to that appropriation and shall be available for the same purposes as originally appropriated: *Provided further*, That before a transfer may take place, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall request from the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress the authority to make the transfer and receive approval of that request.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Chair, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. LOWENTHAL).

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Chair, I thank the ranking member and also the chairman for providing me this time to speak on the floor.

I am going to go back. My congressional district is home to the Long Beach Veterans Affairs hospital; the American Gold Star Manor, which is a manor that provides affordable housing for mothers who have lost their sons to war and for veterans; and my district is also the home of Los Alamitos Joint Forces Training Base.

Providing outstanding service to our veterans has been a top priority throughout my career. That is why I am cosponsoring this amendment to address the disability claims and appeals backlogs and hopefully provide funding for more full-time employees to address these issues.

I want to share with you just quickly my concerns.

There are long delays in Aid and Attendance claims, particularly with regard to elderly, frail veterans with rapidly declining health issues. And approval is slow and sometimes comes, actually, too late, allowing the veterans to suffer for no reason.

This year, I had a 100 percent service-connected Purple Heart veteran with Parkinson's disease who filed for Aid and Attendance in July 2013. At that time, he needed caretaking assistance at his home but was initially denied.

In March of 2014, I received a call from his son who informed me that his father had fallen and broken his shoulder. During this time, my constituent had to produce multiple pieces of paper and doctor's confirmation of disability, even though he is an amputee. His son called my office and informed my caseworker in the district that he needed immediate assistance for his father. My caseworker called my staffer in D.C., who ran to the VA Congressional Liaison's office here at the Capitol to see what could be done during this emergency. I spoke to the VA about the situation, and my constituent received immediate assistance because I called. My constituent was finally awarded Aid and Attendance in May of 2014.

Mr. Chair, our veterans should not have to wait for medical care and suffer while they are waiting for months and years. Our veterans deserve better service than we are giving them. It is unnecessary for these types of emergencies to occur.

Last year, I encouraged the Department to use its funding to hire additional staff and stated that I do not believe that providing overtime pay for workers who are already stretched thin was enough. I am pleased to see there is funding to hire more full-time employees, but we still need more workers in order for the VA to respond faster. I am still concerned that the Veterans Benefits Administration is not requesting adequate resources to expeditiously handle the current backlog or new claims, which are expected to increase.

The VA is still contracting out claims to other regional offices rather than the home office. It is making progress. However, claims are still taking as long as 2 years for resolution. The VA is encouraging veterans to use electronic benefits, eBenefits, though many Vietnam-era veterans need assistance with this technology.

Mr. Chair, in closing, when we ask America's veterans to serve their country and sacrifice their lives on our behalf, our Nation needs to make a promise to take care of them throughout their lives. Ensuring that our veterans receive the best care after their years of service to our Nation is a moral responsibility which must happen. I pledge my continued support to work with Secretary McDonald and the Department of Veterans Affairs, my colleagues, stakeholder groups, and my constituents to address these issues.

Mr. Chair, I ask that you support this amendment.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 237. Amounts made available for the Department of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2016, under the ''Board of Veterans Appeals'' and the ''General Operating Expenses, Veterans Benefits Administration'' accounts may be transferred between such accounts: *Provided*, That before a transfer may take place, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall request from the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress the authority to make the transfer and receive approval from such Committees for such request.

(RESCISSION OF FUNDS)

SEC. 238. Of the unobligated balances available within the ''DOD–VA Health Care Sharing Incentive Fund'', $15,000,000 are hereby rescinded.

SEC. 239. The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may not reprogram funds among major construction projects or programs if such instance of reprogramming will exceed $5,000,000, unless such reprogramming is approved by the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress.

(RESCISSIONS OF FUNDS)

SEC. 240. Of the discretionary funds made available in Public Law 113-235 for the Department of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2016, $197,923,000 are rescinded from ''Medical Services'', $42,272,000 are rescinded from ''Medical Support and Compliance'', and $15,353,000 are rescinded from ''Medical Facilities''.

SEC. 241. The amounts otherwise made available by this Act for the following accounts of the Department of Veterans Affairs are hereby reduced by the following amounts:

(1) ''Veterans Benefits Administration—Veterans Housing Benefit Program Fund'', $3,098,000.

(2) ''Veterans Benefits Administration—Vocational Rehabilitation Loans Program Account'', $10,000.

(3) ''Veterans Benefits Administration—Native American Veteran Housing Loan Program Account'', $25,000.

(4) ''Veterans Health Administration—Medical and Prosthetic Research'', $3,109,000.

(5) ''National Cemetery Administration'', $1,654,000.

(6) ''Departmental Administration—General Administration'', $3,877,000.

(7) ''Departmental Administration—Board of Veterans Appeals'', $786,000.

(8) ''Departmental Administration—General Operating Expenses, Veterans Benefits Administration'', $36,568,000.

(9) ''Departmental Administration—Information Technology Systems'', $7,958,000.

(10) ''Departmental Administration—Office of Inspector General'', $993,000.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. BENISHEK

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 58, after line 25, insert the following:

SEC. 242. Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress a report that describes the status, including the timeline for completion, of each Community-Based Outpatient Clinic to be established by the Department of Veterans Affairs, through construction or lease, that is not yet completed.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chair, I reserve a point of order on the gentleman's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. A point of order is reserved.

Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Michigan and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of my amendment to have the Secretary of the VA report to Congress on the status of VA clinics currently in the leasing or construction process.

Our rural veterans deserve access to quality care without having to drive hundreds of miles. In many areas, like in northern Michigan, VA clinics can serve an important role in providing care to veterans in their communities. However, no one is served when the VA takes many years to approve and complete these projects.

In Traverse City, Michigan, an expansion for the VA clinic was approved and funded by Congress in 2013. After I sent letters to the Secretary asking for an explanation, the program was finally approved by the VA in August of 2014. To this day, the VA has yet to make measurable progress on this facility, and they have told me that it could be as many as 6 more years before this facility is completed.

Our veterans deserve to know how many facilities are facing similar delays. As we work to enforce some accountability at the VA, we can't ignore our rural veterans that rely on VA clinics. The VA must be held accountable for these delays, and I want to know who in the agency is responsible.

My goal is for all veterans to have a choice in where they receive care. We have taken an important step towards that with the Choice Act, and I look forward to continuing to work to expand that program. However, it is critical that we do not allow the VA to hold veterans and taxpayers in limbo as critical, funded projects sit unfinished.

The money we provided in this bill is not for plush executive salaries and full retirement benefits for those that manipulate data. It is for our veterans. The VA must return to its focus, to its central mission and remove bureaucratic hurdles that keep veterans from the care they have earned.

I yield back the balance of my time.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, I make a point of order against the amendment because it proposes to change existing law and constitutes legislation in an appropriation bill and, therefore, violates clause 2 of rule XXI.

The rule states in pertinent part:

''An amendment to a general appropriation bill shall not be in order if changing existing law.''

The amendment gives affirmative direction in effect.

I ask for a ruling from the Chair.

The Acting CHAIR. Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order?

If not, the Chair is prepared to rule.

The Chair finds that this amendment imposes new duties on the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

The amendment, therefore, constitutes legislation in violation of clause 2 of rule XXI.

The point of order is sustained, and the amendment is not in order.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

TITLE III

RELATED AGENCIES

AMERICAN BATTLE MONUMENTS COMMISSION

SALARIES AND EXPENSES

For necessary expenses, not otherwise provided for, of the American Battle Monuments Commission, including the acquisition of land or interest in land in foreign countries; purchases and repair of uniforms for caretakers of national cemeteries and monuments outside of the United States and its territories and possessions; rent of office and garage space in foreign countries; purchase (one-for-one replacement basis only) and hire of passenger motor vehicles; not to exceed $7,500 for official reception and representation expenses; and insurance of official motor vehicles in foreign countries, when required by law of such countries, $75,100,000, to remain available until expended.

FOREIGN CURRENCY FLUCTUATIONS ACCOUNT

For necessary expenses, not otherwise provided for, of the American Battle Monuments Commission, such sums as may be necessary, to remain available until expended, for purposes authorized by section 2109 of title 36, United States Code.

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR VETERANS CLAIMS

SALARIES AND EXPENSES

For necessary expenses for the operation of the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims as authorized by sections 7251 through 7299 of title 38, United States Code, $32,141,000: *Provided*, That $2,500,000 shall be available for the purpose of providing financial assistance as described, and in accordance with the process and reporting procedures set forth, under this heading in Public Law 102–229.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE—CIVIL

CEMETERIAL EXPENSES, ARMY

SALARIES AND EXPENSES

For necessary expenses for maintenance, operation, and improvement of Arlington National Cemetery and Soldiers' and Airmen's Home National Cemetery, including the purchase or lease of passenger motor vehicles for replacement on a one-for-one basis only, and not to exceed $1,000 for official reception and representation expenses, $70,800,000, of which not to exceed $5,000,000 shall remain available until September 30, 2017. In addition, such sums as may be necessary for parking maintenance, repairs and replacement, to be derived from the ''Lease of Department of Defense Real Property for Defense Agencies'' account.

ARMED FORCES RETIREMENT HOME

TRUST FUND

For expenses necessary for the Armed Forces Retirement Home to operate and maintain the Armed Forces Retirement Home—Washington, District of Columbia, and the Armed Forces Retirement Home—Gulfport, Mississippi, to be paid from funds available in the Armed Forces Retirement Home Trust Fund, $64,300,000, of which $1,000,000 shall remain available until expended for construction and renovation of the physical plants at the Armed Forces Retirement Home—Washington, District of Columbia, and the Armed Forces Retirement Home—Gulfport, Mississippi.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

SEC. 301. Funds appropriated in this Act under the heading ''Department of Defense—Civil, Cemeterial Expenses, Army'', may be provided to Arlington County, Virginia, for the relocation of the federally owned water main at Arlington National Cemetery, making additional land available for ground burials.

SEC. 302. Amounts deposited during the current fiscal year into the special account established under 10 U.S.C. 4727 are appropriated and shall be available until expended to support activities at the Army National Military Cemeteries.

TITLE IV

OVERSEAS CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, NAVY AND MARINE CORPS

For an additional amount for ''Military Construction, Navy and Marine Corps'', $244,004,000 to remain available until September 30, 2020, for projects outside of the United States: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress for Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(ii) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

□ 1715

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. MULVANEY

Mr. MULVANEY. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Strike title IV.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chair, I reserve a point of order on the gentleman's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. A point of order is reserved.

Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from South Carolina and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from South Carolina.

Mr. MULVANEY. Mr. Chairman, I want to read something at the beginning of this:

''Abuse of the overseas contingency operation global war on terror cap adjustment is a backdoor loophole that undermines the integrity of the budget process.''

It goes on to say that the Budget Committee will oppose increases above the levels the administration and our military commanders say are needed to carry out operations unless it can be clearly demonstrated that such amounts are war related.

That is from last year's House-passed budget report. Last year, this body took a position that we were not going to use the OCO budget, the global war on terror budget, in order to get around the BCA caps.

The appropriations bill, as currently offered, does exactly that. It spends about $532 million in the OCO budget for matters that the Department of Defense admits are not war related. These

are matters that the Department of Defense included in its original base defense budget request, but for which there wasn't enough money under the BCA caps.

So what the appropriators have done is taken those requests which are admittedly not war related and buried it in this appropriations bill, using the OCO money in order to violate the caps.

By the way, the money goes to overseas bases, bases in Italy, Poland, Bahrain, Niger, Djibouti, and Oman, admitted by the Defense Department not to be war related, yet is in the war budget today.

All I ask, Mr. Chairman, is this: If we agree as a body that we cannot live within the BCA caps and we agree that the defense of the Nation takes more money than is permitted under the BCA caps, then let's break the caps. But let's do it honestly, let's do it openly, and let's tell the people here why we have to do it and where the money is going.

The OCO budget has been described by members of both the Democrat Party and the Republican Party alike as a slush fund, as a bad way to do business. The Defense Department doesn't even like using this type of money because it does not allow them to budget properly. It is a desperate act, and it is a dishonest act when it comes to following the law.

The Budget Control Act is the law of the land. It passed in the House, it passed in the Senate, and it was signed by the President. And this appropriations bill seeks to break the law and seeks to do it in such a way that isn't even honest about how it is going forward.

So with that, Mr. Chairman, I respectfully request that folks would support the Mulvaney-Van Hollen amendment and strike the OCO-GWOT money from this particular appropriations bill.

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

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, I make a point of order against the amendment because it proposes to amend portions of the bill not yet read.

Section 17 of chapter 2 of the House Practice book states in part:

''It is not in order to strike or otherwise amend portions of a bill not yet read for amendment.''

I ask for a ruling from the Chair.

The Acting CHAIR. Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order?

Mr. MULVANEY. Mr. Chairman, my understanding is that this amendment seeks to strike title IV on page 62, which is exactly where we are when I was called to the podium.

The Acting CHAIR. Does any other Member wish to be heard?

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chair, I wish to be heard.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Maryland is recognized.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. My understanding of this is it strikes the provision and, therefore, meets the requirements. After all, this is the first bill we are debating since the budget was passed. The budget opens the door wide to this accounting scam that Republicans on the Budget Committee just last year said was a gross runaround of the budget rules.

I want to read, Mr. Chairman, from the report from the Budget Committee last year that said that abuse of the OCO cap adjustment is a backdoor loophole that undermines the integrity of the budget process.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman must confine his remarks to the point of order.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Well, Mr. Chairman, I want to point out that the Budget Committee itself has indicated that this violates the budget process.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Maryland must confine his remarks to the point of order.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. So it is hard to understand how this could be a violation of the point of order if the Budget Committee says that what we are doing violates the budget process or undermines the budget process.

The Acting CHAIR. Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order?

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. MULVANEY. Mr. Chairman, I have a parliamentary inquiry as to the point of order.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman may state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. MULVANEY. Is the point of order that we have not yet reached the appropriate time for making this particular amendment?

The Acting CHAIR. The point of order has been stated. The Chair has not yet ruled.

Mr. MULVANEY. Would the gentleman from Pennsylvania restate the point?

Mr. DENT. The point of order is that we are not at the appropriate point in the bill for this amendment to be considered.

Mr. MULVANEY. Mr. Chairman, my understanding is that we are on page 62. That is the page I think on which title IV is printed. My amendment does nothing more than strikes all of title IV. So it seems like this is wholly the appropriate time to deal with that particular amendment and, in fact, may be out of order if I don't offer it right now.

The Acting CHAIR. The Chair is prepared to rule.

The amendment strikes title IV. Only the first paragraph of title IV is pending.

It is not in order to amend portions of the bill not yet read for amendment.

The point of order is sustained.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRIES

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chairman, parliamentary inquiry, just so I understand the ruling.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Maryland may state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chairman, as I understood the ruling, because the amendment strikes all of this section, as opposed to the portion of the section we are currently on, it is being ruled out of order. Is that correct?

The Acting CHAIR. Only one paragraph is currently pending, and the amendment sought to strike the entire title.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Parliamentary inquiry: Is there going to be a point in time when that entire section is pending?

The Acting CHAIR. Only the first paragraph of title IV is pending.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chairman, I understand that the meaning of ''is'' is ''is.'' I understand that we are on the first paragraph.

Parliamentary inquiry: Is there going to be a point in time when the entire section is pending, such that this amendment would then be considered in order since the amendment is to strike the entire section?

The Acting CHAIR. The bill is being read paragraph by paragraph.

Mr. MULVANEY. Parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Chairman.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman may state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. MULVANEY. Is the ruling without prejudice as to my ability to offer the amendment at a later time?

The Acting CHAIR. The paragraph that has been read is open for amendment at this time.

Mr. MULVANEY. I respect that, Mr. Chairman. I don't believe that responds to my parliamentary inquiry.

Is the Chair's ruling with or without prejudice as to my ability to bring the same amendment at a later time?

The Acting CHAIR. The Chair cannot give an advisory opinion on a future amendment.

Mr. MULVANEY. I respect that, Mr. Chairman. I am not asking the Chair for an advisory opinion. I am asking the Chair to clarify the ruling the Chair has already made. Is it with or without prejudice?

The Acting CHAIR. The Chair has ruled and is ready for other business.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the pending paragraph.

The Acting CHAIR. Does the gentleman seek to offer an amendment?

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I ask unanimous consent to offer an amendment at this point in time to strike the pending paragraph.

Mr. DENT. I object.

The Acting CHAIR. If the gentleman would send his amendment to the desk.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. MULVANEY. Parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Chairman.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman may state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. MULVANEY. Again, I am new at this. I understand that we are sort of working our way through this.

Here is my question: If this was the inappropriate time for me to bring this amendment, why was I summoned to the podium?

The Acting CHAIR. The Chair was inquiring as to the purpose the gentleman was seeking recognition.

Mr. MULVANEY. Further parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Chairman.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman may state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. MULVANEY. My amendment was read.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. VAN HOLLEN

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Strike the pending paragraph.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Maryland and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to offer this amendment with my colleague, Mr. MULVANEY. And now that we have gotten beyond the sort of procedural objections, let's go to the substance of this.

This is the first appropriations bill that we have on the floor that raises the question about the budgets that were passed in both the House and the Senate. As I think our colleagues know well by this point, both those budgets engage in an incredible accounting scam with respect to how we fund the Department of Defense and how we fund our military operations.

For years, we have distinguished between the moneys that we spend on our ongoing defense programs, called the base budget, and the moneys set aside in the war account, the so-called overseas contingency account funds.

What has happened here is that the President, on the advice of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and our military leadership, has requested the amount that is necessary to address our overseas contingency operations. But instead of abiding by that request and what was necessary, the Republican budget does this end-run and ends up using our overseas contingency account as a slush fund for funds that have been in the base defense budget.

As I was indicating earlier, Mr. Chairman, this accounting scam, the sleight of hand, was something that the Republican Budget Committee just last year strongly objected to and indicated that it violated the budget process.

I am going to read another portion of the Republican Budget Committee report from last year on this issue where it says the Budget Committee will exercise its oversight responsibilities with respect to the use of the OCO, the overseas contingency account, designation in the budget process, and it will oppose increases above the level the administration and our military commanders say are necessary to carry out operations. And then it goes on, because those are not war related.

So what this House is doing now is engaging in this incredible sleight of hand, and it is only one big problem in the budget before us, along with many other problems.

But on this point, I would like to now yield to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. MULVANEY) if he would like to say a word on this amendment.

Mr. MULVANEY. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Chair, I will repeat what I said earlier on the amendment that was ruled out of order. The BCA is the law. We agreed that it is. I didn't vote for it. By the way, I didn't like it very much and was one of the few of my party who did not vote for it. But it is the law passed in the House, passed by the Senate, and signed by the President.

We can change it. We absolutely can change it if we want to. And if that is the will of this body, then let's do it. But let's do it by changing the Budget Control Act. Let's not go around the BCA. Let's not use a back door. Let's not use a slush fund, something that is off-budget.

I hope my friends in the private sector understand the severity of it at this point. We have spending here that is off-budget that doesn't count towards the budget. And if we can use it for this, what else can we use it for? We are using it now for bases in Poland, Bahrain, Niger, Djibouti, and Oman, specifically not war related; yet it is in the war budget.

If we can use it for this, what is to stop us from using it for anything? If the law is going to have any meaning, let's respect it. And if we want to change it, let's change it. But let's be forthright about it.

Bring a bill to the floor to change the Budget Control Act and make the arguments for why we should do that. Let's not be disingenuous. Let's not be deceptive. Let's not be mischievous with the budget.

If we really think it is necessary for the defense of this Nation to spend $532 million on base improvements in these overseas countries, then have folks come to the floor and tell us why. Let's not slip a line into the MILCON-VA budget and just say, Well, everybody always votes for VA anyway. Who can vote against the vets? Who can vote against MILCON? Let's put it in there. Nobody will notice it.

That is how we get $18 trillion in debt.

Mr. Chairman, I support the amendment. In fact, I ask unanimous consent to be added as a cosponsor of Mr. VAN HOLLEN's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The amendment may not have cosponsors.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent, since the original amendment was offered by Mr. MULVANEY, to make this the Mulvaney amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The amendment may not have a cosponsor.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I am asking unanimous consent to make the main sponsor Mr. MULVANEY.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman's request cannot be entertained.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chairman, I am asking unanimous consent.

The Acting CHAIR. Is the gentleman seeking to withdraw the amendment?

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I am willing to withdraw the amendment but only on the understanding—parliamentary inquiry—if I withdraw it and substitute the same amendment in the name of Mr. MULVANEY, can I do that?

The Acting CHAIR. Any Member may offer an amendment.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, let's just keep it. This will be known as the Van Hollen-Mulvaney amendment.

I thank the Chair.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman's time has expired.

□ 1730

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the Van Hollen-Mulvaney amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Pennsylvania is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, I just want to say that there has been precedent to use OCO money on similar projects for similar purposes in previous years. Specifically, the Bahrain portion that is going to the U.S. Navy, there is a pier replacement, ship maintenance support facility. We used OCO funds in fiscal years '11, '12, and '13 for similar purposes then.

I should also note, too, that if we were to strike the OCO funding from this bill, the missile defense in Poland, the Aegis missile defense complex, would also be affected. Again, we had used OCO money for similar purposes in fiscal year '15.

I would argue that there is precedent for using OCO funds for the purposes contained in this bill. It is appropriate. I do not agree with the characterization that it is a scam, but it is used as precedent.

I would urge rejection of this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Maryland will be postponed.

Mr. MULVANEY. I have an amendment at the desk to strike the second paragraph of title IV.

The Acting CHAIR. The reading will first progress to that next paragraph.

The Clerk will read the next paragraph.

The Clerk read as follows:

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, AIR FORCE

For an additional amount for ''Military Construction, Air Force'' $75,000,000 to remain available until September 30, 2020, for

projects outside of the United States: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress for Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism pursuant to section 215(b)(2)(A)(ii) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. MULVANEY

Mr. MULVANEY. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk. I am moving to strike the second paragraph of title IV.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Strike pg. 62, line 15–22.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from South Carolina and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from South Carolina.

Mr. MULVANEY. Mr. Chairman, unless Mr. VAN HOLLEN has anything to add, I believe the same arguments that we just made on his previous amendment stand for this one, and I reserve the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. Does any Member seek time in opposition?

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MULVANEY. Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN).

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chairman, I would just observe, in response to the distinguished gentleman from Pennsylvania on the Appropriations Committee, that our military leadership has said that the funds that are requested for this purpose under OCO are not OCO funds, that they are not war-related funds. That is coming from the Department of Defense. That is coming from the folks who put together the budgets for the Department of Defense.

So to just claim that somehow these expenditures, which have been described by Mr. MULVANEY, are now somehow part of the war effort as opposed to the ongoing defense budget is to say to the military leadership that they don't understand how their budgets work. I think they do understand how their budgets work. We are trying to make sure that we protect the integrity of the process so that people can't be using the war account as a slush fund, which is exactly what this measure does.

Mr. MULVANEY. Mr. Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, I oppose this amendment. This amendment essentially would strike the OCO funds that would be provided to the Air Force, specifically in Oman for the airlift apron. I want to point out that the President of the United States requested funding for this same project under OCO in fiscal year 2011 for the airlift ramp. I am looking at the map actually of the work. It is on the same site.

What I am saying is OCO has been used for this at the request of the President in fiscal year '11. We are talking about using it on the same site for the same purpose. So, again, I would argue that the airlift apron in Oman is part of a facility that is very much part of our counterterrorism operations in that part of the world.

So again, I would urge rejection of this amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MULVANEY. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. MULVANEY).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. MULVANEY. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from South Carolina will be postponed.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, DEFENSE-WIDE

For an additional amount for ''Military Construction, Defense-Wide'', $212,996,000 to remain available until September 30, 2020, for projects outside of the United States: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress for Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(ii) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. MULVANEY

Mr. MULVANEY. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Strike p. 62 line 23 thru page 63 line 6.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from South Carolina and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from South Carolina.

Mr. MULVANEY. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Pennsylvania is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, as I understand this amendment, this would essentially eliminate OCO funding for our operation in Djibouti where we have infrastructure for fuel storage and distribution facilities.

Again, OCO funds were used for similar purposes in Djibouti in fiscal years '12 and '13 through OCO, I believe at the request of the President at the time. Again, Djibouti is a key facility for us strategically and one that is being used in our fight in the global war on terror. It is obviously very close to Somalia, a hotbed of Islamist extremism, as well as close to Yemen, where there is so much hostile action.

So, again, I would urge we reject this amendment because it will negatively impact our ability to conduct the global war on terror at a facility right in that part of the world. And again, where precedent has been set, like in these other situations, precedent has been set for using OCO funds. We are doing it again this year, and I think it is appropriate.

I urge rejection of the amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MULVANEY. Mr. Chairman, I would like to read a portion of the language we are seeking to strike. It says: ''For an additional amount for 'Military Construction Defense-Wide', $212,996,000 to remain available until September 30, 2020.''

So not only are we looking to spend the money today, we are looking to have the right to spend this money whenever we want over the next 5 years. I don't know of any other part of the budget where we do that.

If this is not a slush fund, Mr. Chairman, I don't know what it is. It was set up by a previous administration—an administration, by the way, of my party—and has been decried by Members of my party as being a slush fund. In fact, I think JOHN MCCAIN called it a slush fund, for goodness' sake. I believe Senator CORKER called it the same thing. This is one of the reasons. We have no idea why we are spending this money. It is available until 2020.

This is a great opportunity, Mr. Chairman, to say no. The money in the overseas contingency operation is there to support the troops who are overseas fighting a war. It is there to fight the global war on terror. It is not there for a slush fund for whatever bases we happen to think are convenient at the time and for which we can't find enough money under the base budget for that.

I hope we support not only Mr. VAN HOLLEN's first amendment, but my two subsequent amendments.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, I would just like to respond to my friend from South Carolina. I do understand how construction is done.

I do want to point out that many of these projects are not all funded in one single fiscal year, but over a period of years, both domestically and internationally, as is the case here.

So, again, I would rise in opposition to the amendment and urge its rejection.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. MULVANEY).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. MULVANEY. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from South Carolina will be postponed.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read the following:

TITLE V

GENERAL PROVISIONS

SEC. 501. No part of any appropriation contained in this Act shall remain available for obligation beyond the current fiscal year unless expressly so provided herein.

SEC. 502. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used for any program, project, or activity, when it is made known to the Federal entity or official to which the funds are made available that the program, project, or activity is not in compliance with any Federal law relating to risk assessment, the protection of private property rights, or unfunded mandates.

SEC. 503. All departments and agencies funded under this Act are encouraged, within the limits of the existing statutory authorities and funding, to expand their use of ''E-Commerce'' technologies and procedures in the conduct of their business practices and public service activities.

SEC. 504. Unless stated otherwise, all reports and notifications required by this Act shall be submitted to the Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.

SEC. 505. None of the funds made available in this Act may be transferred to any department, agency, or instrumentality of the United States Government except pursuant to a transfer made by, or transfer authority provided in, this or any other appropriations Act.

SEC. 506. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used for a project or program named for an individual serving as a Member, Delegate, or Resident Commissioner of the United States House of Representatives.

SEC. 507. (a) Any agency receiving funds made available in this Act, shall, subject to subsections (b) and (c), post on the public Web site of that agency any report required to be submitted by the Congress in this or any other Act, upon the determination by the head of the agency that it shall serve the national interest.

(b) Subsection (a) shall not apply to a report if—

(1) the public posting of the report compromises national security; or

(2) the report contains confidential or proprietary information.

(c) The head of the agency posting such report shall do so only after such report has been made available to the requesting Committee or Committees of Congress for no less than 45 days.

SEC. 508. (a) None of the funds made available in this Act may be used to maintain or establish a computer network unless such network blocks the viewing, downloading, and exchanging of pornography.

(b) Nothing in subsection (a) shall limit the use of funds necessary for any Federal, State, tribal, or local law enforcement agency or any other entity carrying out criminal investigations, prosecution, or adjudication activities.

SEC. 509. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used by an agency of the executive branch to pay for first-class travel by an employee of the agency in contravention of sections 301–10.122 through 301–10.124 of title 41, Code of Federal Regulations.

SEC. 510. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used to execute a contract for goods or services, including construction services, where the contractor has not complied with Executive Order No. 12989.

SEC. 511. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used by the Department of Defense or the Department of Veterans Affairs to lease or purchase new light duty vehicles for any executive fleet, or for an agency's fleet inventory, except in accordance with Presidential Memorandum—Federal Fleet Performance, dated May 24, 2011.

SEC. 512. (a) IN GENERAL.—None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available to the Department of Defense in this Act may be used to construct, renovate, or expand any facility in the United States, its territories, or possessions to house any individual detained at United States Naval Station, Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, for the purposes of detention or imprisonment in the custody or under the control of the Department of Defense.

(b) The prohibition in subsection (a) shall not apply to any modification of facilities at United States Naval Station, Guantánamo Bay, Cuba.

(c) An individual described in this subsection is any individual who, as of June 24, 2009, is located at United States Naval Station, Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, and who—

(1) is not a citizen of the United States or a member of the Armed Forces of the United States; and

(2) is—

(A) in the custody or under the effective control of the Department of Defense; or

(B) otherwise under detention at United States Naval Station, Guantánamo Bay, Cuba.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. NADLER

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Strike section 512.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from New York and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, this amendment would strike section 512 of the bill, which prohibits the use of funds to construct or expand any facility in the United States to house any individual detained at the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

□ 1745

Simply put, this section is designed to prevent the closure of Guantanamo.

Mr. Chairman, we are still holding 122 people at Guantanamo, 57 of whom have been cleared for release. These people have been found guilty of nothing, are believed to be guilty of nothing, and have been judged not to pose any danger. Nonetheless, they are not released. By what claim of right do we continue to imprison them?

As for the detainees who have not been cleared for release, this bill is designed to ensure that we will continue to hold them at Guantanamo indefinitely. We don't know whether these people are enemy soldiers or not or are guilty of anything or not. Some of them may be, and some of them probably are not. Those facts must be determined in a fair proceeding of some sort, but, at Guantanamo, there are no proceedings. The military tribunal process at Guantanamo has been at a complete standstill for years, and we cannot hold civilian trials at Guantanamo, so we are holding people for no purpose with no proceedings, no hearings, no opportunity to determine their guilt or innocence, and we are holding them, essentially, forever.

I recall a briefing last year at which Representative and now-Senator COTTON said that these people had been determined to be guilty by Congress. Aside from the fact that Congress has not determined anybody to be guilty and aside from the fact, if Congress tried to determine someone to be guilty of a crime or of anything, that it would be a violation of the bill of attainder section of the Congress, it is simply not true. These people have been determined to be guilty of nothing, and they deserve, like anybody else, to have a day in court. How long will we let this shameful episode in American history continue?

To overcome this challenge to one of the founding principles of the United States, which is that no person may be deprived of liberty without due process of law and, certainly, may not be deprived of liberty indefinitely without due process of law, we must close the detention facility at Guantanamo now so that they can be properly charged and tried in a Federal court. This will afford the detainees no additional constitutional rights. The Supreme Court has already ruled that detainees at Guantanamo have the same constitutional rights as they would if they were to be brought to the United States.

The government should transfer to Federal court any detainee against whom it has evidence. The Federal courts, in contrast to the military tribunals, have an excellent record in prosecuting and convicting terrorists. Anyone not charged should either be classified as a ''prisoner of war'' and treated as such or should be released back to his home country or elsewhere if that prevents a problem to his life or safety. This is not a radical suggestion. It has been our tradition for the entire history of our country and has been our unbroken legal practice until now.

The President can and should without delay authorize the Secretary of Defense to use existing certification and waiver procedures to repatriate and resettle abroad all prisoners who have been cleared for release, and he should arrange trial in the United States for all prisoners who are not cleared for release.

We must close this facility. We must try and convict and sentence the people who are guilty of acts of terrorism or aggression against the United States or, in accord with our moral and constitutional principles, release those who are not guilty of offenses against the United States. Only so can we restore our national honor. This amendment is necessary to start this process

because without our bringing some of these prisoners to the United States for trial, we cannot try them. I urge all of my colleagues to support this amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Pennsylvania is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, section 512 has been included in the MILCON-VA bill for several years, and it is part of the overall policy discussion involving Guantanamo Bay. Identical language is also carried in the 2015 appropriations bill. Again, I respectfully request that the we reject this amendment.

I would also add that, at Guantanamo Bay, we have about 120 prisoners there. Among those who are at that facility are Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the mastermind of the 9/11 attacks. I believe he is the man who also confessed that he decapitated Dan Pearl, the Wall Street Journal reporter. He was gruesomely executed by Khalid Sheikh Mohammed. He is a high-value detainee, and there are other high-value detainees there. Many of the prisoners down in Guantanamo are Yemeni, but we certainly can't send them back to Yemen. It is also clear to me that many of these prisoners are very difficult to try and too dangerous to release, so I urge opposition to this amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Chairman, I note in his opposing this amendment that the gentleman simply said it is part of a larger policy discussion about Guantanamo. He is correct. He said that there is identical language in other bills. He is correct. He said that we should remove that language from the other bills, and he points out that Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and other high-value prisoners are at Guantanamo. He is correct.

We are to bring them to the United States. We are to try them and convict them and either sentence them to death or to life in prison without parole or whatever. That is our tradition. We don't simply declare someone is a bad guy and hold him forever without a trial. Our Federal courts in the United States have an excellent record of trying and convicting people accused of terrorism. In the military tribunals at Guantanamo, they can't even run a trial. It has come to a complete standstill.

It is really missing the point to say that there are some very bad people at Guantanamo. Yes, there are. There are also some perfectly innocent people at Guantanamo. Those people ought to be released. The people who we think are guilty of something should be charged and tried. To simply say that someone is not going to be charged and tried but be held for life imprisonment without a trial is not what this country is about.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the amendment.

I believe we need to set the conditions for the closure of the detention facility at Guantanamo. It is in the United States national security interests to do so. Guantanamo has become a rallying cry. It serves as a recruitment tool for terrorists, and it increases the will of our enemies to fight while decreasing the will of others to work with America.

Part of the rationale for establishing Guantanamo in the first place was the misplaced idea that the facility would be beyond the law—a proposition rejected by the United States Supreme Court. As a result, the continued operation of this facility creates the impression in the eyes of our allies and our enemies alike that the United States selectively observes the rule of law.

There is no reason that we should impose upon ourselves the legal and moral problems arising from the prospect of indefinite detentions at Guantanamo. Working through civil courts since 9/11, hundreds of individuals have been convicted of terrorism or of terrorism-related offenses and are now serving long sentences in Federal prison. Not one has ever escaped custody.

For these reasons, I believe that the time is past due to take the actions needed to initiate the closure of the detention facility at Guantanamo.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, I would also like to remind the Members that Bowe Bergdahl was exchanged for five detainees at GTMO who have been sent elsewhere outside the United States and outside of Guantanamo. It is hard to keep eyes on these folks who have been released in exchange for Bowe Bergdahl, who has actually been charged with desertion.

I also want to remind Members that, a few years ago, former Mayor Bloomberg of New York City agreed to allow certain detainees to be brought back to New York City for trial. Then, apparently, the mayor must have spoken to his police commissioner, who thought that that was a really bad idea because it would have choked off much of southern Manhattan, and it would have been extraordinarily expensive. It would have been a mistake.

Again, I urge that we reject this amendment and maintain the facility at Guantanamo Bay.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New York will be postponed.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

SPENDING REDUCTION ACCOUNT

SEC. 513. The amount by which the applicable allocation of new budget authority made by the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives under section 302(b) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 exceeds the amount of proposed new budget authority is $0.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. BOUSTANY

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. (1) None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to pay any bonus or monetary award under chapter 45 or 53 of title 5, United States Code, to an employee of the Chief Business Office of the Department of Veterans Affairs who is responsible for processing emergency medical care claims until the percentage of emergency medical care claims processed within 30 days reaches 90 percent.

(2) The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit quarterly data to Congress on the following:

(A) The total number of emergency medical claims and the total number of billed charges for such claims.

(B) The total number of emergency medical claims and billed charges for such claims pending for more than 30 days.

(C) The number of veterans with unpaid claims under consideration in each Veterans Integrated Service Network.

(D) The percent of clean claims processed within 30 days.

Mr. DENT (during the reading). Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading of the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order on the gentleman's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. A point of order is reserved.

Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Louisiana and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana.

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Chairman, our veterans deserve better than long, drawn-out claims processes that inhibit access to high-quality care. This is just unacceptable.

Since the passage of last year's landmark VA reform legislation, the VA has demonstrated disturbingly little progress on addressing the emergency medical care claims processing backlog that is hurting our veterans.

I requested data earlier this year on the VA's progress in fiscal year 2015. I was shocked to find that, as of late March of this year, only 14 percent of the claims originating from VISN 16, including my home State of Louisiana, have been processed within 30 days.

That is abysmal. No employee at any business in Louisiana or anywhere around this country would be given a bonus with such a poor success rate.

Mr. Chairman, it is high time the VA starts demanding a higher standard from its employees. My amendment is fairly simple. It prevents this agency from granting bonuses to its emergency medical care claims processing staff until the percentage of emergency medical care claims processed within 30 days reaches 90 percent.

This is just unacceptable behavior. Time and time again, we have asked the VA and have worked and legislated to get them to clean up their act. Our veterans are suffering, and this is no way to treat them. That is why I have offered this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I understand the gentleman has a point of order raised against the amendment because it violates the House rules of legislating on an appropriations bill. I just feel compelled to speak out because of the plight of our veterans, who are at the mercy of an incompetent agency, and it has got to change.

I hope that all Members of this House on both sides of the aisle will work so that we clean up this mess and treat our veterans the way they should be treated because they have gone out and fought for us.

Mr. Chairman, with respect to my friend, the chairman of the subcommittee, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw my amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Louisiana?

There was no objection.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON LEE

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. The amounts otherwise provided by this Act are revised by reducing the amount made available for ''Department of Veterans Affairs—Departmental Administration—Information Technology Services'' (and the amount specified under such heading for operations and maintenance), and by increasing the amount made available for ''Veterans Health Administration—Medical Services'', by $2,000,000.

Ms. JACKSON LEE (during the reading). Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be considered as read.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Texas?

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentlewoman from Texas and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, my first task is to thank the ranking member, Mr. BISHOP, and the chairman of the subcommittee, Mr. DENT, both of whom I have worked with, and I consider them champions of veterans and champions of the legislation that we have before us in terms of the needs that are there.

□ 1800

However, there are many needs that should be addressed, Mr. Chairman. I hold in my hand a list of veterans who have fallen upon hard times, one in particular who has three grown daughters who are serving in the military. She, herself, served in the Navy for 5 years, had a divorce, and really needed to have housing assistance and medical care, but her options were insufficient.

My amendment is a simple amendment to, again, remind us of the importance of these individuals who still suffer. The Jackson Lee amendment makes a modest but important improvement to the bill by increasing the amount of funding for Supportive Services for Veteran Families account by $2 million, offset by a reduction in the same amount to the $4 billion allocated to the VA's information technology systems.

Today in our country, there are approximately 107,000 veterans, male and female, who are homeless on any given night, and perhaps twice as many—200,000—experience homelessness at some point during the course of the year.

All you need do, Mr. Chairman, is go home to your district and be able to engage with your veterans associations and your own constituents, and you will find that they will come up to you because they are homeless.

The VA Supportive Services for Veteran Families Program helps veterans and their families who may have fallen on hard times or hit a rough patch in life and need help from the country they selflessly risked their life to defend.

The veterans don't have to remind us that we owe them an obligation of support. They don't have to say it. We know that. When they put on the uniform, they ask no questions; they are selfless.

The SSVF program ensures that eligible veteran families receive the outreach, case management, and assistance in obtaining veterans and other benefits. Many are suffering from PTSD or traumatic brain injury. They have lived, and we are grateful for it. Many Vietnam vets are just being diagnosed. This program is crucial to helping them get an extra step in life.

I would ask my colleagues to be reminded of the kinds of veterans whom we see every day who are willing to put on that uniform and sacrifice without asking one single question. I ask my colleagues to support the Jackson Lee amendment.

Mr. Chair, the Jackson Lee amendment will enable this vital program to serve more veteran families in need of help by providing a bit more funding for grants to provide nonprofit private organizations and consumer cooperatives the ability to provide supportive services.

The main point is that there is a need, and I would only say that we need to follow the words of a veteran who said, after getting services, ''I have a home, and I enjoy being inside.''

Let's give more of our veterans and veteran families that very important quote, ''I have a home, and I enjoy being inside.''

I ask my colleagues to support the Jackson Lee amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chair, before I begin, let me express my appreciation and thanks to my good friends, Chairman DENT and Ranking Member BISHOP, for their hard and constructive work in shepherding this legislation to the floor.

Chairman DENT and I worked together constructively for many years on the Homeland Security Committee and has always distinguished himself as one of the most bipartisan members of the House.

And Ranking Member BISHOP has for years been one of the ablest Members of this body; I thank them both for commitment to the important work of ensuring that our veterans receive the care and support they have earned from a grateful nation.

The Jackson Lee Amendment makes a modest but important improvement to the bill by increasing the amount of funding for the ''Supportive Services for Veterans' Families'' account by $2 million, offset by a reduction of the same amount to the $4 billion allocated to the VA's ''Information Technology Systems'' account.

Today, in our country, there are approximately 107,000 veterans (male and female) who are homeless on any given night.

And perhaps twice as many (200,000) experience homelessness at some point during the course of a year.

The VA's ''Supportive Services for Veterans' Families'' Program helps veterans, and their families, who may have fallen on hard times or hit a rough patch in life and need a little help from the country they selflessly risked their life to defend.

The Jackson Lee Amendment will enable this vital program to serve more veterans' families in need of help by providing a bit more funding for grants to private non-profit organizations and consumer cooperatives that provide supportive services to very low-income veteran families living in or transitioning to permanent housing.

The SSVF Program ensures that eligible veteran families receive the outreach, case management, and assistance in obtaining VA and other benefits.

These services may include health care, daily living, legal services, fiduciary and payee services, personal financial planning, child care, transportation, housing counseling.

The SSVF Program enables VA staff and local homeless service providers to work together to effectively address the unique challenges that make it difficult for some veterans and their families to remain stably housed.

Many homeless veterans, including in my own state of Texas, lack housing because they lost their job or could no longer afford rent; many suffer from an untreated mental illness that keeps them from working.

Every day the SSVF program makes a real difference in the lives of real people.

Veterans like the Air Force veteran who, hoping to utilize the skills he learned in the service, instead bounced from job to job after being discharged and found himself sleeping at night on the cold cement under a bridge in Chicago.

Through the Thresholds Veterans Project, funded through the SSVF, this hero received steady community service support and eventually was placed in his own studio apartment.

He now says, in his own words: I have a home. I enjoy bein' inside.''

Veterans like the one in Texas who because he lost his job at a manufacturing plant and was unable to pay the bills, was forced to seek shelter for himself and his family at a homeless shelter.

Fortunately, the homeless shelter was a SSVF grantee and was able to assist the veteran obtain employment and his family in securing affordable low-cost housing.

There are thousands of similar success stories made possible by the SSVF Program that I could share but all of them share a common theme: they involve veterans who served their country proudly, fell down on their luck, picked themselves back up, and found affordable and sustainable housing for their families because of the assistance and support made possible by the SSVF program.

Ensuring that veterans have a place of their own to call home is the very least we can do.

I urge my colleagues to support the Jackson Lee Amendment and commit ourselves to the hard but necessary work of ending veteran homelessness in America.

I urge my colleagues to support the Jackson Lee Amendment.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois). The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. JOLLY

Mr. JOLLY. I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to carry out the closure or transfer of the United States Naval Station, Guantánamo Bay, Cuba.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Florida and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. JOLLY. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This is a very simple measure. It simply prohibits the relinquishment, the closure, or the transfer of Naval Station Guantanamo Bay out of the possession of the United States.

In 1903, as a result of the Cuban-American treaty, the United States began to occupy Naval Station Guantanamo Bay for at least as long as necessary or in perpetuity for naval operations. The treaty stated that the U.S. shall exercise complete jurisdiction and control of the base, while also recognizing the sovereignty of Cuba.

Today, Naval Station Guantanamo is a front line for our regional security in the Caribbean. It supports our Navy logistical work; drug interdiction; DHS migrant operations; and, importantly, disaster and humanitarian relief, including responding to the 1980s and 1990s mass migration, as well as the 2010 Haiti earthquake response.

Very importantly is what this measure does not do. This measure does not touch the detention facility and the politics of the detention facility. This focuses solely on the national security implications of maintaining the Navy station 90 miles off the shores of Florida. Importantly, it is an issue that has been brought right now as a result of the President's decision to begin to normalize relations with Cuba.

Also, importantly, this doesn't take a position on normalizing relations with Cuba. In fact, you could make the argument that normalizing relations with Cuba actually enhances and improves and increases our national security because it allows us additional operational units and boots on the ground at our Navy station there, engaging with the locals, improving our intelligence, improving our ability to respond.

The moment the President began to offer normalized relations, the Castro regime demanded the return of Guantanamo. This is a matter of our national security to maintain it. You need not make this political.

Simply look at the advice and opinions of the previous three commanders of U.S. Southern Command. Current General John Kelly has called GTMO indispensable to the Departments of Defense, Homeland Security, and State.

The commander before him, Admiral Stavridis, said it is of immense strategic value. Prior to him, General Douglas Fraser, contemplating the eventual closure of the detention facility said, even absent a detention facility, the strategic capability provided by U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay remains essential for executing the national priorities of the United States.

Mr. Speaker, this is a matter of national security. We have a process for realigning and closing naval facilities. This legislation simply says, for purposes of national security, this amendment prohibits any transfer or closure of Naval Station Guantanamo.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. I claim the time in opposition, but I am not opposed to the gentleman's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I think sometimes people get confused about the role of Guantanamo Bay naval facility's mission. There is a joint task force on detainee operations, and there is the actual facility.

No one has ever floated the idea of closing the base and giving it back to Cuba, so when the detainee mission ends, which it will, we will still need to have this facility. It is the southernmost military facility of the Department.

I don't support detainee operations, but I do support the regular mission of the Guantanamo Bay naval facility, and therefore, I will not oppose the gentleman's amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOLLY. Mr. Chairman, I yield the time I have remaining to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. DENT), the chairman of the subcommittee.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to state, too, that the underlying legislation does not include any funds to close the naval station at Guantanamo Bay, a facility I have visited.

I also should point out, as the distinguished ranking member just stated, Mr. BISHOP, that the naval station is a key strategic location for SOUTHCOM, and I would support the gentleman's amendment.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. JOLLY. Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. JOLLY).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. BLUMENAUER

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to implement, administer, or enforce Veterans Health Administration directive 2011-004 (or directive of the same substance) with respect to the prohibition on ''VA providers from completing forms seeking recommendations or opinions regarding a Veteran's participation in a State marijuana program''.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chair, I reserve a point of order on the gentleman's amendment. I haven't seen the amendment yet.

The Acting CHAIR. A point of order is reserved.

Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Oregon and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chair, 36 States and the District of Columbia have passed laws that provide legal access to medical marijuana in some form, and over 1 million patients now use medical marijuana to treat conditions ranging from seizures, anxiety, chronic pain, nausea associated with chemotherapy, and post-traumatic stress at the recommendation of their physician.

Over 213 million people reside in those jurisdictions; yet, according to Directive 2011–004, the Department of Veterans Affairs prohibits its medical

providers from completing forms brought by their patients seeking recommendations or opinions regarding a veteran's participation in a State medical marijuana program.

The amendment I am offering ensures that no funds made available to the VA can be used to implement this prohibition. The amendment will not encourage doctors or patients to recommend or use medical marijuana. It would not authorize the possession or use of marijuana at VA facilities.

It would simply free up VA providers to have an honest conversation about treatment options and recommend medical marijuana in accordance with State law if they think it is appropriate. It would not force veterans to not work with their primary care provider.

I am joined in offering this bipartisan amendment by Congressman HECK from Nevada, Congressman ROHRABACHER, and a series of other Members, some of whom you will hear from.

Over 20 percent of the 2.8 million American veterans who served in Iraq and Afghanistan suffer from PTSD and depression. They should not be forced outside the VA system to seek a simple recommendation about a treatment that might help them manage these conditions.

I will say, while nobody has ever died from a marijuana overdose, we are watching veterans have prescriptions for opiates who suffer from PTSD, for example, more than others, and their suicide rate is high. There is real danger in not being able to provide balanced treatment.

Our VA physicians should not be denied their First Amendment right to have an honest conversation about options and offer a recommendation they think could bring relief and well-being to a patient. Our veterans should not be treated as second class citizens in the States that permit medical marijuana.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, I withdraw my reservation of a point of order.

The Acting CHAIR. The reservation of a point of order is withdrawn.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chair, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Pennsylvania is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, I do rise in opposition to my friend's amendment. We had a similar debate in the full committee just last week. The VA must comply with all Federal laws, including the Controlled Substances Act.

This act designates schedule I drugs, such as marijuana, as having no currently accepted medical use. There are criminal penalties associated with the production, distribution, and possession of these drugs.

The standing VA policy does not deny veterans who participate in State marijuana programs from also participating in VA substance abuse or clinical programs. It simply prohibits VA clinicians from completing forms for their participation in such State programs or for providing or paying for marijuana authorized by a State program.

Veterans are able to participate in State programs. They just cannot possess marijuana at VA facilities. Changing the VA directive does not change the DEA's interpretation of Federal law on marijuana.

DEA has advised VA that its doctors cannot issue anything that could be construed as a prescription or endorsement of medical marijuana, so the amendment won't change the situation for veterans unless the VA physicians are willing to risk prosecution.

At this point, again, I would have to urge opposition.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I support the amendment offered by Mr. BLUMENAUER.

Just recently, in Georgia, Governor Deal signed legislation that immediately legalized the use of medical marijuana to treat serious medical conditions. Georgia became the 36th State, plus Washington, D.C., to legalize marijuana extracts to treat diseases.

I believe that we should not limit the Veterans Health Administration in providing optimal pain care for our veterans. If medical marijuana is legal in the State, then the VA should be able to discuss that treatment option and allow the veteran to make his or her own choice.

I believe that the VA's published policy guidance related to the use of medical marijuana by veteran patients has become outdated. I believe supporting a veteran's right to use alternative methods to deal with pain is the right thing to do.

I support the amendment. I urge its adoption.

I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. FARR).

□ 1815

Mr. FARR. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I hope that you heard the amendment because it said nothing about the doctor's ability to issue a prescription for use of medical marijuana. This simply lifts a gag order.

Now, these doctors have taken an oath of office to do no harm. Their ability is to talk to patients. They can tell patients that there is medical marijuana available. They can also tell patients that you shouldn't try it, you shouldn't use it.

What you want is just an honest dialogue. You want to give doctors their professional capability to have a discussion with the veteran. That is all this bill does.

Our veterans are living in a civilian community. In 33 States, this is legal. When they walk in with admitted problems and they want medical attention, the doctor cannot have a thorough discussion with them.

That is all this amendment adds. It says, Let's let these doctors be like the civilian doctors in the same offices in the same States, only maybe those civilian doctors can issue prescriptions where the veteran doctor can't.

Because of the reasons that the chairman talked about of how this drug is listed, this is very limiting, so let's lift the gag order. We owe it to our veterans to give them complete information when they ask for it, even if it means discussing medical marijuana.

I ask for an ''aye'' vote.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Chair, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE).

Ms. LEE. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in very strong support of this bipartisan amendment, which I am very proud to cosponsor with my colleagues.

This would finally put an end to the misguided VA policy that keeps our veterans from receiving the medicine that they need. To date, 23 States, the District of Columbia, and Guam have passed legislation allowing legal access to medical marijuana.

What is more, similar amendments saying that the Federal Government should respect states' rights and the will of voters on this issue have passed the House with bipartisan support.

This amendment represents the will of more than 70 percent of voters who support patient access to medical marijuana and is supported across party lines.

Veterans should have the benefit of being able to know what the options are. So many of our veterans are suffering from PTSD and other medical problems, and possibly, this would help in terms of relieving their pain and providing for the quality of life that they so deserve.

This amendment would put an end to the policy that keeps our veterans from receiving the medicine, counseling, and care they so deserve, and I hope we have an ''aye'' vote on this.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. May I inquire of the chair how much time is remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Georgia has 1 minute remaining.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. I yield to the gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. TITUS).

Ms. TITUS. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I want to say, very simply, that we shortchange our veterans if we don't give them the opportunity to have every possible medical treatment that is out there.

We know that certain States have legalized medical marijuana. In those States, our veterans deserve to have that as on option. To shortchange them would just be unconscionable, and I urge a ''yes'' vote.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. May I inquire as to how much time is remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) has 2½ minutes remaining, and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. DENT) has 3½ minutes remaining.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER).

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Chairman, the question we are discussing is simply whether Veterans Affairs physicians can recommend the use of marijuana or not recommend the use of marijuana to their patients.

As Republicans, we supposedly believe in the doctor-patient relationship, but apparently, some of my colleagues believe that that relationship is not relevant when it comes to VA doctors and their patients, the patients who happen to be our Nation's great heroes who went off to defend us in war.

It is criminal that we send our men and women off to war, where their minds and bodies are broken, and then deny them the ability to obtain a medical recommendation from a legitimate VA doctor upon their return home.

Why is it we have faith in the medical qualifications of Congress to determine the best medical practices rather than those people who are doctors in the Department of Veterans Affairs?

I would submit that perhaps marijuana is a better option for some patients—and maybe not—but we should stop this heavy-handed, top-down approach and allow the Department of Veterans Affairs physicians and their patients to determine for themselves the best use and the best treatment that they would be able to have.

Let's respect these people and their rights. I thought we Republicans believed in the doctor-patient relationship. Either you do or you don't. If you vote this down, you don't believe in the doctor-patient relationship for our veterans, of all people.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, I understand my colleagues are very sincere in their attempt. I am sympathetic to at least listening to the arguments for medicinal marijuana, but this discussion must be driven by the science.

I would love to hear from the National Institutes of Health, Food and Drug Administration, and the medical community formally about their views on this issue prior to us legislating on this matter.

At this time, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland, Dr. HARRIS.

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Chairman, as a veteran and a physician and someone who has treated veterans, I appreciate the sacrifice our men and women in uniform have made and our duty to give them the best possible care.

That means care based on real science, not promise, not hope, not conjecture, not politics, not as part of an agenda, but real science.

The chairman says we should wait for good science and we should wait to hear from the experts. We don't need to wait. We have heard. Dr. Nora Volkow, the head of the National Institute on Drug Abuse at the NIH, says medical marijuana, in the current state of medical knowledge, is not a good idea.

There just isn't very good science behind what it works for and what it doesn't; so I agree, when good science is in hand, let's give doctors carte blanche to discuss that. That science isn't available.

Worse than that, Mr. Chairman, this bill does nothing to advance the knowledge of science on this issue because it doesn't say we are going to sign veterans up for research so they can help other veterans answer the question of whether or not it helps.

It doesn't do anything like that. It doesn't make it easier for them to enlist in research protocols to address the scientific questions. Now, the chairman of the subcommittee asked, Well, we should hear from the FDA; we should hear from DEA.

We hear from all of them. They say medical marijuana is not scientifically based at this time. I have offered this to the Members, but the author of the amendment and I have been to the NIH. He knows my interest in getting to the bottom of what works and what doesn't.

At this point in time, we are not doing our veterans a service. We could. If we asked to engage in more scientific research, we could do them a service. If this amendment, in fact, encouraged in any way, shape, or form further research on what works and what doesn't, we could be doing them a service.

Sadly enough, Mr. Chairman, it doesn't; and that is why I oppose this effort—not helping our veterans, but this specific effort.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, may I inquire as to how much time is remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. DENT) has 1 minute remaining. The gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) has 1 minute remaining.

Mr. DENT. At this time, I yield the balance of my time to the distinguished gentleman from Louisiana, Dr. FLEMING.

Mr. FLEMING. I thank my friend, the chairman, for yielding.

As a practicing physician and a veteran myself, the way we approach health care is not to just allow any healthcare provider to do whatever he or she wants to do at the time. That is simply not the way health care works.

Let's look specifically at the problem of PTSD, which is one of the worst problems that we are dealing with today among veterans.

What have we found just in the last year? Smoking pot increases psychotic episodes by a factor of two to four times normal. The conversion to schizophrenia, a permanent mental disorder, is enhanced by pot by a factor of two—double.

Why in the world would we give a drug that is addictive, that is prohibited under schedule I, that is not accepted for any specific mental disease or disorder and enhances psychosis and schizophrenia, why are we going to give that to our veterans, especially those with PTSD? That is just absolutely insane.

Mr. DENT. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. First, it isn't just PTSD that medical marijuana is used for. There is a whole host of other conditions that were available.

Second, the marijuana medical train has left the station. A million Americans have a legal right to use medical marijuana, and they do so. You want to treat veterans differently.

Third, medical marijuana is nowhere near as addictive as what is happening to our veterans right now. Veterans seen by agency doctors are dying from prescription drug overdoses nearly twice the national average.

Nobody dies from an overdose of marijuana; and the VA doctors prescribe significantly more opiates, which are highly addictive, to patients with PTSD and depression than other veterans, even though those people suffering those conditions are more at risk of overdose and suicide.

Get your facts straight. I am happy to do more research; I have work coming forward, but, in the meantime, don't treat these veterans as second class citizens.

If you want to be concerned, be concerned about the explosion of addictive drugs that are being prescribed to people who we should be giving more care.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Oregon will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. BABIN

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to carry out the Appraised Value Offer program of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Texas and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Chairman, I rise to offer an amendment to terminate the

VA's abused Appraised Value Offer Program so that these funds can be used to better serve the needs of our Nation's veterans, rather than VA bureaucrats.

The VA spent nearly $300,000 of taxpayer money to move a VA employee 140 miles, specifically from Washington, D.C., to Philadelphia. That is $300,000 that could have been used to care for numerous deserving veterans who have served this Nation in uniform, but instead was spent to move someone 140 miles.

At the request of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, the Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Inspector General is investigating this abuse, and here is what we have learned so far.

Under the VA's Appraised Value Offer Program, the VA paid more than $80,000 to one of its government employees and $211,000 to a Federal contractor that was tasked with selling that employee's home.

At a time when the VA is struggling to meet the medical needs of our veterans, it is unconscionable that the VA would waste $300,000 in taxpayer money to move someone 140 miles.

Unfortunately, this is just another disturbing example of the lack of transparency and accountability at the VA. The folks at the VA are already under scrutiny for their shocking failure to properly care for veterans, and now, to spend $300,000 on this is absolutely abusive. Clearly, the VA cannot be trusted to exercise common sense with this program, and it is time to end it.

As a military veteran and a father of a decorated Navy SEAL, I am deeply frustrated with the abuse and mismanagement at the VA. Our veterans must be the VA's first priority, not its bureaucrats.

I would like to thank House Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman JEFF MILLER for shedding light on this important issue and holding the VA accountable for failing to put veterans first.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment and to end this outrageous abuse within the Department of Veterans Affairs.

□ 1830

Mr. DENT. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BABIN. I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. DENT. I just wanted to state I do not object to the gentleman's amendment. He raised the Philadelphia issue. I am very much aware of it and certainly concerned about it, and I understand the purpose.

I also understand the purpose of the Appraised Value Offer Program, when a valued employee would otherwise stand to lose thousands in the sale of a house to move at the request of their employing agency. But sometimes the cost of the program seems a little excessive, in my view.

In conference, we may need to tweak the language to make sure that we aren't jeopardizing VA's efforts to move talented staff to areas where they are needed. But as I said, I do not object to the amendment.

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BABIN).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MS. ADAMS

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. (1) Subject to paragraphs (2) and (3), amounts made available under the ''General Operating Expenses, Veterans Benefits Administration'' account for fiscal year 2016 may be used by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide discretionary competitive grants for State and local governments to establish or expand technology systems that develop a coordinated network of private, public and nonprofit services and resources to better serve veterans and their family members. A State or local government awarded a grant under this section shall work with an entity that has experience working with comprehensive coordinated networks, protects privacy of veterans and their families, ensures the quality of providers, and has a metrics system to effectively measure success of the network.

(2) Amounts used as described in paragraph (1) may not result in a more than 10 percent aggregate decrease in the total amount made available by this Act for the ''General Operating Expenses, Veterans Benefits Administration'' account.

(3) Each grant made under paragraph (1) shall be subject to the approval of the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate.

Mr. DENT (during the reading). Mr. Chair, I reserve a point of order on the gentlewoman's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. A point of order is reserved.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk continued to read.

Ms. ADAMS (during the reading). Mr. Chair, I ask unanimous consent that we dispense with the reading.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentlewoman from North Carolina and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina.

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank Chairman DENT and Ranking Member BISHOP for allowing me to present my amendment.

Mr. Chair, I rise today to highlight the need for better access to resources and services for our veterans and military families.

The U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs and other Federal agencies are providing a vast array of services and resources that our heroes deserve, but the Federal Government alone is not able to address every challenge our servicemen and -women and their families are facing and will face in years to come. Many community providers and local governments are starting their own initiatives to assist veterans in applying for benefits with VA and other organizations.

For those 37,000 veterans living in the 12th Congressional District of North Carolina, it is important that community-based groups work collaboratively with local, State, and Federal Government service providers so that recipients know where all of these different benefits and resources are and how to access them.

Additionally, we need to make sure we are holding service providers accountable and that performance measures are in place.

My amendment encourages the VA to assist with establishing and expanding technology systems at the local and State level to create a more unified network of veteran services. These networks would include private, public, and nonprofit partners who are qualified to serve veterans and their families.

My amendment directs funding to a grant program that has not yet been authorized by law, and will be subject to a point of order.

I look forward to working with the House Veterans' Affairs Committee and with the Appropriations Committee to make this funding a reality for our community providers in the future.

The veterans in my district, in Mecklenburg, Cabarrus, Rowan, Davidson, Forsyth, and Guilford Counties, have noted that they have difficulties finding and accessing the services that are available to them and their families.

As more servicemen and -women come home from serving overseas, Congress must support innovation and local solutions to providing services for our Nation's veterans.

I thank the chairman and the ranking member for allowing me to present my amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. ROTHFUS

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to pay a performance award under section 5384 of title 5, United States Code.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Pennsylvania and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to stand with our Nation's veterans and their families. We owe these

brave individuals and their loved ones a debt that can never be repaid. When our Nation called, they answered. Our veterans served bravely in theaters around the world, kept us safe, and helped to spread American values and the freedoms that we hold dear.

Our veterans made unimaginable sacrifices to their health, to their well-being, and to their families. They fulfilled their commitment to our great Nation, and we must now uphold the commitments we made to them. It is for that reason that I rise in strong support of the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act under consideration today. It is also why this amendment is so important.

For the last 2 years, I have offered this amendment with the same simple message: VA senior executives need to take responsibility, fix the problems, and do their jobs. As public servants, these senior executives have a solemn obligation to ensure that veterans receive the respect, support, and care that they have earned.

But one only needs to take a quick survey of the tremendous investigative work that Chairman MILLER, Congressman MIKE COFFMAN, and the rest of my colleagues on the Veterans' Affairs Committee have been doing to see that, despite our efforts to reform and improve the agency culture at the VA, little to nothing has changed.

The VA is still failing veterans in Pennsylvania and across the country. Veterans still have difficulty accessing care, claims and appeals are still backlogged, whistleblowers are still being retaliated against, and reckless, wasteful spending has reached new levels.

For example, in my home State of Pennsylvania, the inspector general recently conducted an investigation at the Philadelphia regional office after receiving numerous complaints that there was data manipulation and that management was mistreating and retaliating against staff. The IG confirmed a number of these allegations and found tens of thousands of unanswered veteran inquiries.

Many of us are also familiar with the VA Hospital project in Aurora, Colorado. Over a decade ago, veterans in Denver were promised a new medical facility; yet, due to gross mismanagement, the project is well behind schedule and is now going to cost taxpayers more than $1 billion over budget.

To his credit, Secretary McDonald has publicly recognized many of his Department's failings, has spoken of increased transparency and accountability, and acknowledges that a wholesale culture change will be necessary. But this transformation has not yet occurred, and accountability is certainly still lacking.

To date, only a few of the senior executives who have been found responsible for the misconduct at the VA have actually been terminated. Some have been placed on extended paid leave, some reassigned, while others have been promoted.

In fiscal year 2013, the VA shelled out some $2.8 million in bonuses solely to its executives, an increase from the previous year, when the agency paid out $2.3 million.

I have always maintained that taxpayer-funded bonuses to senior executives of an organization with this sort of abysmal performance record are ridiculous. These dollars would be better spent providing our veterans with the first-rate service and care they rightly deserve.

That is why I am offering this amendment again this year, to direct that none of the funds appropriated may be used to pay for senior executive bonuses. The amendment was adopted the last 2 years and was included in bills that passed out of this Chamber with wide bipartisan support.

Congress certainly has an important role to play in reforming the VA. We need to continue our oversight activities and pass the sorts of reforms that are included in bills brought to the floor by Chairman MILLER and the Veterans' Affairs Committee. However, while we do that, we also need to ensure that not a single dime is spent on paying bonuses to senior executives until the problems at the VA are fixed.

I would like to thank Chairman MILLER and Congressmen FITZPATRICK, KELLY, TIPTON, CRAWFORD, and HUELSKAMP for their support.

I urge all of my other colleagues to stand with our Nation's veterans and support increased transparency.

Mr. DENT. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. ROTHFUS. I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. DENT. I just want to say I rise in support of the amendment.

A number of Members have offered amendments relating to the VA performance bonus awards. The gentleman's amendment is the most comprehensive, and I would encourage other Members to join with Mr. ROTHFUS rather than offer their own amendments.

We have all certainly been outraged by the behavior of some VA employees and the consequences for veterans' health and well-being resulting from incompetence, deceit, and deception. A ban on all senior executive service performance bonuses is a needed wake-up call to the VA bureaucracy which, as we have seen, needs to change its culture to ensure veterans' needs are their top priority.

I support the amendment.

Mr. ROTHFUS. I thank the chairman.

I yield my remaining time to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. CRAWFORD).

Mr. CRAWFORD. I will make it quick, Mr. Chairman.

I rise in support of this amendment. Just last year, the House voted unanimously to strip out funding for bonuses to Senior Executive Service employees at the VA because we were appalled by the heinous treatment of our veterans. And even though I opposed the legislation, later, both Chambers voted to reinstate many of these bonuses. Some of these executives are the very people who contributed to the plight of our VA hospitals.

We can't allow this negligent behavior to continue to impact the care of those who sacrificed so much on behalf of our Nation's security. In fact, no award should be reinstated until significant improvements are made toward transparency.

I want to make this point. In my home State of Arkansas, $8 million of Federal funds were used to build solar panels in a VA parking lot. But those panels have sat unplugged and inoperable for years, and now some of the panels are being torn down in order to make room for a parking garage that they knew in advance was coming, and yet they spent that money recklessly on another project. This is exactly the type of poor planning and behavior that shouldn't be rewarded, even though it has been.

This amendment makes sure that no Federal funds in the MILCON-VA Appropriations Act are used to pay performance awards to VA senior officials. I encourage its passage.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, we are all outraged with regard to the claims backlog and the incidences of poor quality health services and safety. The current claims backlog is unacceptable.

There is no question that the VA has struggled to successfully deliver one of its key missions: to provide timely ratings of disabilities. However, the VA has reduced the backlog by 44 percent.

Should we ignore that?

It is also clear that some VA health facilities have had serious issues that put the health, safety, and well-being of our veterans at risk. This, too, is unacceptable. Where these failures have occurred, it is hard to imagine how VA leaders of these facilities could have received high performance ratings and substantial bonuses.

However, this amendment will not provide any solution in the short-term and, in fact, may have long-term consequences and compound the very problems that it attempts to address. This amendment would make the VA a less attractive option than other agencies when it comes to recruiting and retaining quality executive leaders, and it will not have the very talent that it needs to solve the problems that it faces today, like the claims backlog and the healthcare deficiencies.

Furthermore, SES pay and bonuses are governed by title 5 of the United States Code and administered by the Office of Personnel Management. Any change to title 5 to address VA would then also apply to all other Federal agencies.

Attempting to do an across-the-board, one-size-fits-all fix will penalize those dedicated VA executives who are working hard and well to find solutions to the VA's problems. This is nonsense. I urge all Members to vote ''no.''

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON LEE

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act for benefits for homeless veterans and training and outreach programs may be used by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs in contravention of subchapter III of chapter 20 of title 38, United States Code.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentlewoman from Texas and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, I thank the chairman and ranking member of the subcommittee again for the work, and I raise again a picture of three ladies who look attractive in this picture.

Mr. Chairman, and colleagues, these are homeless vets. These are vets who bonded with each other in a homeless shelter.

The good news is that we have made progress on providing services for homeless vets. But I want to emphasize, through this amendment, that we will continue to raise and focus on the needs of homeless vets.

I offer the Jackson Lee amendment because I believe reducing and eliminating homelessness among veterans, those who risked their lives to protect our freedom, should also be one of the Nation's highest priorities. I would like this bill to have it as its highest priority.

□ 1845

Homelessness among the American veteran population is on the rise in the United States. We must be proactive in giving back to those who have given us so much.

Even though the administration has done an enormous job, has made great strides in bringing down the numbers of homeless vets, for those that they bring down, then, for some reason—whether it is the loss of a job or medical issues—vets are becoming homeless every day.

My amendment will help remind us of our obligation to provide our veterans the assistance needed to avoid homelessness, which includes adequately funding the program for Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing and, as well, to be able to ensure those centers are there for our veterans.

Today in our country, we have mentioned the numbers of veterans that exist: 100,000 veterans, male and female, are homeless; 200,000 experience homelessness. In my hometown of Houston, for example, between the years of 2010 and 2012, the number of homeless vets increased from 771 to 1,162.

I want to acknowledge the city of Houston that has worked on their Homeless Veterans Project; the George Hotel that has worked on the Homeless Veterans Project; many other veteran organizations; U.S.VETS, who has worked on the Homeless Veterans Project; and a grant that came some years ago to the Houston Housing Authority to work on the Homeless Veterans Project.

But this amendment is to, again, establish in this important legislation the idea that we must fight for our veterans, and we must ensure that every year, we take the temperature of the Nation's homeless vets, the temperature that says, if it is high, the numbers have been going up; if it is low, we are doing our job because the numbers of homeless vets are going down.

Let me thank the many shelters that deal with our vets, and particularly in my district, St. John's United Methodist Church for the work they have done, along with many other entities that believe that cutting the numbers of homeless vets should be the end.

I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. DENT. I just wanted to let the gentlelady know that we support the amendment, which was accepted last year. I know the gentlelady is offering it to reaffirm the congressional obligation to provide veterans the assistance they need to avoid homelessness.

I accept the amendment.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Reclaiming my time, let me thank the chairman. With that, I thank my colleagues and ask my colleagues to support the Jackson Lee amendment to end homelessness for our veterans here in America.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chair, none of the funds made available by this Act for the Department of Veteran Affairs—Benefits for Homeless Veterans and Training and Outreach Programs may be used in contravention of the title 38, Part II, Chapter 20, Subchapter II and III of the U.S. Code

This amendment will help ensure that the rate of homelessness among veterans in the United States does not increase.

I thank Subcommittee Chairman DENT and Ranking Member BISHOP for their hard work in shepherding this important legislation to the floor.

I offer the Jackson Lee Amendment because I believe reducing and eliminating homelessness among veterans, those who risked their lives to protect our freedom, should also be one of the nation's highest priorities.

Homelessness among the American veteran population is on the rise in the United States and we must be proactive in giving back to those who have given so much to us.

My amendment will help remind us of our obligation to provide our veterans the assistance needed to avoid homelessness, which includes adequately funding for programs Veterans Administration Supportive Housing VASH) that provide case-management services, adequate housing facilities, mental health support, and address other areas that contribute to veteran homelessness.

VASH is a jointly-administered permanent supportive housing program for disabled Veterans experiencing homelessness in which VA medical Centers provide referrals and case management while Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) administer the Section 8 housing vouchers.

Mr. Chair, our veterans deserve the best services available, and I believe that we could be doing much more for them.

Today, in our country, there are approximately 107,000 veterans (male and female) who are homeless on any given night. And perhaps twice as many (200,000) experience homelessness at some point during the course of a year.

Many other veterans are considered near homeless or at risk because of their poverty, lack of support from family and friends, and dismal living conditions in cheap hotels or in overcrowded or substandard housing.

While significant progress has been made, ending homelessness among veterans remains a big challenge.

In my hometown of Houston for example, between the years 2010 and 2012, the number of homeless veterans increased from 771 to 1,162.

We must remain vigilant and continue to fight for those who put on the uniform and fought for us.

Providing a home for veterans to come home to every night is the very least we can do.

Mr. Chair, programs like VASH have succeeded in changing lives. In 2012 alone, 35,905 veterans lived in the public housing provided by VASH.

I have seen the impact of such grants in my home state of Texas, and within my congressional district in Houston, and I am sure that this funding has positively impacted many communities across this country.

In Texas, there are committed groups in Houston, working to eradicate the issue of homelessness.

For example, the Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center has been involved in changing veterans' lives in a mighty way by providing Veterans and their families with access to affordable housing and medical services that will help them get back on their feet.

Mr. Chair, we cannot let this issue of homelessness continue.

I urge my colleagues to support the Jackson Lee Amendment and commit ourselves to the hard but necessary work of ending veteran homelessness in America.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 6 OFFERED BY MR. ROE OF TENNESSEE

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. Not more than $4,400,000 of the funds provided by this Act under the heading ''Department of Veterans Affairs—Departmental Administration—General Administration'' may be used for the Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs, and the amount otherwise provided under such heading is hereby reduced by $1,500,000.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Tennessee and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Chairman, I am offering this amendment that would cut $1.5 million from the budget of the VA's Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs, or OCLA. The OCLA is tasked with being the liaison between Congress and the VA. It is their job to provide information to Congress to help with casework and basic information.

What is unfortunate is that, even after the Committee on Veterans' Affairs' investigation into the largest scandal in VA history continues, it is still the perception that the VA will do everything in its power to withhold information to prevent negative news from being made public. Unfortunately, as many veterans can tell you, timeliness is not a word the VA understands or cares to learn.

In VA's budget submission, they assert: ''The mission of OCLA is to improve the lives of veterans and their families by advancing pro-veteran legislation and maintaining responsive and effective communications with Congress.''

As of April 24, the Committee on Veterans' Affairs had 78 outstanding requests for information with OCLA, and over half of these have been pending for over 60 days. On average, it is now taking the OCLA 69 days to respond to the committee's requests. There is one that dates back all the way to 2012. These numbers do not reflect responsive or effective communications. What is even more disappointing is that the requests have gone unanswered despite the fact that the OCLA's budget has gone up by 36 percent since fiscal year 2009.

I understand that other parts of the Federal Government, such as the Office of General Counsel, the Office of Management and Budget, and in some cases, the President's own staff may be delaying Congress' requests for months. However, OCLA is chartered with being Congress' connection to the rest of the VA, and, as such, they bear the burden of these untimely responses.

The current delays in getting information to Congress is not a new phenomenon, as the VA Committee has now held three separate hearings that have exposed VA's lack of transparency to Congress and showed that even when we do receive information we have requested, it is so old or so heavily redacted that it is basically useless.

These requests are critically important to Congress' role in providing meaningful oversight over the second-largest agency in the Federal Government. It is our duty to be a strong check on the executive branch. While Secretary McDonald is trying everything he can to change the culture at the VA, Congress must send a message that providing answers to our questions 69 days after we have requested it is simply unacceptable to us, unacceptable to the taxpayers, and, most importantly, it is unacceptable to the veterans. Passage of this amendment would send that message.

I thank Chairman DENT for his hard work on this bill.

Mr. DENT. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of the gentleman's amendment.

I certainly share Dr. ROE's frustration with the VA Congressional and Legislative Affairs Office stalling the delivery of important information Congress has requested to fulfill its oversight responsibilities.

Frankly, the only time I have seen that office act with lightning speed was in its delivery to all Members of the House last week in an inaccurate and critical portrayal of this appropriations bill.

So, again, I support your amendment.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. COSTELLO) to speak on the amendment.

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of Dr. ROE's amendment to address the lack of accountability and transparency at the Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs.

As the gentleman from Tennessee mentioned, OCLA is meant to serve as a bridge between Congress and the VA to help facilitate access to information that we, as a legislative body, request in our oversight role.

Since I have been in Congress and a member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee all of 4 months, it is clear that more transparency is needed.

Let me give you a clear example of a pending request, an unusually long unfulfilled request that is still outstanding. Back in December, as part of the committee's continued investigation into malfeasance at the Philadelphia RO, the committee requested copies of all EEO complaints and MSBP files that have been filed at this location since 2008.

Late last year, we were told that the files were in boxes and ready to be shipped to Washington, D.C., for our review. It is now 5 months later, and after numerous requests, we have only received a few of the files we requested. The inability of the VA to provide these documents is mind-boggling. I don't know how else to describe it.

The bottom line is: ignoring reasonable, relevant requests is unacceptable. There has to be accountability. This amendment does that. It does not impact or diminish in any way the treatment and care of our veterans. I urge adoption of Dr. ROE's amendment to demand accountability.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to adopt this amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. I claim the time in opposition.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Chair, I think that the concerns raised by the gentleman in offering the amendment are perhaps well taken from time to time. But I think this amendment is punitive. I think it is counterproductive. And I think it is going to make it much more difficult to get the results that the gentleman is seeking.

Because of that, I think that the amendment should be defeated. It is a bad amendment. And I think it would be bad for morale for the Department. And I think it would be bad generally for the public. I urge opposition and a ''no'' vote on this amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. POCAN

Mr. POCAN. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chair, I reserve a point of order on the gentleman's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. A point of order is reserved.

The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used to withhold any report of an Inspector General from any member of Congress in any case where the member of Congress has requested that such report be provided.

Mr. POCAN (during the reading). Mr. Chair, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be considered as read.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Wisconsin?

Mr. DENT. I object to the unanimous consent. I don't know which amendment we are talking about here.

The Acting CHAIR. Objection is heard.

The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk continued to read.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Wisconsin and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

Mr. POCAN. Mr. Chair, I thank Subcommittee Chairman DENT and Ranking Member BISHOP for all of their work on this bill.

This amendment is a simple amendment to make sure that Members of Congress have access to inspector general reports, should they request one.

We recently came across this issue when there was a bipartisan field hearing in Tomah, Wisconsin, regarding the Tomah VA facility.

The Veterans Affairs Office of Inspector General had a report regarding the overprescription of opiates resulting in multiple deaths in the area. And in this case, the VA Office of Inspector General completed a report that uncovered these practices, and they gave the recommendations to the local and regional manager. However, the report and these recommendations were never reported to the Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Bob McDonald, any congressional committees of jurisdiction, or the public, as the report was administratively closed. What is more, the initial report was requested by a Member of the House of Representatives, and the VA Office of Inspector General failed to even provide the completed report to the Member of Congress.

Ultimately, that Member of Congress had to do a Freedom of Information request, a very unusual request, in order to get a copy of that report. Instead, it was left largely to local facilities to implement the recommended changes without any oversight from the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs or from the Members of Congress who had specifically requested that report. It is all about sunlight. I think we function better if we could have that information. And we should make sure that those reports are available to every Member of Congress. This amendment would simply make sure that no funds can be expended in withholding a report, as this report was in the State of Wisconsin.

I yield back the balance of my time.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, I make a point of order against the amendment because it proposes to change existing law and constitutes legislation in an appropriations bill and, therefore, violates clause 2 of rule XXI.

The rule states in pertinent part:

''An amendment to a general appropriation bill shall not be in order if changing existing law.''

The amendment imposes additional duties.

Therefore, I would request a ruling from the Chair.

The Acting CHAIR. Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order?

If not, the Chair will rule.

As the Chair ruled on an analogous amendment on June 13, 2011, this amendment includes language requiring a new determination by the relevant executive branch official of the current membership of a body in the legislative branch. The amendment, therefore, constitutes legislation in violation of clause 2 of rule XXI.

The point of order is sustained, and the amendment is not in order.

□ 1900

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MRS. NOEM

Mrs. NOEM. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to end, suspend, or relocate hospital-based services with respect to a health care facility of the Department of Veterans Affairs that is—

(1) the subject of an environmental impact statement in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.);

(2) designated as a National Historic Landmark by the National Park Service; and

(3) located in a highly rural area.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentlewoman from South Dakota and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from South Dakota.

Mrs. NOEM. Mr. Chairman, the Department of Veterans Affairs is entrusted with the protection of a multitude of historic facilities. As I noted last year during debate on the VA's budget, the National Trust for Historic Preservation has found serious deficiencies in the manner in which the VA operates these facilities.

These VA facilities, especially the medical facilities, are more important than ever. We are seeing thousands of veterans returning home after fighting in conflicts abroad, many suffering from chronic service-related injuries. The last thing we want to do is to force these veterans to travel hundreds of miles to receive treatment, as is often the case in rural States like South Dakota.

The health of these historic medical facilities is directly connected to our veterans' health, and this amendment would prohibit the VA from curtailing healthcare services at the historic facilities located in rural areas.

I thank the chairman and his staff for all of their assistance on this amendment, and I urge everyone's support for this amendment as well.

Mr. DENT. Will the gentlewoman yield?

Mrs. NOEM. I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, I am aware the South Dakota delegation has been struggling with the VA's determination to move services out of historic facilities into a new geographic area. We had language in last year's bill forcing the VA to do a full analysis of the consequences of the facility moving.

I have no objection to including the amendment Representative NOEM is offering this year.

Mrs. NOEM. I thank the gentleman. I appreciate those words of support. It certainly is important to the veterans in our State and in many States across the country that often find it very difficult to travel to local VA facilities, but now, with the closure of some of these facilities, they would have to travel hundreds of miles.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from South Dakota (Mrs. NOEM).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. POCAN

Mr. POCAN. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following new section:

SEC. 5____. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used to enter into a contract with any person whose disclosures of a proceeding with a disposition listed in section 2313(c)(1) of title 41, United States Code, in the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System include the term ''Fair Labor Standards Act''.

Mr. POCAN (during the reading). Mr. Chair, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be considered read.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Wisconsin?

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Wisconsin and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

Mr. POCAN. Mr. Chairman, hopefully, the second time is the charm. This is an amendment on behalf of myself, Representative ELLISON, and the Congressional Progressive Caucus.

This amendment would bar taxpayer dollars from going to companies that have recent wage theft convictions or civil penalties reported in the government's contracting database.

No hard-working American should ever have to worry that their employer will refuse to pay his or her work, overtime, or take money out of their paycheck, especially if they work for a Federal contractor.

As a small-business owner who has had previous contracts, it is not a right, but an earned responsibility and privilege to have these contracts, and any employer that would do wage theft—which is considered to pay less than the minimum wage, to be shorting someone their hours, being forced to work off the clock, not being paid overtime, or not being paid at all—should not be able to get these Federal contracts.

A recent National Employment Law Project survey found that 21 percent of Federal contract workers were not paid overtime, and 11 percent have been forced to work off the clock. Eighteen Federal contractors were recipients of one of the largest 100 penalties issued

by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration of the Department of Labor between 2007 and 2012, and almost half of the total initial penalty dollars assessed for OSHA violations were against companies holding Federal contracts in 2012.

Overall, 49 Federal contractors responsible for large violations of Federal labor laws were cited for 1,776 separate violations of these laws and paid $196 million in penalties and assessments; yet, just in fiscal year 2012, these same companies were awarded $81 billion in taxpayer dollars.

The Federal Government cannot look the other way when Federal contractors take advantage of their employees. Those who violate the Fair Labor Standards Act deserve more than a slap on the wrist; they don't deserve to do business with the government anymore. Those contractors who engage in wage theft should not be rewarded with contracts to do business with the Federal Government.

This was included in last year's appropriation. We would appreciate consideration again in this year's appropriation, to make sure that we are protecting the workers for these Federal contractors.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Pennsylvania is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, I do have some concerns with this amendment. As I read it, it appears to be a ''one strike and you are out'' type amendment.

Mr. WALBERG. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. DENT. I yield to the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. WALBERG. I thank the chairman. I appreciate the concern that my colleague has on this issue. I know it is sincere. I think there is every one in this Chamber that has concerns that our laborers, our employees, and individual citizens be treated fairly and treated with respect, safety, and all of the rest by their employers.

Mr. Chairman, we all agree that bad actors who deny workers basic protections, including wage and overtime pay, shouldn't be rewarded with government contracts funded by taxpayer dollars. That is a given.

There is a suspension and disbarment process already in place under current law. If an employer has a history of bad behavior, Federal agencies know about it and have the authority to deny that employer Federal contracts. My question is: Has anyone suggested the current process isn't working? I don't believe so, Mr. Chairman.

Earlier this year, we held a joint subcommittee hearing, in fact, on this issue in relation to the President's executive order that functions to blacklist Federal contractors for alleged Federal and State labor law violations, including the FLSA.

The committee received a substantial load of evidence regarding the inherent flaws of the President's executive order, which, like this amendment, supersedes agencies' current authority to exclude problematic contractors, causing significant delays and disruption to the Federal procurement system.

There is agreement on both sides of the aisle that the FLSA is the cornerstone of workers' wage and hour protections, but in many ways, the regulations implementing the law are flawed and outdated.

For that reason, we have asked for consideration with the President, with the administration, the Department of Labor, both sides of the aisle, to look at reforming and fixing the Fair Labor Standards Act that has been in place an awful long time before present practices and doesn't fit with the 21st century workplace.

A report by the Government Accountability Office found that litigation stemming from FLSA claims continues to be a significant problem. These aren't all from bad actors, but in many cases, it comes—if not most cases—from an employer trying to keep up with present law, present functions, and present regulations that don't even fit with FLSA.

Mr. Chairman, I would ask my colleagues to reject this amendment. We have in place opportunities now that can and should be used. We even have instances where the Labor Department has violated, and, under this amendment that is being offered, they would be held at risk as well.

It is not an amendment that is needed; it is an amendment that will disrupt the process, and it is an amendment that will not move us forward and really make changes with FLSA that can and should be made.

I urge rejection.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POCAN. Mr. Chairman, I would just like to say I agree with the gentleman. I was at the hearing, and I heard the conversation that was there. The difference we had is that the hearing—I understand there was a disagreement with the executive order, but I would hate for us to confuse the disagreement with the executive order with the action that we can do here in Congress.

We had concluded this last year in the appropriations bill, the exact same language, to the best of my understanding; and I know that, since then, there has been an executive order that we are trying to have a conversation with the executive branch about.

However, it is not fair to the contractors who abide by the law that, when you bid against someone who doesn't abide by the law because they are shortchanging their employees, that makes it an unfair practice.

We think the bottom line is we should be protecting those good contractors; we should be protecting the employees who don't get their fair pay; and, despite any disagreement we might have with the executive branch, I think we should, at minimum, as a Congress, stand up for those workers and for those good contractors.

Mr. Chairman, I have been in business for 28 years as a small-business owner. I know that, when I bid on something, I want to know I am at a fair and even playing field.

We are not making a fair playing field when you have this number of people who are getting violations who already get Federal contracts and are really getting a slap on the hand, $196 million in penalties versus 81 billion in taxpayer dollars in contracts awarded.

Clearly, there is an imbalance, and that becomes a cost to business for a bad company, but you are punishing the good companies and the good workers by doing that.

I would certainly hope that we would support this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, I will try to keep it brief.

I do have concerns about the amendment. There is an agreement on both sides of the aisle that the FLSA is the cornerstone of workers' wage and hour protections, but in many ways, the regulations implementing the law are flawed and outdated. A report by the GAO found that litigation stemming from the FLSA claims continue to be a significant problem.

These aren't all bad actors. Often, they are employers trying to do the right thing, but are simply tripped up by an overly complex regulatory structure.

I would urge opposition, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. POCAN).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. POCAN. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 5 OFFERED BY MR. RATCLIFFE

Mr. RATCLIFFE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), add the following new section:

SEC. 5____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to propose, plan for, or execute a new or additional Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) round.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. RATCLIFFE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. RATCLIFFE. Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank Chairman DENT and Ranking Member BISHOP for their hard work on behalf of the 57,000 veterans in my district and on behalf of veterans and servicemembers across the country.

I am also grateful for the support of Congressmen MACARTHUR, HURD, and NORCROSS in offering this bipartisan amendment, one which would simply prohibit any funds made available in this act from being used to propose or execute a new or additional round of BRAC.

Mr. Chairman, I am honored to represent the Fourth Congressional District of Texas, home to the Red River Army Depot. The depot has supported the warfighters since 1941. Although the depot community has weathered many changes over the years, their commitment to mission remains the same. It is reflected on the placard placed in each of the vehicles there which reads, ''We build it as if our lives depend on it. Theirs do.''

The Red River Army Depot is a vital job creator in northeast Texas, and it is a critical component of our national defense.

Mr. Chairman, in this fiscal environment, we need to be careful stewards of taxpayer dollars and focus our limited resources on addressing critical national security objectives and military readiness. Having another round of BRAC won't help us achieve this goal.

In fact, the Government Accountability Office reports that the last round of BRAC in 2005 cost the American taxpayers $35.1 billion, which was 67 percent more than the original cost estimate.

At the same time, the expected savings from the last round of BRAC were 73 percent less than was advertised. Starting another round of BRAC would weaken our capabilities and increase our vulnerability in the face of the critical threats facing our Nation.

I would like to thank my colleagues who have supported this amendment.

Mr. DENT. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. RATCLIFFE. I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. DENT. I want to let the gentleman know I support the amendment.

Mr. RATCLIFFE. I thank the gentleman. I would like to yield the remainder of my time to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MACARTHUR).

□ 1915

Mr. MacARTHUR. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Texas.

I have been fighting against BRAC since January, when I led a bipartisan letter urging then-Defense Secretary Hagel to not call for another round of base closures. But a BRAC was included in the President's budget, and here we are today.

Along with the gentleman from Texas, I am bringing this amendment and fighting against BRAC for two reasons:

First, BRAC is not cost effective. As was mentioned, the 2005 BRAC was supposed to cost $21 billion. Just a few years later, it has now skyrocketed to $35 billion. On top of that, the savings were reduced by 73 percent. So it cost the taxpayers more and saved them less. Once more, the Department of Defense won't even recoup its upfront costs until 2018, 13 years after it started.

And second, I oppose BRAC because it destroys local economies. I know this all too well as Fort Monmouth in my home State was shuttered in 2005. That area is still recovering from the loss.

My district is home to Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, which is responsible for 105,000 local jobs in southern New Jersey. It is a $7 billion impact on just one local community. Like so many other military bases around the country, it is the backbone of our community. If it is closed, the area would be devastated.

Spending more, saving less, ruining local economies, and reducing our military capability should not be done based on what we know today. In closing, I urge passage of this amendment.

Mr. RATCLIFFE. I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HURD).

Mr. HURD of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I am proud to cosponsor this amendment alongside my colleague from Texas, the honorable JOHN RATCLIFFE, and my colleague from New Jersey, the Honorable TOM MACARTHUR.

Government action that both wastes the taxpayer dollars and hurts local economies just doesn't make sense, especially when the same action negatively impacts national security. But that is precisely what another round of base realignment and closures would do.

Laughlin Air Force Base, located near Del Rio, Texas, in the 23rd Congressional District of Texas, is responsible for training more Air Force pilots than any other base in the world. It is an integral component of our Nation's military readiness, and they are a vital part of Del Rio's economy and community. Yet every year they wait to see if the powers that be up here have decided in their infinite wisdom to put Laughlin Air Force Base back on the chopping block, devastating Del Rio and endangering our Nation's air superiority.

I encourage my colleagues to support this amendment, which will prohibit funds from being used to propose, plan, or execute another round of BRAC closures. Protecting our military readiness in communities such as Del Rio is vital.

Mr. RATCLIFFE. I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. RATCLIFFE).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. GRAYSON

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to enter into a contract with any offeror or any of its principals if the offeror certifies, as required by Federal Acquisition Regulation, that the offeror or any of its principals:

(A) within a three-year period preceding this offer has been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against it for: commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (Federal, State, or local) contract or subcontract; violation of Federal or State antitrust statutes relating to the submission of offers; or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, tax evasion, violating Federal criminal tax laws, or receiving stolen property; or

(B) are presently indicted for, or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity with, commission of any of the offenses enumerated above in subsection (A); or

(C) within a three-year period preceding this offer, has been notified of any delinquent Federal taxes in an amount that exceeds $3,000 for which the liability remains unsatisfied.

Mr. GRAYSON (during the reading). Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to waive the reading of the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Florida and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Chairman, this amendment is identical to other amendments that were inserted by voice vote into every appropriations bill that was considered under an open rule during the 113th Congress. My amendment expands the list of parties with whom the Federal Government is prohibited from contracting due to serious misconduct on the part of the contractors.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GRAYSON).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. HURD OF TEXAS

Mr. HURD of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used in contravention of subtitle D of title VIII of the Carl Levin and Howard P. ''Buck'' McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Texas and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. HURD of Texas. Mr. Chairman, one thing we can all agree on is our veterans deserve better. For far too long, our Nation's veterans have failed to receive the health care they have earned and the health care they have needed.

One of the reasons is due to the VA's inability to join the 21st century when it comes to information technology. Something as simple as allowing a veteran's medical records to be available digitally to their health care providers shouldn't be something beyond the capabilities of the greatest Nation in the world.

My amendment ensures the Department of Veterans Affairs and their chief information officer will take the appropriate steps and get the VA moving in the right direction. It will create accountability with their acquisition and use of information technology.

Let's do what is right and make sure the VA is using the right technology to ensure that our veterans are getting timely, quality care.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HURD).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. ROE OF TENNESSEE

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to pay an award or bonus under chapter 45 or 53 of title 5, United States Code, to any employee of the Office of Construction and Facilities Management of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Tennessee and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Chairman, I am offering an amendment that would prevent bonuses from being awarded to the Office of Construction & Facilities Management, the branch of the Department of Veterans Affairs in charge of all construction projects costing more than $10 million and which is perhaps the least deserving of performance bonuses in the entire agency.

In January, the House Veterans' Affairs Committee held a hearing to examine the enormous shortcomings of this office. We found that construction of a VA hospital in Denver—Aurora, to be specific—is projected to outpace the budget by $1 billion. This project that started supposedly in 2010 was supposed to be completed in 2013. The original budget was $600 million, with a $10 million change order. Now they estimate the completion date is 2017.

Mr. Chairman, the Romans built the Colosseum in 8 years, and I don't think they were $1 billion over budget. That is $1,700 a square foot to build this hospital. Can you imagine how many veterans the VA could have treated with $1 billion. That is 1,000 million dollars.

How many doctors and nurses could have been hired with $1 billion that the VA's Office of Construction & Facilities Management has set fire to? The answer is: a lot.

The Denver project, if that was just it, that would be fine, but it is not an isolated incident.

In Orlando, a hospital project initially estimated to cost $254 million is almost 5 years behind schedule and projected to be $372 million over budget. That is 143 percent overrun.

In New Orleans, a major hospital being built to replace a VA facility lost to Hurricane Katrina was initially estimated to cost $625 million and is just over halfway completed, running 66 percent over budget at a cost of a whopping $1.035 billion.

And in Las Vegas, a hospital initially projected to cost $325 million is almost complete after being delayed for more than 7 years, coming in $260 million over budget.

These four projects alone have wasted billions of dollars of taxpayer money and delayed the delivery of health care to veterans for almost 14 years.

If this is the performance we should expect, the VA really has no business being in the construction industry. My friend, Congressman COFFMAN, who chairs the House Veterans' Affairs Committee Oversight and Investigation Subcommittee and represents the Denver area, has introduced legislation that would allow construction to continue at Denver while placing the responsibility of any further future VA construction projects over $10 million in the hands of the Army Corps of Engineers, who have a great track record, I might add.

I hope that we are able to consider an approach like Mr. COFFMAN's and clean up this mess once and for all. But in the interim, it is critical that we send a message to this office that business as usual can't be tolerated.

The VA branch responsible for these cost overruns and delays should not have jobs in the construction realm, much less receive performance bonuses. This amendment would see that the taxpayer does not pay for performance bonuses to an office that has caused more harm than good.

I urge adoption of this amendment, Mr. Chairman, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition, although I do not oppose the gentleman's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I think we are all very, very disturbed by what has happened with Denver, and we are also disturbed about the practices of the construction office. But I just wanted to take this opportunity to maybe kind of clarify what has happened in response to try to mitigate the situation.

In January, Deputy Secretary Sloan Gibson announced the restructuring of the Office of Construction & Facilities Management, having them report directly to the Deputy Secretary through the Office of Management.

The VA also initiated an administrative investigative board in January to find the truth and to document the misconduct on the project. Secretary Gibson has included the VA Office of General Counsel in the review, and the administrative investigative board is expected to complete its review and make recommendations to the Deputy Secretary this month.

Additionally, the U.S. Corps of Engineers is conducting a separate review of the VA's Construction office to evaluate the structure and the processes so that changes can be made in the future.

I just thought that the RECORD ought to be set straight that everyone is disgusted with the way that these projects have been handled and that we are taking steps, and the Department is taking steps, to make sure that this bad situation is corrected.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Chairman, I would say—and I agree with that; I am on the Veterans' Affairs Committee—I have been involved personally in four hospitals being built in my hometown. All came in on time, under budget.

When you have a bank, a lender, lending you money, they will stop you from going this much over budget. That is exactly what we didn't have here. I cannot imagine spending $1 billion more to build a facility and then maybe offering someone a bonus.

There are some measures being put in right now, but right now I think—and I appreciate the gentleman not objecting to this amendment—we need to make sure this never happens again to waste the taxpayers' money.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. STIVERS

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to pay the salary of any employee of the Department of Veterans Affairs who is a member of an Amputee Clinic Team (as described in VHA Handbook 1173.3, ''Amputee Clinic Teams and Artificial Limbs'', dated June 4, 2004) and who is not credentialed in accordance with VHA Directive 2012-030, ''Credentialing of Health Care Professionals'', issued on October 11, 2012.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Ohio and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio.

□ 1930

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of my amendment, which would help ensure that VA orthotists and prosthetists, who are responsible for caring for our veterans, are fully qualified and are able to perform the duties entrusted to them.

This February, the CBS affiliate in Columbus, Ohio, ran a story exposing flaws at the Chalmers P. Wylie VA Ambulatory Care Center, which serves constituents from my district. The story revealed that dozens of veterans—and possibly many more—who have not come forward had received ineffective care by uncertified prosthetists. One veteran was even told that his fitting was supposed to be painful. After several unsuccessful visits, he turned to a non-VA provider, Willow Wood, which is near Columbus, Ohio, where he was immediately provided with a successful, pain-free fitting.

The VA does claim to be following a credentialing directive, which is VA directive 2012–030. Mr. Chairman, I will soon be introducing comprehensive legislation to address this issue, but in the meantime, this amendment would force the VA to honor its word by ensuring that no salaries are paid to uncertified prosthetists and orthotists. Our veterans have made tremendous sacrifices for our country, and they deserve the best.

Mr. DENT. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. STIVERS. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. DENT. I support the amendment.

Mr. STIVERS. That was easy.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STIVERS).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. BYRNE

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to transfer any funds from the Veterans Choice Fund established by section 802 of the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–146; 128 Stat. 1802).

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Alabama and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alabama.

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to offer an important clarifying amendment that will help ensure our Nation's veterans have the choices they deserve when seeking medical care.

Last year, Congress passed the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act. In addition to many important reforms, this bill created a VA Choice Card program. Under the law, veterans who are experiencing wait times of more than 30 days or who live more than 40 miles from a VA facility can seek private care. This was great news for veterans all across the Nation who had been stuck in a backlog or who lived a significant distance from a VA clinic. Like many of my colleagues, I praised this legislation as a major step forward. Unfortunately, due to a self-serving interpretation, the VA has put up barriers that restrict veterans' access to private care.

First, the VA calculated the 40-mile requirement in a straight line, or as the crow flies, instead of calculating based on driving distance. After much pushback from veterans' organizations and from Members of Congress, the VA recently changed the interpretation to driving distance. I applaud the VA for making that change. However, the VA is still misinterpreting the law. The VA says, if a veteran lives 40 miles from a VA facility of any kind regardless of what services are offered, then he is not eligible for private care. My district paints a good picture of why this is problematic.

We have a VA outpatient clinic in Mobile that only provides minimal services, but the VA claims that, since that clinic is there, our veterans cannot seek private care even if the services they need are not provided by the local clinic. That is especially frustrating because Mobile is home to a number of large, first class hospitals which could provide adequate care to our veterans. For example, if a veteran needed orthopedic surgery, he would be forced to travel to Pensacola or to Biloxi to seek that care even though he could get that surgery done right in his hometown. That is not how the legislation was intended to work.

Recently, VA Secretary Bob McDonald asked Congress for the ability to shift money away from the VA Choice Card program into other accounts. I am disappointed that the Secretary would already be giving up on this program while it is still in its infancy. It is even more frustrating considering that one of the biggest obstacles to the program's success is the VA's own self-serving interpretation. My simple amendment would clarify that the VA cannot move money out of the Choice Program account. We need to give this program time to work and allow veterans access to private care instead of forcing them to travel hundreds of miles out of the way to receive care.

Additionally, I have introduced stand-alone legislation, which is supported by Republicans and Democrats from 15 different States, that would correct the VA's interpretation and make clear that veterans are eligible for private care when they live more than 40 miles from a VA facility that provides the care the veterans need.

I am optimistic that the House will act on this commonsense bill. Today, I urge my colleagues to support my amendment. Let's prevent the VA from transferring funds away from the Choice Card program, and let's work together to give our veterans the choices they need and deserve when seeking medical treatment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BYRNE).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. GOSAR

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to—

(1) carry out the memorandum from the Veterans Benefit Administration known as Fast Letter 13-10, issued on May 20, 2013; or

(2) create or maintain any patient recordkeeping system other than those currently approved by the Department of Veterans Affairs Central Office in Washington, D.C.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Arizona and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Chairman, last year, in the midst of the explosive allegations about the Phoenix VA's keeping secondary unofficial records of claims and appointment requests, I offered a similar amendment that passed this body which prohibited funds from being used to create or to maintain unofficial recordkeeping systems at the Department of Veterans Affairs. This year, I am proud, once again, to offer this commonsense policy with the support of my friend and colleague from Georgia.

As many of you know, several whistleblowers came forward with allegations that the Phoenix Veterans Affairs Healthcare System had been using secondary unofficial records of veterans claims and appointment requests to misrepresent the actual wait times that veterans faced as they sought health care. Some employees within the VA even received bonuses as a result of these manipulations. It is unfortunate that, over the past year, many of these once unthinkable allegations have become substantiated.

Recently, an inspector general's investigation uncovered actual memos from VA leadership that encouraged this type of behavior. This is outrageous. The memo I speak of is known as the ''Fast Letter 13–10,'' and it was handed down directly from the Office of the Director of Veterans Benefits Administration to the Philadelphia VA Regional Office.

I am appalled but not totally surprised to learn of this memo. I have

said this before, but it is sad that we have to pass amendments to prevent this type of behavior. When government bureaucrats don't use good judgment or common sense, Congress must address these issues. No matter what the investigation shows and no matter who was involved, this practice must be prevented in the future.

This amendment would prohibit the practice of altering or falsifying veterans wait-time data pursuant to the Fast Letter or any other purpose. We should have only one, uniform patient recordkeeping system within the VA in order to provide accountability as well as uniformity and to prevent employee manipulation.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment, and I thank the distinguished Chair and ranking member.

Mr. DENT. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. GOSAR. I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. DENT. I do not think any of us wants to allow the VA funds to be used in any way that would falsify records on the claims backlog. I have no objection to the amendment.

Mr. GOSAR. I thank the distinguished chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER).

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, veterans continue to be one of the most neglected groups in our country. These men and women have sacrificed their lives to ensure that our values and principles remain true; yet we still have people within the VA system who neglect these sacrifices and who disregard these men and women.

As my colleague from Arizona mentioned, this flawed guidance from the VA headquarters is wrong and completely disrespectful to our country's veterans. The memo that was issued by the VA, commonly known as ''Fast Letter 13–10,'' was a deliberate attempt to make VA bureaucrats appear as if they were delivering services and benefits to veterans faster than they really were. Through these internal actions, some VA offices were ''eliminating'' the backlog of benefit claims with a stroke of a pen.

Just because you lie about the details does not make the problem disappear. With one memo, the VA managers disregarded every performance measure that had been put in place to protect our veterans and their benefits. Mr. Chairman, I believe this brings up a large point—the problems within the Federal civil service and, as an employee within the VA stated, the dysfunctional culture of management corruption.

For the time being, we must address this issue. I join my friend from Arizona in offering this amendment. We must ensure that VA managers care for our veterans in a timely and effective manner. I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GOSAR).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. HILL

Mr. HILL. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title) add the following new section:

SEC. 5____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used by the Department of Veterans Affairs to carry out any new Key Renewable VA Energy Project under the Department's Green Management Programs.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Arkansas and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

Mr. HILL. Mr. Chairman, in 2012, an award of $8 million was provided to design and build a 1.8-megawatt solar system at the John L. McClellan VA Medical Center in Little Rock, Arkansas. It has been almost 2 years since that planned activation was to begin operating. However, reports in our local media have indicated that there is additional engineering and that it is not functioning and not operational. Further, sections of the solar panels for this system are now being torn down in order to be relocated to make way for a parking deck that was planned before the installation had begun of the solar panels. Many questions remain unanswered about this project and when the VA plans to fully implement this supposed cost-saving system to provide energy for the facility.

Further, I found from the VA's own Web site a list of 40 key energy projects that are designated as ''works in progress'' by the VA under its key renewable energy program. Some of these date back to 2010; yet they have not been completed and have not been made operational. There are over 90 solar projects that have been funded under this program and 198 projects that have been funded under the VA's Green Management Program. Some of these projects individually have cost the taxpayers up to $20 million. The Little Rock project is only projected to save $150,000 annually in energy costs, which would make the payback on that $8 million investment some 50 years.

On April 8, I sent a letter to Secretary McDonald, asking for answers about these solar systems, in Little Rock particularly, about the relocation of the panels at the facility, and about the activation date. Senator JOHN BOOZMAN and I have called for an IG investigation into this project and into other aspects of the key renewable energy program to ensure that the taxpayers' hard-earned dollars are safeguarded.

This amendment would simply prevent any new funding for these projects this fiscal year, allowing Congress the additional time to conduct oversight and allowing the VA to ensure that this program is effective.

□ 1945

It is essential that we demand accountability and transparency when utilizing taxpayer dollars for these kinds of government projects. I urge the passage of this amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chair, I claim the time in opposition.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Pennsylvania is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chair, I rise reluctantly in opposition to the amendment. I feel the gentleman's amendment is a bit too broad. It is overly broad, in my view. I understand the gentleman's frustration with the VA's delay in getting the Little Rock solar panel project up and running. I certainly support the inspector general investigation into the problems.

I am concerned that blocking all renewable energy projects, currently budgeted at $86 million for fiscal year 2016, would have the unintended impact of blocking some worthwhile projects that would save money, reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.

I would respectfully suggest maybe the gentleman would consider withdrawing the amendment, and we will try to work with him to get this amendment in a better form, one that we might be able to support. I just want to put that out there for his consideration at this time.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HILL. I thank the chairman for his comments. I appreciate his consideration. I would be happy to work with the gentleman to revise my amendment.

Mr. Chair, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw my amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Arkansas?

There was no objection.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Chair, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I just want to speak to this amendment. The VA Green Management Program is a sustainability program that integrates energy and water conservation, environmental compliance, vehicle fleet management, sustainable building design and operation, greenhouse gas management, and climate change adaptation.

Since its inception in 2007, the VA Green Management Program has reduced VA's energy costs from $504 million in 2010 to $459 million in 2014, despite significant growth in mission. Additionally, the Green Management Program has put in place energy performance contracts requiring no appropriated funds that will save VA over $9

million annually. Other significant achievements include it reduced VA energy use per square foot by 21 percent since 2003, reduced VA water consumption per square foot by 28 percent since 2007, increased VA's vehicle fleet to 55 percent alternatively fueled vehicles, and reduced VA-generated greenhouse gases 12 percent since the 2008 baseline.

In the absence of the Green Management Program funding, a number of programs, processes, and projects will not be carried out. These activities save taxpayers significant amounts of money; improve indoor and outdoor environments at VA facilities for the benefit of veterans, for visitors, employees, and surrounding communities; and help assure the VA compliance with Federal laws, with regulations, with executive orders, Presidential memoranda.

I would urge Members to oppose it. I am happy that the gentleman has withdrawn the amendment. I think his concerns are well placed, and I join the chairman in agreeing to work with him to see if we can't address those specific concerns in his location.

I yield back the balance of my time.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. FARENTHOLD

Mr. FARENTHOLD. I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to pay the salary of any employee of the Department of Veterans Affairs who received an unsatisfactory work performance review in fiscal year 2015.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Texas and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Chairman, my amendment is very straightforward. If an employee of the Department of Veterans Affairs has received a work performance review rated as unsatisfactory in the last fiscal year, he will not be able to receive a salary for this fiscal year 2016.

Mr. Chairman, there have been all sorts of media reports about how Secretary McDonald has been trying to reform the VA but has been having trouble getting rid of the bad apples. This is one way we could help him do that. For instance, the VA employees in the 27th Congressional District of Texas that I represent and across the Nation continue to provide vital care to our veterans. In the 27th District, our local medical center is well below the national standards for both customer service and phone standards.

Mr. Chairman, an official report from the VA inspector general found that about 1,700 veterans were in need of care and were at risk of being lost or forgotten after being kept off official waiting lists. Schedulers for the Veterans Affairs were instructed to change the dates for which veterans had requested an appointment in order to hide delays. At the Phoenix VA, official data showed that veterans waited an average of 24 days for an appointment when in reality the average wait was 115 days. That is absolutely unacceptable.

The VA OIG reported in May of 2014 that 17 veterans deaths had occurred while waiting for VA treatment in the Phoenix VA, and on June 5 of that same year, the VA reported they had identified an additional 18 deaths. People are dying because of unsatisfactory performance at the VA.

Earlier this month it was reported that out of 280,000 employees working for the VA, only eight had been ''punished'' for any of the offenses. In fact, the only person who has actually been fired is Sharon Helman. She wasn't fired immediately for unsatisfactory work performance. Instead, she was on paid administrative leave for over 7 months before they finally got around to firing her. She was that former VA person in Phoenix and was only fired after it was discovered she was accepting gifts from a lobbyist. We have no way of dealing with the problems, and we are looking for a solution to this.

Mr. Chairman, the VA OIG found that, under Ms. Helman's leadership, 35 veterans had died, and it took us 7 months to fire her for an unrelated offense. The VA still is struggling with this.

Clearly, Congress needs to find a better approach to help root out the bad apples in the VA. My amendment is one way we can do this. If you are receiving the worst possible performance review, you ought not to be getting paid with taxpayer money for your unsatisfactory work.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment, though I am not necessarily opposed.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman from Pennsylvania is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chair, I appreciate the gentleman for raising this important issue. I certainly share his concern about the service our veterans are receiving from VA employees. However, I do have some concerns with the breadth of this amendment. It seems, again, a little bit overly broad.

If the gentleman would withdraw his amendment, I will continue to work with him to ensure greater accountability for poor-performing employees. Again, I thank the gentleman for highlighting this important issue, but I just think the amendment is a little overly broad. The breadth is a bit more than I think is necessary at this moment, but we might be able to work this out.

Would the gentleman consider withdrawing the amendment?

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Chair, I understand the concerns that the chairman of the subcommittee has. The breadth was necessary in order to get by the requirement to not be legislating within an appropriations bill. If the chairman is willing to work with me on finding a scalpel rather than an ax to prune these bad apples out of the tree, I am willing to withdraw the amendment.

Mr. DENT. I will do that.

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. LAMALFA

Mr. LAMALFA. I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

Sec.____. For an additional amount for ''Department of Veterans Affairs—Departmental Administration—General Operating Expenses, Veterans Benefits Administration'', there is hereby appropriated, and the amount otherwise provided by this Act for ''Department of Veterans Affairs—Departmental Administration—General Administration'' is hereby reduced by, $5,000,000.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from California and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Chairman, first of all, let me thank those who have helped with this legislation here, my colleagues from California, Mr. COSTA, Mr. RUIZ, and my colleague from Massachusetts, Mr. MOULTON, on helping bring this forward. I also thank the chairman and the members of the committee as well as the desk staff here tonight in helping to make this happen.

Again, this bill simply reduces the amount budgeted for the general administration of Veterans Affairs to instead be posted toward the Veterans Benefits Administration; therefore, helping to take a bite out of the huge backlog that we have of veterans waiting to have their claims processed after having served with us. This $5 million shift, I think, will be helpful in that backlog, as we already know that the VA is at least 171,000 claims behind in their process. These 171,000 claims are behind by more than 125 days, which is unacceptable.

Of course, the VA's top priority should be making sure that veterans have their claims processed and are receiving the benefit they should be getting. Our veterans should not have had to return from fighting a war and have to instead fight a bureaucracy at home.

Mr. DENT. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. LAMALFA. I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. DENT. I do not oppose this amendment. I am prepared to accept it.

Mr. LAMALFA. I thank the chairman.

Mr. Chairman, again, this will be an important step towards helping reduce

that backlog and getting our veterans claims processed and the service they deserve. I ask for an ''aye'' vote.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. JODY B. HICE OF GEORGIA

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to pay a Federal employee for any period of time during which such employee is using official time under section 7131 of title 5, United States Code.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Georgia and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to offer an amendment that will help our Nation's veterans increase efficiency in the Federal workforce and uphold the integrity of tax dollars. Title 5 of the U.S. Code allows for a practice in which Federal employees are permitted to engage in union-related activities while at work while not doing the job for which they were hired. This practice is known as official time, and it costs the taxpayers literally millions of man-hours every year and hundreds of millions of dollars every year.

The Department of Veterans Affairs is one of the agencies with the most egregious use of official time. This agency is singlehandedly responsible for almost one-third of all the reported official time usage in the entire Federal Government.

Mr. Chairman, this one agency has more than 250 individuals who do nothing but operate on official time. That is to say, 100 percent of their time at work is used doing union activity rather than what they were hired to do, which is to help our veterans. That is unacceptable. It costs the taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars.

On the other hand, Mr. Chairman, as of April 1, there were some 431,000 veterans who have been waiting for over 30 days to get an appointment at a VA medical facility. In my home State alone, more than 20,000 veterans have waited more than 30 days for appointments, be it in Atlanta, Augusta, or Dublin. We have veterans literally begging for access to health care, and yet they are being told while waiting in line that people appreciate their service to our country, appreciate the fact that they have been willing to lay their lives down for our country, but when it comes to their medical conditions, they will have to wait because of lack of resources.

□ 2000

Mr. Chairman, to allow hundreds of VA employees to give 100 percent of their work hours to union activity while telling veterans that we do not have the resources to provide for their medical needs is inexcusable.

We need to stop this practice that allows VA employees to prioritize their union over our veterans. The day that veterans are put in second place to union activities is the day that Congress must get involved, and that has day come.

According to the most recent OPM report, the VA spends over $45 million taxpayer dollars every year on this practice. That is $45 million that could go to serve the medical needs of our veterans.

Mr. Chairman, what we have before us is a tremendous opportunity to help our veterans while, at the same time, saving taxpayer dollars and increasing the overall efficiency of our Federal workforce. This amendment cuts through all the bureaucratic red tape and the sweetheart deals for unions and helps our Nation's deserving veterans.

Mr. Chairman, this amendment is an opportunity to put our veterans first, above special interests, and I ask my colleagues to support this amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. COLLINS of Georgia). The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. I believe that this amendment really serves no purpose but to erode collective bargaining rights for civil service Federal employees, and it may violate collective bargaining agreements that have been negotiated between workers and these agencies.

The VA employs some 342,000 people, and to complain because 200 of them spend their time representing and making sure that the conditions of employment within the scope of employment of their coworkers under collective bargaining agreements are maintained, I believe, is just punitive.

Federal unions are legally required to provide representation to all members of a bargaining unit, whether or not the workers elect to pay voluntary unions dues. Representation for employees working their way through administrative procedures is a cost-effective process for administering and adjudicating agency policies.

The alternative to official time is for government agencies to pay for costly third-party attorney and arbitrator fees. Eliminating official time would increase cost, time, and effort for the agencies, the workers, and the taxpayers.

Official time is essential to maintaining workplace safety. Union representatives use official time to set procedures to protect employees from on-the-job hazards. Official time is also used to allow employees to participate in work groups with the management team to improve the processes.

Under current law, official time may not be used to solicit membership, to conduct internal union meetings, elect union officers, or to engage in any partisan political activities. The notion that official time is used for these purposes is just false.

I would urge a ''no'' vote on this amendment. I think that it is punitive, and it has no purpose but to erode collective bargaining rights for civil service Federal employees.

I think that is not consistent with the laws of the United States of America.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, how much time is remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman has 1½ minutes remaining.

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I understand my colleague's concerns, but to say it is unnecessary is a bit beyond my understanding.

Yes, there are some 259 individuals at the VA that dedicate 100 percent of their time to union activity when they were hired to do veterans work, but there are hundreds of others who don't give 100 percent of their time, but hundreds of additional hours on a regular basis.

We have reached out. After I introduced H.R. 1658, the Federal Employee Accountability Act, we literally heard from veterans all across the country. Many of these fine men and women, being veterans now, also were and are employees at the VA. With one unified voice, they expressed that they had deep frustration and disappointment with how they have seen veterans treated.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to quote just one of those individuals who served in our Air Force and is a current employee at the VA. He said, ''The union is the number one obstacle to providing care to vets.''

I just see, ultimately, Mr. Chairman, that the choice before us is clear. Members of this body can stand with union bosses, or they can stand with the people who have stood on the front line to defend our liberties and our freedom, the Nation's veterans.

I choose to stand with our brave veterans, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I would like to point out that many of the employees—as a matter of fact, I think the number is 34 percent—at the Department of Veterans Affairs are, indeed, veterans.

They are people who, in fact, put their lives on the line and have given and served and sacrificed for this country. Of course, they are now continuing to work for their colleagues and their coworkers on the job in their capacity as bargaining representatives in the VA.

I would point out that, under the law, they have the right to do this. The law supports them in doing this. We should not interfere with that because too many of them—34 percent—are, in fact, veterans.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JODY B. HICE).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. KING OF IOWA

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of the bill, before the short title, add the following new section:

SEC. 514. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to implement, administer, or enforce the prevailing wage requirements in subchapter IV of chapter 31 of title 40, United States Code (commonly referred to as the Davis-Bacon Act).

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Iowa and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Iowa.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Chairman, my amendment is an amendment that I brought up in previous appropriation cycles.

What it does is defunds and eliminates the Davis-Bacon federally mandated wage scale components in the construction of MILCON on this underlying bill. It recognizes a whole series of history that has been built since the early thirties on the Davis-Bacon Act.

I have spent my life in the construction business, Mr. Chairman. I started a construction business in 1975. We are celebrating our 40th year in business, and, almost every one of those 40 years, we have dealt with Davis-Bacon wage scales. I have made out, personally, that payroll over and over again.

I have also seen the inefficiencies that are created. The net effect is a de facto union scale. It is not a prevailing wage, but a de facto union scale. The net effect is it creates inefficiencies, and it increases and inflates the cost of our construction projects.

Our records, over the years that I have been in business, show that Davis-Bacon wage scales—the federally mandated wage scales—range between an additional 8 percent up to 38 percent; so I just bring that back to a bit of a moderate, careful average, and we have a 20 percent increase.

The bottom line on this is that, if you want to build 5 miles of road, repeal Davis-Bacon. If you are willing to accept 4 miles of road, accept a federally mandated union scale. That is true with whatever else we might be doing in all of our military construction and everything else.

This is a substantial savings on this bill, and I would point out that this is the last Jim Crow law that I recall that is still on the books. It was designed to lock Black construction workers out of the construction work in New York back in the thirties during the Great Depression.

When there was a Federal building contract that was let and the contractor went to Alabama and brought in African Americans to do that work, undercutting the essentially White labor union forces within New York, two New Yorkers—both of them Republicans, Davis and Bacon—got together and brought this Jim Crow law. Now, we are dealing with union scale mandates.

I would point out I used to have this debate with the gentleman from Massachusetts, Mr. Frank. He would make the argument that two consenting adults should be able to agree to whatever it is those two can do.

I would say I agree, and there is no reason for the Federal Government to be involved in a relationship between an employer and employee that agree to a wage scale.

We pay prevailing wages. They are not union scale wages, as a rule; but they are prevailing wages. We do that because we want to hire the best people. We do the best work that we can do under the plans and specifications offered to us—government work and private sector work altogether—for 40 years.

We are about to hear that the quality of the work isn't that, that the government knows best, and government should intervene between a relationship between two consenting adults. We are about to hear some kind of response on why we shouldn't get rid of the last Jim Crow law on the books.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, Davis-Bacon is a pretty simple concept and a fair one. What the Davis-Bacon Act does is protect the government, as well as the workers, in carrying out the policy of paying decent wages on government contracts.

The Davis-Bacon Act requires that workers on federally funded construction projects be paid no less than the wages paid in the community for similar work. It requires that every contract for construction to which the Federal Government is a party in excess of $2,000 contain a provision defining the ''minimum wages'' paid to various classes of laborers and mechanics.

Mr. Chairman, the House has taken numerous votes on this issue, and on every vote, this body has voted to maintain Davis-Bacon requirements because it makes good sense, it saves the taxpayers money, and it is useful.

Last year, we avoided including divisive language like this, and it is my hope that we stop attacking the working class and defeat the amendment before us today and move on to more important matters.

I urge all Members to vote ''no'' on this, as we have repeatedly year after year.

At this point, I yield to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE).

Mr. KILDEE. I thank my friend for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, we have been through this fight before. Thankfully, we have been able to prevail with help on both sides of the aisle.

The gentleman referred to the 1930s. Anybody who is a student of history and a student of the U.S. economy knows that it was the period following the 1930s that we finally saw a steady progress toward greater wage equality in this country and we saw the middle class emerge and the strongest period of economic growth and income equality in our history, a period which is at risk right now.

I would urge the gentleman to take a look at the period that followed the enactment of Davis-Bacon, how the middle class was born, and I would also urge us to consider that, if not the Federal Government, who can we expect to set the example that a decent wage should be paid for a decent day's work. That is all this law does, and I support it wholeheartedly and urge my colleagues to reject this amendment.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Again, let's avoid including divisive language like this. This is a policy rider that is unnecessary. We have defeated it over and over again.

Davis-Bacon saves the government money. It requires quality work and quality labor be done on Federal contracts, and it pays a fair day's wages for a fair day's work.

I urge all Members to vote ''no'' and reject this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Chairman, may I inquire as to how much time I have remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman has 2 minutes remaining.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Chairman, first, in response to the gentleman's argument of a fair wage for a fair day's pay, that is determined by supply and demand in the marketplace. This is the United States of America, and on the flashcard the USCIS puts out, they say: What is the American system of America? It is free enterprise capitalism.

You have to pay the going rate to get the people to do the job. That has been the case for a long time. I have done that for 40 years, and the quality of the work is there, and we are proud of the work that we do.

I don't know how anyone argues that the Federal Government has got to intervene in setting the marketplace for wages on construction projects $2,000 or more, but not intervene in the price of gas or the price of electricity or the price of some of the commodities that we are dealing with on a regular basis.

If we are going to have a robust economy, we have got to get a value received for the work that is done, and that value received is determined by supply and demand in the marketplace, not by a de facto mandated union scale. I know how these scales are reached. I know how these conferences go.

Mr. Chairman, we want to save the taxpayers money. We want to build 5 miles of road, not 4. We want to build five bases, not four. We want to put five different components out there, instead of four, and get a return on the taxpayers' dollar so that we maximize the utilization of the hard-earned tax dollars that come from some of the people that are working on these projects.

□ 2015

They want a return on their investment, too. You can't argue that there is fiscal responsibility in this country if we are going to impose an additional 20 percent on every dollar that is spent to produce construction projects on MILCON in America.

So, Mr. Chairman, I urge the adoption of my amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Iowa will be postponed.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Pennsylvania is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman I yield to my colleague from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) for a colloquy.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank Chairman DENT and Ranking Member BISHOP for your work on this bill. And congratulations to Congressman DENT on the work he has done on H.R. 2029, his first bill as chairman of the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Subcommittee.

I admire Chairman DENT's and Ranking Member BISHOP's commitment to our veterans of America. They have demonstrated day-to-day that they are here for our people in the armed services.

I would like to especially acknowledge this bill's provisions relating to the importance of early detection and treatment of colorectal cancer. As the bill notes, the VA has made screening patients for colorectal cancer a priority, and I am encouraged by the steps that this bill would take to ensure that the VA continues to dedicate the resources and attention to this important issue which it deserves.

Almost every family in America, including our veterans, including Members of Congress, including people all over this Nation, have been touched by cancer. My father, former Congressman Donald Payne, who served New Jersey's 10th Congressional District for 23 years, prior to me coming here and taking his place, succumbed to this preventable and treatable disease.

Chairman DENT, thank you for your partnership on this issue. I am looking forward to continuing to work together to advance the fight against colorectal cancer and lessen the needless loss of life.

The committee report encourages the VA to support additional research and development in the field, including investigating a less costly blood test for colorectal cancer. I applaud this language, and I also understand that both the FDA and CMS have approved a new DNA, noninvasive, stool-based colorectal cancer screening test that is pending review with the Federal supply services for availability in the VA health system.

For clarity, does this committee also encourage the VA to consider and review such stool-based test screening?

Mr. DENT. Thank you, Congressman PAYNE, for your shared interest in this very important topic.

Mr. Chairman, I commend my colleague for his steadfast support of colorectal cancer awareness research, prevention, and treatment efforts. As the second leading cause of death in men and women in the United States, we have both seen the personal toll that colorectal cancer can have on family members and loved ones. Congressman PAYNE obviously lost his father; I lost my brother-in-law. It was very painful for all of us. We lost them all too soon.

It has been a privilege to work together with you on an issue that has raised awareness and increased preventive screenings. This is an issue that affects far too many of our veterans and, as you mentioned, this bill takes steps to support the VA's prevention and treatment efforts.

The report's language should not be misconstrued as only focusing on blood tests, and I certainly encourage the VA to expedite its review of alternative colorectal cancer screening tests, including DNA stool-based noninvasive tests. We certainly want to encourage the VA in that regard.

I look forward to continuing to work with on you these important matters. Again, I want to really commend Congressman PAYNE for his determination and steadfast interest in advancing therapies and treatments for colorectal cancer.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. NEWHOUSE) having assumed the chair, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2029) making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1732, REGULATORY INTEGRITY PROTECTION ACT OF 2015; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF CONFERENCE REPORT ON S. CON. RES. 11, CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET, FISCAL YEAR 2016; AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.J. RES. 43, DISAPPROVAL OF DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH NON-DISCRIMINATION AMENDMENT ACT OF 2014

Mr. WOODALL, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 114–98) on the resolution (H. Res. 231) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1732) to preserve existing rights and responsibilities with respect to waters of the United States, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the conference report to accompany the concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 11) setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2016 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2017 through 2025; and providing for consideration of the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 43) disapproving the action of the District of Columbia Council in approving the Reproductive Health Non-Discrimination Amendment Act of 2014, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2016

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 2028, and that I may include tabular material on the same.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 223 and rule

XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 2028.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 2022

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 2028) making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes, with Mr. COLLINS of Georgia in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read for the first time. The gentleman from Idaho (Mr. SIMPSON) and the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Idaho.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

It is my distinct honor to bring the fiscal year 2016 Energy and Water bill before you today.

Before I go into the details, I would like to recognize the hard work of Chairman ROGERS and Ranking Member LOWEY on this bill and the appropriation process. I would also like to thank my ranking member, Ms. KAPTUR. I appreciate her help, and with it, this bill is better because of it.

The bill provides $35.4 billion for the activities of the Department of Energy, Army Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Reclamation, and other agencies under our jurisdiction. This is a $1.2 billion increase from last year's funding level, and $633 million below the request.

This is a responsible bill that recognizes the importance of investing in our Nation's infrastructure and national defense. As we do each year, we worked hard to incorporate priorities and perspectives from both sides of the aisle.

The administration's proposal to cut programs of the Army Corps of Engineers by $750 million would have led to economic disruptions in our ports and waterways as they filled in, and would have left our communities and businesses vulnerable to flooding.

Instead, this bill recognizes the critical work of the Corps and provides $5.6 billion for those activities, $865 million above the request and $142 million more than last year. The bill makes use of all estimated annual revenues from the inland waterways trust fund, for a total of $340 million.

The bill takes a strong stand against the administration's regulatory overreach with regards to the Clean Water Act and includes three provisions that prohibit changes to the definition of ''fill material,'' the definition of ''waters of the United States,'' and the permit requirement for certain agricultural activities.

The nuclear weapons program run by the Department of Energy is funded at $8.7 billion, which is $526 million more than last year. This increase will support full funding for the stockpile life extension programs, and includes an additional $100 million above the request to address the growing backlog of deferred maintenance and physical security projects.

The recommendation for Naval Reactors is $1.3 billion, an increase of $86 million, and includes full funding for the *Ohio* class replacement submarine.

This bill makes strong, balanced investments in our energy sector to ensure that our constituents continue to have reliable, affordable energy.

Fossil energy, which provided more than 67 percent of our electricity production in 2014, received $605 million, a $34 million increase above fiscal year 2015.

Nuclear energy is increased by $23 million above last year. The bill also includes $40 million more than last year to ensure an electric grid that is both reliable and resilient now and into the future.

This is a strong bill that will advance our national security interests and our economy. I urge everyone to support it.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS BILL FY 2016 (H.R. 2028)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2015 Enacted	FY 2016 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
TITLE I - DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE - CIVIL					
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY					
Corps of Engineers - Civil					
Investigations	122,000	97,000	110,000	-12,000	+13,000
Construction	1,639,489	1,172,000	1,631,000	-8,489	+459,000
Mississippi River and Tributaries	302,000	225,000	275,000	-27,000	+50,000
Operations and Maintenance	2,908,511	2,710,000	3,058,000	+149,489	+348,000
Regulatory Program	200,000	205,000	200,000	---	-5,000
Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP)	101,500	104,000	104,000	+2,500	---
Flood Control and Coastal Emergencies	28,000	34,000	34,000	+6,000	---
Expenses	178,000	180,000	180,000	+2,000	---
Office of Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works)	3,000	5,000	4,750	+1,750	-250
General Provisions					
Title I Rescission	-28,000	---	---	+28,000	---
Total, title I, Department of Defense - Civil	5,454,500	4,732,000	5,596,750	+142,250	+864,750
Appropriations	(5,482,500)	(4,732,000)	(5,596,750)	(+114,250)	(+864,750)
Rescissions	(-28,000)	---	---	(+28,000)	---
TITLE II - DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR					
Central Utah Project Completion Account					
Central Utah Project Completion Account	9,874	7,300	9,874	---	+2,574
Bureau of Reclamation					
Water and Related Resources	978,131	805,157	948,640	-29,491	+143,483
Central Valley Project Restoration Fund	56,995	49,528	49,528	-7,467	---
California Bay-Delta Restoration	37,000	37,000	37,000	---	---
Policy and Administration	58,500	59,500	59,500	+1,000	---
Indian Water Rights Settlements	---	112,483	---	---	-112,483
San Joaquin River Restoration Fund	---	35,000	---	---	-35,000
Bureau of Reclamation Loan Program Account (Rescission)	-500	---	---	+500	---
Total, Bureau of Reclamation	1,130,126	1,098,668	1,094,668	-35,458	-4,000
Total, title II, Department of the Interior	1,140,000	1,105,968	1,104,542	-35,458	-1,426
Appropriations	(1,140,500)	(1,105,968)	(1,104,542)	(-35,958)	(-1,426)
Rescissions	(-500)	---	---	(+500)	---
TITLE III - DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY					
Energy Programs					
Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy	1,937,000	2,722,987	1,657,774	-279,226	-1,065,213
Rescissions	-13,065	---	---	+13,065	---
Subtotal, Energy efficiency	1,923,935	2,722,987	1,657,774	-266,161	-1,065,213
Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability	147,306	270,100	187,500	+40,194	-82,600
Nuclear Energy	805,000	772,413	810,000	+5,000	+37,587
Defense function	108,500	135,161	126,161	+17,661	-9,000
Rescission	-80,000	---	---	+80,000	---
Subtotal	833,500	907,574	936,161	+102,661	+28,587
Fossil Energy Research and Development	571,000	560,000	605,000	+34,000	+45,000
Naval Petroleum and Oil Shale Reserves	19,950	17,500	17,500	-2,450	---
Elk Hills School Lands Fund	15,580	---	---	-15,580	---
Strategic Petroleum Reserve	200,000	257,000	212,030	+12,030	-44,970

ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS BILL FY 2016 (H.R. 2028)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2015 Enacted	FY 2016 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
Northeast Home Heating Oil Reserve	7,600	7,600	7,600	---	---
Rescission	-6,000	---	---	+6,000	---
Subtotal	1,600	7,600	7,600	+6,000	---
Energy Information Administration	117,000	131,000	117,000	---	-14,000
Non-defense Environmental Cleanup	246,000	220,185	229,193	-16,807	+9,008
Uranium Enrichment Decontamination and Decommissioning Fund	625,000	542,289	625,000	---	+82,711
Science	5,071,000	5,339,794	5,100,000	+29,000	-239,794
Nuclear Waste Disposal	---	---	150,000	+150,000	+150,000
Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy	280,000	325,000	280,000	---	-45,000
Office of Indian Energy Policy and Programs	---	20,000	---	---	-20,000
Title 17 Innovative Technology Loan Guarantee Program	42,000	42,000	42,000	---	---
Offsetting collection	-25,000	-25,000	-25,000	---	---
Subtotal	17,000	17,000	17,000	---	---
Tribal Indian Energy Loan Guarantee Program	---	11,000	---	---	-11,000
Advanced Technology Vehicles Manufacturing Loans program	4,000	6,000	6,000	+2,000	---
Clean Coal Technology (Rescission)	-6,600	---	---	+6,600	---
Departmental Administration	245,142	270,682	247,420	+2,278	-23,262
Miscellaneous revenues	-119,171	-117,171	-117,171	+2,000	---
Net appropriation	125,971	153,511	130,249	+4,278	-23,262
Office of the Inspector General	40,500	46,424	46,000	+5,500	-424
Total, Energy programs	10,232,742	11,554,964	10,324,007	+91,265	-1,230,957
Atomic Energy Defense Activities					
National Nuclear Security Administration					
Weapons Activities	8,231,770	8,846,948	8,713,000	+481,230	-133,948
Rescission	-45,113	---	---	+45,113	---
Subtotal	8,186,657	8,846,948	8,713,000	+526,343	-133,948
Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation	1,641,369	1,940,302	1,918,000	+276,631	-22,302
Rescission	-24,731	---	-10,394	+14,337	-10,394
Subtotal	1,616,638	1,940,302	1,907,606	+290,968	-32,696
Naval Reactors	1,238,500	1,375,496	1,320,394	+81,894	-55,102
Rescission	-4,500	---	---	+4,500	---
Subtotal	1,234,000	1,375,496	1,320,394	+86,394	-55,102
Federal Salaries and Expenses	370,000	402,654	388,000	+18,000	-14,654
Total, National Nuclear Security Administration	11,407,295	12,565,400	12,329,000	+921,705	-236,400
Environmental and Other Defense Activities					
Defense Environmental Cleanup	5,010,830	5,055,550	5,055,550	+44,720	---
Rescission	-10,830	---	---	+10,830	---
Subtotal	5,000,000	5,055,550	5,055,550	+55,550	---
Defense Environmental cleanup (Legislative proposal)	---	471,797	---	---	-471,797
Defense Uranium Enrichment Decontamination and Decommissioning	463,000	---	471,797	+8,797	+471,797

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	FY 2015 Enacted	FY 2016 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
Other Defense Activities	754,000	774,425	767,570	+13,570	-6,855
Total, Environmental and Other Defense Activities	6,217,000	6,301,772	6,294,917	+77,917	-6,855
Total, Atomic Energy Defense Activities	17,624,295	18,867,172	18,623,917	+999,622	-243,255
Power Marketing Administrations /1					
Operation and maintenance, Southeastern Power Administration	7,220	6,900	6,900	-320	---
Offsetting collections	-7,220	-6,900	-6,900	+320	---
Subtotal	---	---	---	---	---
Operation and maintenance, Southwestern Power Administration	46,240	47,361	47,361	+1,121	---
Offsetting collections	-34,840	-35,961	-35,961	-1,121	---
Subtotal	11,400	11,400	11,400	---	---
Construction, Rehabilitation, Operation and Maintenance, Western Area Power Administration	304,402	307,714	307,714	+3,312	---
Offsetting collections	-211,030	-214,342	-214,342	-3,312	---
Subtotal	93,372	93,372	93,372	---	---
Falcon and Amistad Operating and Maintenance Fund	4,727	4,490	4,490	-237	---
Offsetting collections	-4,499	-4,262	-4,262	+237	---
Subtotal	228	228	228	---	---
Total, Power Marketing Administrations	105,000	105,000	105,000	---	---
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission					
Salaries and expenses	304,389	319,800	319,800	+15,411	---
Revenues applied	-304,389	-319,800	-319,800	-15,411	---
General Provisions					
Title III Rescissions:					
Department of Energy:					
Energy Efficiency and Energy Reliability	-9,740	---	-16,677	-6,937	-16,677
Science	-3,262	---	-4,717	-1,455	-4,717
Nuclear Energy	-121	---	-1,665	-1,544	-1,665
Fossil Energy Research and Development	-10,413	---	-12,064	-1,651	-12,064
Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability	-331	---	-900	-569	-900
Advanced Research Projects Agency - Energy	-18	---	---	+18	---
Construction, Rehabilitation, Operation and Maintenance, Western Area Power Administration	-1,632	---	-4,832	-3,200	-4,832
Weapons activities (050)	-6,298	---	---	+6,298	---
Office of the Administrator (050)	-413	---	---	+413	---
Departmental Administration	-928	---	---	+928	---
Defense Environmental Cleanup (050)	-9,983	---	---	+9,983	---
Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation (050)	-1,390	---	---	+1,390	---
Naval Reactors (050)	-160	---	---	+160	---
Other Defense Activities (050)	-551	---	---	+551	---
Subtotal	-45,240	---	-40,855	+4,385	-40,855
Total, title III, Department of Energy	27,916,797	30,527,136	29,012,069	+1,095,272	-1,515,067
Appropriations	(28,152,876)	(30,527,136)	(29,063,318)	(+910,442)	(-1,463,818)
Rescissions	(-236,079)	---	(-51,249)	(+184,830)	(-51,249)

ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS BILL FY 2016 (H.R. 2028)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2015 Enacted	FY 2016 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
TITLE IV - INDEPENDENT AGENCIES					
Appalachian Regional Commission	90,000	95,000	95,000	+5,000	---
Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board	28,500	29,150	29,900	+1,400	+750
Delta Regional Authority	12,000	14,936	12,000	---	-2,936
Denali Commission	10,000	10,000	10,000	---	---
Northern Border Regional Commission	5,000	5,000	3,000	-2,000	-2,000
Southeast Crescent Regional Commission	250	---	250	---	+250
Nuclear Regulatory Commission:					
Salaries and expenses	1,003,233	1,020,119	1,003,233	---	-16,886
Revenues	-885,375	-899,971	-862,274	+23,101	+37,697
Subtotal	117,858	120,148	140,959	+23,101	+20,811
Office of Inspector General	12,071	12,136	12,136	+65	---
Revenues	-10,099	-10,060	-10,060	+39	---
Subtotal	1,972	2,076	2,076	+104	---
Total, Nuclear Regulatory Commission	119,830	122,224	143,035	+23,205	+20,811
Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board	3,400	3,600	3,600	+200	---
Office of the Federal Coordinator for Alaska Natural Gas Transportation Projects	---	1,000	1,000	+1,000	---
Total, title IV, Independent agencies	268,980	280,910	297,785	+28,805	+16,875
Appropriations	(268,980)	(280,910)	(297,785)	(+28,805)	(+16,875)
Grand total	34,780,277	36,646,014	36,011,146	+1,230,869	-634,868
Appropriations	(35,044,856)	(36,646,014)	(36,062,395)	(+1,017,539)	(-583,619)
Rescissions	(-264,579)	---	(-51,249)	(+213,330)	(-51,249)

1/ Totals adjusted to net out alternative financing costs, reimbursable agreement funding, and power purchase and wheeling expenditures. Offsetting collection totals only reflect funds collected for annual expenses, excluding power purchase wheeling

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to begin by thanking Chairman SIMPSON for his bipartisan approach in preparing this bill. We have a good committee, and we work together.

I want to thank also our entire staff, Donna Shahbaz and Taunja Berquam, the Republican and Democratic Clerks, as well as the rest of the Committee staff: Matt Anderson, Angie Giancarlo, Loraine Heckenberg, and Perry Yates; and in the personal offices, Sarah Cannon and Ryan Steyer. Their countless long hours, late nights, and thoughtful insight are so critical to help us prepare this legislation.

Thirty-seven years ago, President Jimmy Carter, after the first Arab oil embargo, as gasoline prices exploded and the U.S. fell into deep, deep recession, championed the creation of a U.S. Department of Energy. He equated the struggle for America's energy independence as the moral equivalent of war, and he was right. He set a goal to steer the United States toward energy independence by 1985.

Today, America still struggles to meet that challenge set out nearly four decades ago: reducing our imported energy dependence, curbing our voracious appetite for foreign oil, and growing a diverse domestic energy portfolio that invests in a self-reliant America and the job creation here at home that goes with it.

Containing our ballooning consumption topped President Carter's agenda. But while he successfully reduced consumption during his Presidency, his successors lost focus. Demand for gasoline increased by 40 percent in the 25 years after he left office, a troubling reality, as every economic recession since World War II has come on the heels of a sharp spike in gasoline prices. I have a chart here that so dramatically shows every time gasoline went over $4 a gallon, America, in the late seventies, in the early nineties, and then of course in 2008, fell into deep, deep recession.

Our work is important. Under the current administration, partnerships between the Department of Energy labs and automotive companies have finally helped level out demand for gasoline with increasing fuel efficiency.

President Carter also envisioned a new energy horizon for our Nation, including renewable energy and conservation. Solar electric capacity currently operating in our country is enough to power more than 3.5 million homes, on average.

Today, 90 percent of homes in our country are insulated. These are important achievements, milestones for our country, and America must push onward.

On the critical issue of reducing foreign oil dependence, President Carter's initiative strikingly reduced imports below the target of 6 million barrels a day, a cut of nearly a third, but imports, again, after his Presidency, went on the rise in subsequent decades. Vast energy imports continue to represent the single largest component of our overall trade deficit.

□ 2030

I brought a chart down here tonight that shows America has been in the depths of deficit in trade, but the portion of it that deals with petroleum is its most significant percentage, and it has been for a very long time.

That translates into millions and millions of forfeited jobs here at home. Still at $47 billion last year, crude oil imports were roughly equal to the next four largest trade deficit categories.

Around the world, the war over energy rages on. Look only to Europe's compromised position toward Ukraine and, of course, oil-rich but unstable Iraq. We must position our own Nation to a secure energy future.

Our bill's priority is to strengthen our Nation's energy foundation. This bill does responsibly invest in that effort, as well as in our nuclear security as well as our water infrastructure. But I must ask: At what cost does our bill do this? Our bill is among the first two to be considered. There are 10 bills that will follow, and, frankly, they were raided to pay for ours.

This Republican budget will mean that additional funding for this bill—1 of 12 appropriation bills on which Congress must act—comes at the expense of other vital national needs that will be shortchanged as subsequent appropriation bills are brought forward; in total, 12 of them.

For example, our bill funds incredible advanced scientific research. But it does so at the expense of the Health and Human Services bill that shorts support for our students who will be the next generation of scientists.

Our bill provides for the Department of Energy labs, whose new technologies will power our future. But why is the National Institutes of Health shortchanged in the Health and Human Services, Education Appropriations bill? Its discoveries will save and improve millions of lives.

In our bill, nuclear weapons funding will increase by $500 million. Meanwhile, in the Transportation, Housing bill, crumbling cities will lose even more resources, elderly housing will remain unfunded, and our poorest families will continue struggling to put food on the table.

Nuclear nonproliferation and environmental cleanup efforts in our bill will make our world safer. But on America's streets, police and fire departments will remain understaffed, insufficiently trained, and underequipped because the Commerce-Justice-Science appropriations bill is shorted.

In our bill, there are no new starts for the Army Corps of Engineers infrastructure, whose $60 billion backlog of unfinished projects is astounding. But to fund the Corps in our bill, America's roads will be shortchanged and remain pothole-ridden, the rail lines clogged, with more bridges on the brink of collapse because the Transportation, Housing bill has been shortchanged too.

In our bill, the Bureau of Reclamation will continue to help our 17 Western States cope with record drought, yet severe underfunding of the clean water and drinking water funds in the Department of Interior-EPA bill will further threaten the fresh water supply of thousands more communities across our country. No amount of duct tape can fix all the leaking pipes.

This bill sacrifices the long-term strength of our Nation by raiding other bills that are essential appropriation responsibilities, but that is the game plan of the overall Republican budget that has been handed us. It is not a prescription for an American success story.

The Appropriations Committee's discretionary programs, at only 6.8 percent of our Nation's total economy, or GDP, are too thin a reed on which to balance our Nation's accounts.

The Ways and Means Committee must put its cards on the table too and open its vast jurisdiction to scrutiny. Mandatory programs must be put on the table. And then the preparation of America's budget will have an engine in which all pistons are firing and engaged.

We want to produce an appropriation bill here tonight, but I find myself guilty in a way because I know what is being taken from those other subcommittees so vital to our Nation's future.

Though this Energy and Water bill is respectable, it is only one oar in the water pushing our ship of state forward. We can't reach our destination without the other 11 oars in the water too. For that reason, I urge my colleagues, as we move forward, to consider a ''no'' vote on this measure in hopes that a message will be sent strongly. The American people deserve all hands on deck and all oars in the water.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BENISHEK).

Mr. BENISHEK. I thank the chairman.

Mr. Chair, I rise today in support of H.R. 2028 and would like to take this opportunity to talk about the importance of investing in American infrastructure.

This legislation provides support for critical national and regional waterways. The Soo Locks, located in my district, are a critical point in our Nation's infrastructure. Over 80 million tons of commercial commodities travel through the Soo Locks each year, including the vast majority of the iron ore mined in the United States. The value of the cargo traveling through the Soo Locks represents approximately 3.2 percent of the U.S. gross domestic product each year.

Recently, the Army Corps completed a sensitivity analysis on the Soo Locks

and has indicated that they may begin a new benefit-cost ratio in the future.

This lip service isn't good enough. The impact on our economy, should there be a failure of the lock, is too great.

The study must be completed, and I am confident that it will show a need for a replacement lock and construction can get underway.

I urge the Corps to continue to work with Congress in an efficient and transparent fashion so that we can continue to move this process forward and get this project going.

Ms. KAPTUR. I would like to inquire of the Chair, how much time do we have remaining on this side, please?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Ohio has 22 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Idaho has 26 minutes remaining.

Ms. KAPTUR. I yield 4 minutes to the very distinguished gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. LOWEY), the ranking member of the full Appropriations Committee.

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Chair, I thank subcommittee Chairman SIMPSON, Ranking Member KAPTUR, and full committee Chairman ROGERS for their work on this bill.

The House Republican ''work harder for less'' budget resolution was opposed by every Member on my side of the aisle in part because it makes it impossible to provide the funding necessary in the 12 appropriations bills to grow our economy and give hard-working Americans the opportunity to succeed.

Democrats much preferred the approach taken by the President, calling for an end to the sequester and more reasonable and realistic budgeting that could help families afford college, a home, and a secure retirement.

The proposed funding level for the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy is dismal and would curtail innovation in clean and renewable energy and make us less competitive. This type of investment grows our economy and provides opportunity to hard-working Americans. But under the Republican proposal, funding would be slashed by $266 million compared to the 2015 level.

A number of other areas fall far short of the President's proposal, including $82.6 million less to modernize and secure the electric grid and $240 million less for scientific research critical to addressing long-term energy needs.

These levels are above the current enacted levels; but by failing to address sequestration, the majority is missing an opportunity to further invest in critical initiatives that create jobs and make American families more secure.

Given the difficulty in resolving funding disputes, I am deeply disappointed that the majority also, once again, needlessly included controversial policy riders.

An annual appropriations bill is not the place to make sweeping changes to environmental protection or gun laws.

Despite the fact that it streamlines existing activities to protect 2.8 million ocean industry jobs and $282 billion in GDP generated by ocean industries in coastal States, the National Ocean Policy would be blocked. I do not understand how any public good is served by thwarting efficiency measures that bring together the best ecological, economic, and stakeholder-driven data.

There are egregious attacks on the Clean Water Act, including locking in place a state of confusion about the scope of pollution control programs and sacrificing water quality for small streams and wetlands that contribute to the drinking water of one in three Americans.

I should not have to remind my majority colleagues that similar provisions have imperiled this bill in the past. The administration is, once again, on record with veto threats of nearly identical language, and leading environmental groups have stated that these and other riders are bad policies that will put Americans' health and safety at risk.

I am truly amazed that the majority would willfully go down this path again. Despite the many shortcomings, there are positive aspects, particularly the Army Corps of Engineers. In its most recent report card, the American Society of Civil Engineers gave the U.S. a D-plus and estimated that $2.6 trillion in investments are needed by 2020.

I am very grateful that Chairman SIMPSON included $142 million more than the current level and $865 million more than the President requested for the Army Corps.

While a number of priorities in the bill receive sufficient funding, due to major shortcomings, I urge my colleagues to oppose the bill.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. JENKINS).

Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia. I thank the chairman.

Mr. Chair, I was elected to fight for the people of the Third Congressional District. That is what I am doing, and that is what this bill does.

As members of the Appropriations Committee, we are using the power of the purse. This bill provides full funding for key Army Corps of Engineers projects in my district, nearly $26 million for projects in southern West Virginia—East Lynn, Summersville, Bluestone, and Beech Fork lakes—all critically important.

This bill supports the excellent work of the Appalachian Regional Commission, making a real difference in real people's lives. This bill actually adds an additional $5 million over last year's funding.

And this bill also says no to funding for the administration's war on coal, no to expanding the definitions of the ''waters of the U.S.,'' and no to new regulations on fill material.

This is a good bill, and I urge its passage.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Chair, I yield 3 minutes to the very, very able gentleman from the State of California (Mr. HONDA), a distinguished member of our subcommittee.

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Chair, this was my first year serving on the subcommittee. And I thank Chairman SIMPSON and Ranking Member KAPTUR for their leadership throughout this process, for the collaborative way they had worked with the members of the subcommittee on this bill.

I support the increases in the bill for the important investigations and construction accounts of the Army Corps of Engineers, which are increasingly important for dealing with the effects of climate change and have been underfunded for too long. I hope we can fully address the Corps' budgetary needs as this bill moves forward.

I am pleased that the bill includes language I sought to help us increase access to solar and other renewable energy sources for low-income families. This inclusiveness is critically important if we are going to transform to a 21st century energy economy that benefits all Americans.

I also appreciate the inclusion language supporting development of new photonics technologies to enable exascale computing breakthroughs.

Funding DOE's Workforce Development for Teachers and Scientists program at the President's request level is essential for programs to develop K–12 STEM educators, including the Albert Einstein Distinguished Educator Fellowship, now in its 25th year.

□ 2045

The funding level in this bill should allow for continued growth of the Einstein Fellows program, which brings exceptional STEM educators to Washington for a year to work in Federal agencies and in Congress helping to shape STEM education programs. There are, however, damaging cuts to some programs and others funded below the President's budget request.

These decisions will take us in the wrong direction. We need to boost the funding levels for renewable energy programs that are our path to a clean energy future. We also must address the shortfalls in the Science Laboratories infrastructure funding that will hamper operations at user facilities such as light sources and science and nanoscience centers and engineering centers.

I want to voice my disagreement with several of the policy riders in the bill. We shouldn't be blocking work to clarify the scope of the Clean Water Act, and we should be fostering collaboration between the Federal, State, and local agencies and ocean stakeholders about how to share this vital resource and not hindering it.

I know my chairman was faced with a difficult task, and his approach to developing this bill has shown these issues, which are important for our Nation and for our planet, the respect they deserve.

I look forward to working with Chairman SIMPSON and Ranking Member KAPTUR, as this bill moves forward, to resolve some of these issues in a bipartisan fashion so we can send a bill to the President that all of us can support.

Mr. SIMPSON. It is my pleasure to yield 90 seconds to the gentleman from California (Mr. FARR), a good friend of mine, for the purpose of colloquy.

Mr. FARR. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Chairman, as we continue to cut, squeeze, and trim the Federal budget, we have a responsibility to ensure that our Federal agencies operate as efficiently as possible.

I know that we both have examples in our district where multiple Federal, State, and local agencies overlap in their management authority, often causing unnecessary bureaucratic red tape, which ends up costing taxpayers more money while accomplishing less.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to work with you as we move this bill forward to improve the transparency and efficiency of Federal agencies. They need to talk to each other and work together so that our constituents are not forced to sort through conflicting requirements. I hope you can help me.

Mr. SIMPSON. I thank the gentleman from California for inviting me to speak on this important matter. I agree that the Energy and Water Appropriations bill should strive to make our Federal agencies work more efficiently with each other and work together.

I look forward to working with the gentleman on this issue.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE), a very, very hardworking and passionate member of our Appropriations Committee.

Ms. LEE. Let me thank our ranking member, first of all, for yielding, but secondly, for her unwavering leadership on this subcommittee, but also on each and every issue that we are addressing in this bill and for her leadership just in general, in terms of making sure that people who have been marginalized and who really have been victimized by this terrible recession really have opportunities into the middle class. Thank you very much, Congresswoman KAPTUR.

Let me thank the Chair for including language to recognize the importance of workplace diversity in the Department of Energy's National Laboratories and encouraging the Department to develop and broaden partnerships with minority-serving institutions, including Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

Mr. Chairman, however, I am concerned that not only does this bill maintain harmful sequester levels for funding, it also continues the pattern of inserting unnecessary policy riders into spending bills, including allowing guns to be carried on all Corps of Engineers lands. These riders are harmful and further complicate the already difficult appropriations process.

Mr. Chairman, instead of trying to roll back vital environmental protections, we need to be proactive about preserving our environment for the next generation. We need to make more investments in clean energy like solar, wind, and geothermal.

We need to do this to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels that release harmful, toxic methane and carbon. Pollution and smog must not be a normal way of life for our children and our children's children.

Ms. KAPTUR. I would like to yield 30 seconds to myself to just thank the gentlewoman very much for her comments and to say how very much I enjoyed visiting the Berkeley lab with her out in California and knowing the work that they are doing not just for California, but for the whole country.

It has been really a pleasure to work with you and to support that lab and its activities.

Ms. LEE. Will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. KAPTUR. I yield to the gentlewoman from California.

Ms. LEE. I just thank the gentlewoman, first of all, for her visit, but also for really understanding very deeply what our labs are about and what they are really conducting not only for my district and for California, but for the country and for the world in terms of their research.

I just really want to thank you because the feedback, of course, from my lab is how smart and how committed you are.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Chairman, it is my pleasure to yield 90 seconds to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DIAZ-BALART), a good friend of mine and a member of the Appropriations Committee. He is the chairman of the Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Subcommittee on Appropriations.

Before yielding to Mr. DIAZ-BALART from Florida, I would like to thank the gentleman for all his tireless work on behalf of the Everglades, truly a remarkable spot. He is a true leader on these issues, and he continues to restore the Everglades to their natural state.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Chairman, I actually came here to thank Chairman SIMPSON for putting together this great bill, a responsible bill and, again, for putting up with me and working with me on issues dealing with Everglades restoration. I don't have to tell anybody here that is a national treasure. It is important not only for southern Florida's drinking water, but also for our economy.

I also want to specifically thank the chairman for his help in the Herbert Hoover Dike, which is crucial, again, for the folks in that area.

Again, Mr. Chairman, this is a great bill. Chairman SIMPSON has a very difficult task. He has done a spectacular job. Again, thank you, sir, for working with me on these important issues.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE).

Ms. LEE. Let me thank the gentlewoman for yielding. Once again, congratulations on bringing this important bill to the floor.

I wanted to thank you for the chance to really engage and for your willingness to address an issue of critical importance to the Nation's innovation and competitiveness, that is the full utilization of the Department of Energy's radiation light source national user facilities.

Unfortunately, the funding level in this bill for DOE's light source scientific user facilities would not utilize our Federal investment to the fullest effect. This would lead to facilities temporarily shutting down and laying off and furloughing scientific staff.

The fiscal year '15 enacted level for this program was $447 million. Now, the President has requested $477 million, but the House mark is $443 million.

My colleagues and I look forward to working with you to address this issue in conference and with the Senate and to work toward a higher mark for this account, at least higher than fiscal year '15 and hopefully closer to the President's budget.

Again, I want to thank you for your leadership and for your willingness to work with us on this important issue.

Mr. HONDA. Will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. LEE. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member KAPTUR, I echo my colleague's comments and thank you for your collegial leadership of the subcommittee.

Funding the synchrotron light sources adequately is a competitiveness issue for the Nation's economic well-being. Companies from my district, throughout Silicon Valley and around the Nation, utilize these unique, large-scale scientific facilities to advance next generation technologies and to grow our Nation's economy.

Other nations are catching up. We must make sure to make the investments that retain our leadership. Thank you for your willingness to address this issue.

Mr. SIMPSON. Will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. LEE. I yield to the gentleman from Idaho.

Mr. SIMPSON. I thank you for bringing this important issue to the subcommittee's attention. I look forward to working with Ranking Member KAPTUR and all of you to support the Nation's light source user facilities as we move forward into conference.

Ms. KAPTUR. I also appreciate the Members bringing this to our attention, having visited more than one of these facilities and look forward to working with the chairman to support this very worthy activity.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Chairman, it is my pleasure to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr.

NEWHOUSE), a new Member of Congress who has been very active and who has been newly appointed to the Rules Committee for the purpose of a colloquy.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Chairman, Hanford is the Nation's largest and most complex Department of Energy defense nuclear cleanup site. I have greatly appreciated your willingness to work with me to ensure funding for this important effort.

The restoration of funds for cleanup along the Columbia River Corridor, which is legally required and a priority for the mid-Columbia region, puts those projects on a very strong path forward.

I also appreciate the funding provided for the Office of River Protection. As the final bill is developed for fiscal year '16, I would like to continue working with you to ensure that all of the work that the Federal Government is legally obligated to do is realized.

I am particularly concerned with ensuring that work is able to progress on retrieving Hanford's tank waste and preparing to feed an operational waste treatment plant while providing sufficient resources to meet near-term regulatory requirements in the tank farms.

Mr. SIMPSON. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. NEWHOUSE. I yield to the gentleman from Idaho.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank the gentleman from Washington for his strong advocacy for these important cleanup activities. I agree they are probably the most important in this country.

I look forward to working with him to ensure that activities at Hanford's tank farms and at the waste treatment plant receive the funding required to move forward safely, efficiently, and in a timely manner.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. I thank the gentleman and look forward to working with him, as well as the ranking member from Ohio, in the future.

Ms. KAPTUR. I have no further requests for time, so I yield back the balance of my time in the interests of moving forward with the bill.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Chairman, it is my pleasure to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. GIBBS).

Mr. GIBBS. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of H.R. 2028, the Energy and Water Development Appropriations bill for fiscal year 2016.

Not only does the underlying bill support funding for critical infrastructure in our country, but also includes several important provisions a majority of the Members in this body are concerned with.

Section 105 provides an excellent backstop for ensuring the EPA's controversial waters of United States rule does not go forward in its current state. This rule is nothing more than a Federal power grab for the EPA and it flies in the face of two Supreme Court decisions. The agencies themselves have admitted to Congress, in multiple hearings, that the proposed rule has created confusion and uncertainty.

I want to thank the chairman for including this necessary backstop provision that will help stop this rule from wreaking havoc on farmers, businesses, families, and the entire regulated community. This rule could potentially roll back the progress we have made in our Nation's water quality by instituting burdensome permitting costs and unnecessary red tape.

Another important provision prohibits the Corps from using funds for open lake placement of dredge material in Lake Erie, unless the material is approved under the State water quality certification program. We all know the benefits of dredging and how vital it is to the Great Lakes system's ecosystem, businesses, recreation, and tourism.

We must ensure dredged material is safely repurposed for beneficial use or placed in a confined disposal facility. If dredged sediment is placed in Lake Erie now, research shows increased PCB levels in the fish could cause significant setbacks to the recreational community.

In a time where our Great Lakes' water quality is threatened by algae and other contaminants, we must ensure we do not add to the problem.

I am also pleased to see my commonsense legislation included in the underlying bill to grant law-abiding gun owners the ability to exercise their Second Amendment rights when they are legally camping, hunting, and fishing on Army Corps property.

I thank Representative SIMPSON and Ranking Member KAPTUR for recognizing the importance of these provisions and for putting together a bill that sets appropriate levels.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Chairman, it is now my pleasure to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. REED) for the purpose of a colloquy.

Mr. REED. Mr. Chairman, I thank Chairman SIMPSON for providing me time to engage in this colloquy.

Through working with the chairman and others, the House was able to pass the Revitalize American Manufacturing and Innovation Act last year, and the legislation was signed into law.

□ 2100

This legislation is designed to bring manufacturing in our country to the next level by increasing global competitiveness and training the workforce of tomorrow through the establishment of centers throughout the country.

As some of these centers lie within the purview of the Energy and Water Appropriations bill, I want to take this opportunity to thank the chairman for working with me on this issue and to clarify that this bill we are considering today funds the establishment of at least one new center that can be coordinated with the Department of Commerce.

With that, I thank the chairman.

Mr. SIMPSON. I appreciate my friend's leadership on the Revitalize American Manufacturing and Innovation Act and can confirm that this bill funds the establishment of at least one new center. I look forward to working with you on these issues in the future and as this bill moves forward.

Mr. REED. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. SIMPSON. With that, Mr. Chairman, I believe we have no more requests for time on general debate and look forward to moving forward on the bill.

Like my colleague from Ohio, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule.

During consideration of the bill for amendment each amendment shall be debatable for 10 minutes equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent and shall not be subject to amendment. No pro forma amendment shall be in order except that the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations or their respective designees may offer up to 10 pro forma amendments each at any point for the purpose of debate. The chair of the Committee of the Whole may accord priority in recognition on the basis of whether the Member offering an amendment has caused it to be printed in the portion of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD designated for that purpose. Amendments so printed shall be considered read.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 2028

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the following sums are appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes, namely:

TITLE I—CORPS OF ENGINEERS—CIVIL

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

CORPS OF ENGINEERS—CIVIL

The following appropriations shall be expended under the direction of the Secretary of the Army and the supervision of the Chief of Engineers for authorized civil functions of the Department of the Army pertaining to river and harbor, flood and storm damage reduction, shore protection, aquatic ecosystem restoration, and related efforts.

INVESTIGATIONS

For expenses necessary where authorized by law for the collection and study of basic information pertaining to river and harbor, flood and storm damage reduction, shore protection, aquatic ecosystem restoration, and related needs; for surveys and detailed studies, and plans and specifications of proposed river and harbor, flood and storm damage reduction, shore protection, and aquatic ecosystem restoration projects, and related efforts prior to construction; for restudy of authorized projects; and for miscellaneous investigations, and, when authorized by law,

surveys and detailed studies, and plans and specifications of projects prior to construction, $110,000,000, to remain available until expended.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. GOSAR

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 3, line 4, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $1,000,000)''.

Page 27, line 13, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $1,000,000)''.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Arizona and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Chairman, I rise to offer an amendment which will help reduce the large backlog of important Army Corps of Engineers projects.

This amendment transfers $1 million from the Department of Energy's Departmental administration budget to the Corps of Engineers' investigations budget to bring it closer to the fiscal year 2015 enacted appropriation level.

The investigation account funds the planning and environmental studies required under law for important Corps projects prior to construction. There is a large backlog of worthwhile Corps projects throughout the country that are essential to improving infrastructures for communities, improving ecosystem restoration, providing clean water, and expanding much-needed water storage. These projects are especially critical to the drought-stricken communities in the West and many other parts of the Nation.

The committee showed great insight in recognizing that the administration's request for the Corps' investigation budget was much too low. Having said that, the amount appropriated in this bill is still $12 million below the fiscal year 2015 levels. At a time of historic drought and major water challenges, we shouldn't be reducing investigation dollars that will allow worthwhile community projects to move forward.

The committee has provided significant safeguards in the report to ensure the funds transferred by this amendment will go to the studies in planning for the most viable projects. Thus, support for this amendment is a definitive action we can take to directly support timely development of critical infrastructure projects.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

I thank the distinguished chair and ranking member for their work on this bill.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GOSAR).

The amendment was agreed to.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

CONSTRUCTION

For expenses necessary for the construction of river and harbor, flood and storm damage reduction, shore protection, aquatic ecosystem restoration, and related projects authorized by law; for conducting detailed studies, and plans and specifications, of such projects (including those involving participation by States, local governments, or private groups) authorized or made eligible for selection by law (but such detailed studies, and plans and specifications, shall not constitute a commitment of the Government to construction); $1,631,000,000, to remain available until expended; of which such sums as are necessary to cover the Federal share of construction costs for facilities under the Dredged Material Disposal Facilities program shall be derived from the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund as authorized by Public Law 104–303; and of which such sums as are necessary to cover one-half of the costs of construction, replacement, rehabilitation, and expansion of inland waterways projects shall be derived from the Inland Waterways Trust Fund, except as otherwise specifically provided for in law.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. GOSAR

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 3, line 16, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $3,000,000)''.

Page 27, line 13, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $3,000,000)''.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Arizona and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Chairman, I rise to offer another commonsense amendment that will help reduce the large backlog of important Army Corps of Engineers' projects by providing additional resources to the Corps' construction budget.

I applaud the committee for recommending resources for the Corps of Engineers' construction budget above the President's budget request, but the recommended level in this bill for construction is still $8.5 million beneath the fiscal year 2015 level.

A devastating drought is currently plaguing the West. CRS estimates that more than 93 percent of the State of California is experiencing severe drought. Other scientists have claimed this is the worst drought for some Western States in more than 100 years and that approximately 60 percent of the West is ''experiencing moderate drought or worse, affecting 52 million people.''

At a time of historic drought and major water challenges, we shouldn't be reducing construction dollars for Corps projects that improve infrastructure for local communities, improve ecosystem restoration, provide clean water, and expand much-needed water storage.

The committee report on this bill raised some important concerns about the draconian cuts proposed by this administration to the Corps of Engineers' construction budget.

From the committee report: ''The construction account would see the largest dollar reduction ($467,489,000) and largest percentage reduction (29 percent) . . . As mentioned above, the budget request is woefully inadequate for meeting the critical water resource infrastructure needs of this Nation. Numerous continuing studies and construction projects will be suspended or slowed, leaving many communities vulnerable to floods and coastal storms longer than necessary and hindering economic growth and international competitiveness . . . Once again, the administration's claims to understand the importance of infrastructure ring hollow when it comes to water resource infrastructure investments . . . Once again, however, the committee rejects the low priority placed on infrastructure in the budget request.''

The committee has provided significant safeguards in the report that will ensure that the funds transferred by this amendment go to the best projects, including those that will prevent future flooding and storm damage, create jobs, and enhance national, regional, or local economic development.

Support for this amendment is definitive action that we can take to directly support timely development of critical water projects that benefit communities throughout the Nation.

I thank the distinguished chair and ranking member.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment, even though I am not opposed to the gentleman's amendment.

The CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman from Idaho is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. SIMPSON. But I will tell you it is easy to draft amendments and take money out of the department of the administration—who is not going to be in support of that—and put it to other things.

I can tell you this committee has worked hard to address the issues. We know about the drought in California and other places, and we have done a good job in trying to fund this. If the gentleman wants to do this in here and take money out of the department of administration and the committee wants to do it, it is kind of meaningless, but I understand what the gentleman is trying to do.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOSAR. I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GOSAR).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. MURPHY OF FLORIDA

Mr. MURPHY of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 3. line 16, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $1,000,000)''.

Page 7, line 3, after the dollar amount, insert ''(decreased by $1,000,000)''.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Florida and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. MURPHY of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the chair and ranking member for their extremely hard work on the underlying bill and their ongoing commitment to Everglades restoration.

I rise because, at this very moment in my district in Florida, toxic blue-green algae is threatening the environment in our area. The amendment I am offering, along with the gentleman from Florida, Mr. CLAWSON, will enhance the Army Corps' environmental restoration efforts in south Florida and help put a stop to this vicious cycle once and for all.

The Everglades watershed stretches as far north as Orlando, where runoff eventually flows into Lake Okeechobee. Due to rapid development, the natural flow of water from north to south in the system has been severely disrupted, and we are inundated with freshwater discharges that harm our communities to the east and to the west of the lake.

Meanwhile, Florida Bay desperately needs freshwater to restore its natural ecology. However, moving clean water south to restore the entire ecosystem is no small feat.

I had the chance to explain to President Obama last week on his first trip to the Everglades how freshwater discharges are hurting our community while freshwater is desperately needed in the Florida Bay, and how critical the Everglades restoration efforts are throughout the whole system.

Supporting the Corps' ongoing work in the Everglades is key for water quality in the Caloosahatchee River watershed, which includes Ft. Myers and Cape Coral, the St. Lucie River watershed in the Treasure Coast and Palm Beaches that I represent, and throughout Florida.

Right now, a toxic blue-green algae bloom pictured here is threatening waterways in the most biodiverse estuary in all of North America. When toxic blooms hit our water, health advisories like this are posted—right here—warning people do not touch the very water that is the center of their livelihoods.

Supporting the Corps' Everglades work can help move restoration projects closer to completion, like the C–44 reservoir in Martin County, which will help hold water back from further harming the local population and ecologically fragile areas.

This is not the first time I have come to the House floor to address this issue. Every year, our communities face this same threat. And to the people that I represent, it is unsustainable, and it is time to stop this before lasting damage is done.

I, along with many people committed to protecting our water and our community, will not rest until the health advisories posted along our rivers and estuaries disappear once and for all. These aren't just our precious Everglades in Florida. This ecosystem is America's River of Grass with no place like it in the world. It must be protected at all costs.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment, and I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. CLAWSON), who has been a tireless champion on Everglades restoration.

□ 2115

Mr. CLAWSON of Florida. Thank you to Representative MURPHY for his great leadership on this issue, and particularly thank you to the chairman, Mr. SIMPSON, for his leadership and success in this endeavor.

Mr. Chairman, my first steps towards Congress began one summer day 2 years ago while I was wading in the Gulf of Mexico with my father, who is in the autumn of his lifetime. Walking beside my dad in knee-deep depth, the old vet and I couldn't see our own toes because of the dirty water. Dad looked at me, and he said, ''Son, do something about this.''

The Gulf had been contaminated by the discharge from Lake Okeechobee. The algae was in full bloom—toxic algae in our Gulf. Two years later, I humbly stand here and ask you: Please join me. Let's do something about this.

Clean water is both an environmental issue and a business issue. The dirty discharges damage our tourism, our economy, our drinking water, our beaches, our businesses, and our national treasure, the Everglades. The Federal Government and the State of Florida are already working to restore the Everglades with a larger freshwater supply, but we can do more.

I am asking you to help here by voting ''yes'' on this Murphy-Clawson amendment in order to help expedite projects like the critical South Florida Ecosystem Restoration and the Herbert Hoover Dike.

Mr. MURPHY of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MURPHY).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. DUFFY

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 3, line 16, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $10,000,000) (increased by $10,000,000)''.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Wisconsin and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the opportunity to offer this amendment and to speak in support of a program that is important to my constituents and to all of those around the Great Lakes.

The Great Lakes Fishery and Ecosystem Restoration, also known as ''GLFER,'' is responsible for the planning, design, and construction of projects to protect and restore the fisheries and aquatic habitat of the Great Lakes. These projects include the restoration of riverside and wetland habitats, the construction of fish passages, and improving spawning and nursery habitats. A critical part of this program is that it requires a 35 percent cost share from a local sponsor. So it is not just Federal money. It is local money as well to fund this project.

GLFER is widely supported by those with a stake in the Great Lakes, including the Great Lakes Commission, the Alliance for the Great Lakes, the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, and the Great Lakes fishing community.

Al House of Washburn, Wisconsin, one of my constituents and a board member of the Apostle Islands Sport Fisherman's Association, recently shared with me the importance of this program. He recounted: ''In recent discussions with groups in Lake Superior's basin, sport fishermen are in unanimous agreement that the GLFER program offers invaluable support to fishery habitat and ecosystem restoration projects that maintain and restore the health of our Great Lakes.''

This program has broad bipartisan support and the backing of environmental, industry, and recreational groups. Not often in this House do we see this kind of support across the spectrum.

It is authorized under WRRDA, similar to other regional restoration programs in south Florida and the Louisiana coastline, which are funded by the Army Corps of Engineers in this bill. Unfortunately, for the past several years, the Corps has chosen to include no funding for this program in the budget request. This is despite the calls from Congress to do so. In fact, language in the final funding bill for fiscal year 2015 urged the Corps to ''budget for this aquatic habitat restoration program in future budget submissions as it is important to the overall Great Lakes Restoration effort.'' Again, they didn't include it in their budget.

This amendment is intended to ensure that the Army Corps actually provides the $10 million necessary for the GLFER program in this fiscal year. This program should not have to rely on funding from other Great Lakes programs or wait for the leftovers of the Corps' to fund this very important project. I would hope that the Corps would follow the advice of Congress and actually account for this program in next year's budget request—actually listen to us.

I want to thank Chair Simpson and Ranking Member KAPTUR for their work on this legislation and for their support on this issue. I would urge my

colleagues to support our Great Lakes, to support our fish, and to support this bipartisan effort.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition, although I am not opposed to the gentleman's amendment.

The CHAIR. Without objection, the gentlewoman from Ohio is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Chairman, I just want to say to my fellow Great Lakes member that I appreciate his coming down here tonight at this late hour and representing the interests of the Great Lakes. We need stronger voices, and you, obviously, are one of those.

I am so glad that you are calling the Corps to task to pay attention to our region and to all of the improvements that are necessary to deal with the most vital body of freshwater on the face of the Earth and, certainly, in our country. I want to thank you very much, Congressman DUFFY, for your proposal. I think that the Corps will hear you. Many of us want to work with you and to do what we can to help not just this generation but those that follow in having access to this globally critical, precious freshwater resource that we call the Great Lakes. Thank you so very much for coming down this evening.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Chairman, I thank Ms. KAPTUR for her support of this amendment and for all of her work on the Great Lakes.

It is remarkable that we have such a wonderful bipartisan group that has a wide variety of opinions in this Chamber but that comes together to support the health and well-being of our Great Lakes and of our fisheries. Thank you for your support.

Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. DUFFY).

The amendment was agreed to.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

MISSISSIPPI RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES

For expenses necessary for flood damage reduction projects and related efforts in the Mississippi River alluvial valley below Cape Girardeau, Missouri, as authorized by law, $275,000,000, to remain available until expended, of which such sums as are necessary to cover the Federal share of eligible operation and maintenance costs for inland harbors shall be derived from the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. CRAWFORD

Mr. CRAWFORD. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order against the gentleman's amendment.

The CHAIR. A point of order is reserved.

The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 4, line 7, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $27,000,000)''.

Page 21, line 5, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $96,000,000)''.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Arkansas and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

Mr. CRAWFORD. First, let me thank the committee chairman and the staffs for their hard work in putting this bill together. I know it has taken a lot of time and the work of a lot of people to get it here today.

Mr. Chairman, my amendment restores funding for the Mississippi River and Tributaries Project, which is the largest flood control project in the world, to its FY15 enacted levels. The MR&T is critical in preventing widely devastating floods and to ensure this waterway remains open and able to carry the massive stream of trade that is so vital to American commerce. The Mississippi River is a thriving economic thoroughfare in the United States, with billions of tons of cargo being transported up and down the river each year.

The MR&T has played an integral role in protecting the lower Mississippi valley from floods and enabling continuous navigation along the Mississippi River and its tributaries. Since its inception in 1928, our Nation has received $45 for every dollar invested while preventing $612 billion in flood damages and protecting 4 million residents of the lower Mississippi River valley. The success of the project was on display in 2011, when the system withheld historic flooding that exceeded the benchmark set by the very 1927 flood which spurred the creation of the MR&T.

Not only does the MR&T protect lives and property in the lower Mississippi valley, but it also promotes navigation along the river and its tributaries, and it helps support a vibrant agriculture economy. Over 500 million tons of cargo move on the Mississippi River system each year, saving billions of dollars in domestic transportation costs and giving U.S. businesses a natural advantage.

At a time when the fiscal environment forces us to carefully evaluate where every dollar goes, I believe it is prudent to sufficiently fund projects like those covered under MR&T, which give taxpayers a return on their investment. I urge the support of this critical project.

I thank the chairman for his consideration, and I look forward to continuing to work with the committee and the chairman through the appropriations process on this critical investment in the Midsouth region.

Mr. Chair, at this time, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw my amendment.

The CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Arkansas?

There was no objection.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

For expenses necessary for the operation, maintenance, and care of existing river and harbor, flood and storm damage reduction, aquatic ecosystem restoration, and related projects authorized by law; providing security for infrastructure owned or operated by the Corps, including administrative buildings and laboratories; maintaining harbor channels provided by a State, municipality, or other public agency that serve essential navigation needs of general commerce, where authorized by law; surveying and charting northern and northwestern lakes and connecting waters; clearing and straightening channels; and removing obstructions to navigation, $3,058,000,000, to remain available until expended, of which such sums as are necessary to cover the Federal share of eligible operation and maintenance costs for coastal harbors and channels, and for inland harbors shall be derived from the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund; of which such sums as become available from the special account for the Corps of Engineers established by the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 shall be derived from that account for resource protection, research, interpretation, and maintenance activities related to resource protection in the areas at which outdoor recreation is available; and of which such sums as become available from fees collected under section 217 of Public Law 104–303 shall be used to cover the cost of operation and maintenance of the dredged material disposal facilities for which such fees have been collected: *Provided*, That 1 percent of the total amount of funds provided for each of the programs, projects, or activities funded under this heading shall not be allocated to a field operating activity prior to the beginning of the fourth quarter of the fiscal year and shall be available for use by the Chief of Engineers to fund such emergency activities as the Chief of Engineers determines to be necessary and appropriate, and that the Chief of Engineers shall allocate during the fourth quarter any remaining funds which have not been used for emergency activities proportionally in accordance with the amounts provided for the programs, projects, or activities.

AMENDMENT NO. 6 OFFERED BY MR. HUIZENGA OF MICHIGAN

Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 4, line 24, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $36,306,000)''.

Page 27, line 13, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $36,720,000)''.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Michigan and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan. Mr. Chairman, I rise this evening to offer an amendment, along with my friend, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. HAHN), to ensure that the Federal Government meets its obligations to our ports, to our harbors, and, frankly, to the American people.

Just last year, this body overwhelmingly passed the Water Resources Reform and Development Act, WRRDA,

by a vote of 412–4. It was later then signed into law by President Obama. WRRDA includes a glide path to increase harbor maintenance funding to a level collected through the harbor maintenance tax, directing Congress this fiscal year to spend 69 percent of all of the funds collected from the user fee of that harbor maintenance. Now, that is just 69 percent this year with a 10-year glide path, and we are pleased that we are going to be able to use all of that funding for its intended purpose.

While I was hoping to achieve full expenditure for the trust fund right away, I was willing to compromise on this glide path as a step in the right direction. Unfortunately, the current version of the Energy and Water bill falls short of the mark by just over $36 million.

I would like thank the chairman for working with us on a bipartisan and, I should say, a bicoastal way with my coming from the west side of Michigan, the west coast of Michigan—and we have got the West Coast of the country with California—and for finding a bipartisan solution to hit the target and offset the cost by reducing spending elsewhere.

We can hit this WRRDA target, and we believe that this will ensure that the 140 federally maintained commercial and recreational ports and harbors in the Great Lakes will be adequately maintained. These Federal harbor channels, like Pentwater, White Lake, Ludington, Muskegon, Holland, and Grand Haven, in my district, are the lifeblood of these very communities. Let's keep our promise to these communities and to the taxpayers who support this and allow their ports and harbors to be engines of economic growth and create jobs for American workers, farmers, and manufacturers.

Again, thank you for working with us, Mr. Chairman.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. HAHN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition, although I do not oppose the amendment.

The CHAIR. Without objection, the gentlewoman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Ms. HAHN. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I join my colleague and good friend from Michigan in offering the Huizenga-Hahn amendment to the Energy and Water Appropriations bill in order to utilize the harbor maintenance trust fund at the target set forth in the recently passed Water Resources Reform and Development Act. As my colleague said, this is a very important part of what we compromised on in the WRRDA bill.

As a Representative of the Nation's busiest port complex in Los Angeles, along with Long Beach, and as the cofounder of the Ports Caucus, along with TED POE, I have fought so hard since the first day I came to Congress to increase the funding for our Nation's ports and to fully utilize this harbor maintenance trust fund to ensure that the money that is collected at our ports goes back to our ports.

□ 2130

After working for months with my colleagues, we reached a plan to finally put the harbor maintenance trust fund to work and fully utilize it by 2025, but this bill on the floor today fails to follow the law we passed just last year with an overwhelming vote of 404–4. This bill is $36 million behind our targets. For our Nation to remain globally competitive, we need to fund our port infrastructure.

According to the Army Corps of Engineers, we need to fully fund our harbor maintenance tax for 5 years to fully dredge our ports. Ports are crucial across this country. Americans expect to go to Target and have tennis shoes or toys on its shelves; our farmers need efficient ports to export our agriculture products, and we cannot let America's infrastructure crumble. That is unacceptable.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ROUZER).

Mr. ROUZER. Mr. Chairman, I encourage my colleagues to support this amendment because it is critically important that we provide the necessary funding to ensure that our ports are fully dredged and properly maintained. The port in Wilmington, North Carolina, plays a vital role in helping our State's farmers and other businesses export their goods to foreign markets.

In fact, a recent study showed that Wilmington's port contributes $14 billion toward North Carolina's economy and supports, both directly and indirectly, nearly 77,000 jobs in our State. Without the proper funding, our ports will continue to deteriorate, and we risk putting our farmers and local industry—indeed, America—at a competitive disadvantage.

Ms. HAHN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GENE GREEN).

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I rise to speak in favor of the Huizenga and Hahn amendment. First, I would like to commend our Committee on Appropriations' efforts on the increased Army Corps of Engineers budget on the navigation safety and efficiency.

The committee's work this year, despite very low numbers from the budget, has been difficult. I would like to thank the chair, ranking member, and staff for your hard work in working with us.

In Texas, we have serious energy and water infrastructure needs. Representing a large part of the Port of Houston, our need for operation and maintenance, as well as construction money, is significant. I greatly appreciate the committee's efforts to fund our needs by appropriating more than $32 million for harbor maintenance, but this amount does not reflect the amount the Port of Houston needs or the amount of revenue it generates. The Port of Houston is the second largest port in the country by tonnage. The Port of Houston ranks number one in foreign tonnage.

For dredging operations alone, the Port of Houston requires more than $50 million annually. Currently, the Port of Houston has a backlog of projects with the Corps of Engineers totaling almost $100 million.

The Port of Houston generates significant tax revenue, both for the State and Federal Government. To meet the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century, the Port of Houston needs the funding allocated from the harbor maintenance trust fund.

The Water Resources Reform and Development Act, WRRDA, requires that 69 percent of harbor maintenance trust fund fees be spent on related activities. While the energy and water appropriators have done great things with limited resources, this bill shortchanges the Port of Houston and many other ports across the country.

I support the Huizenga-Hahn amendment. The approximately $37 million shortfall significantly impacts the ability of the Port of Houston to receive larger ships, and it is our job to meet these demands.

I ask my colleagues to support the Huizenga and Hahn amendment.

Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan. Mr. Chair, at this time, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. ABRAHAM).

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Chair, I want to thank Chairman SIMPSON for putting the money for the whole E and W bill.

Mr. Chair, I rise in support of this amendment to ensure that Congress remains faithful to its obligation to fund important infrastructure projects. The harbor maintenance trust fund takes in enough revenue each year to provide the necessary maintenance of our harbor ports and channels.

However, for years, expenditure of these funds has failed to keep up with the annual revenues. This amendment would simply keep us on schedule to hit the harbor maintenance target authorized by law in the Water Resource Reform and Development Act.

This fund helps the Army Corps of Engineers provide dredging and maintenance for critical ports and channels throughout the country. In my district alone, these funds have been used to provide needed dredging at the Lake Providence Harbor, the Madison Parish Port, and ensure that the Ouachita and Black Rivers and the J. Bennett Johnston Waterway remain open to transportation and commerce.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment that will keep our Nation's critical arteries open for business.

Ms. HAHN. Mr. Chairman, I just really want to thank Chairman SIMPSON and Ranking Member KAPTUR for allowing us to offer this amendment tonight. I really want to thank my colleague, Mr. HUIZENGA, for his incredible

passion and his ability to move this forward in a way that was acceptable tonight.

I think our ports and waterways across this country will thank the gentleman, but more importantly, I really believe that, when our ports and waterways are strong, this country will be strong, and I thank the gentleman very much for that.

I urge all my colleagues to support the Huizenga-Hahn amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan. Mr. Chair, I, too, want to thank my colleague, Ms. HAHN, for her work on the Huizenga-Hahn amendment. It has been a pleasure to work with her over a few years as we have gone to battle over this issue and for this issue; and ultimately, as she pointed out, having a port system that is functional, that is usable, is critical to the economy of our Nation.

I, too, want to thank Chairman SIMPSON for his work and willingness to sit down and work through some issues with us. I pledge to the chairman—and I know Representative HAHN does as well—that, as we are going through this process, we will continue to refine how the harbor maintenance trust fund works, and I look forward to having this amendment be passed.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SIMPSON. I move to strike the last word.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Idaho is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Chair, I want to thank the gentleman from Michigan and the gentlelady from California for working with us on this.

What a lot of people may not understand is the challenge that presents us with the harbor maintenance trust fund and the way it is scored and the way it is counted for. I am one who believes that, if you have got a problem and you are going to tax people in order to address that problem, you ought to spend the money that you are receiving to address the problem.

Instead, what happens is we spend—as I think the gentleman said, 69 percent is the target—we will only spend 69 percent of what came in this year in the harbor maintenance trust fund on actually dredging the harbors and so forth. That seems rather silly. I think we ought to be able to spend it all if we have got a problem. If we are not going to spend it all, we shouldn't tax it.

The problem is the way we score things and the budget around here is that we are given an overall cap in the Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations. We have to have our total bill come in under that cap.

If we spend more money in the harbor maintenance area, even though we have that money in a trust fund, then we have to decrease spending in everything else, such as the other energy portions of the bill or something like that, so increasing it even more decreases what we can spend in other needed areas. That is the challenge we face.

What I would like to do is work with all of the supporters of the harbor maintenance trust fund to find a way that we can address this issue—it is really an issue created by us—but address this issue so that the funds that we collect in the harbor maintenance trust fund can actually go out and do what we expect them to do.

I do appreciate the gentlelady from California and the gentleman from Michigan and the others that are interested. I should mention the other gentleman from Louisiana that is not here that has been an advocate for this for many years and many Congresses, Mr. BOUSTANY. I do thank you for working on this and working with the committee to try to address this to see if we can get up to the target.

The other thing is it was said that we didn't reach the target in this. While it depends on kind of how you look at it, there are, as you know, other purposes for which the harbor maintenance trust fund is spent, Saint Lawrence Seaway and also for one of the other accounts in transportation for border security and stuff.

If you count those in the total spending of WRRDA, it probably does come close to reaching the target, as long as those committees appropriate what was requested. I don't know whether they will or not, but if they do.

I think working in a bipartisan way, we have come up with the best we can do to address this. I know it is of high importance to all Members of Congress. I thank the gentlelady and the gentleman for working with the committee.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HUIZENGA).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. RICE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Mr. RICE of South Carolina. I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 4, line 24, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $4,500,000)''.

Page 6, line 6, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $4,500,000)''.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from South Carolina and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from South Carolina.

Mr. RICE of South Carolina. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, so many things we do here in Washington are nonsensical. Our tax system is not competitive; our immigration system is not competitive; our regulatory system is not competitive, and our infrastructure is deteriorating. Our ports are certainly a very, very critical part of our infrastructure.

When we have a situation where it takes 15-plus years to get environmental permitting done for the Port Everglades, when we are on the fourth year of studying the Charleston port—one of the most efficient ports on the East Coast—and when it has been 10 years since we have had dredging funds for the small Port of Georgetown in my district, our infrastructure continues to deteriorate; the country becomes less competitive, and thousands more American jobs are lost.

With limited funds, it is increasingly difficult for small harbors to compete with larger projects. Given this competition for scarce funds, very few small projects make the President's budget and receive funding.

What my amendment proposes to do, Mr. Chairman, is to remove $4.5 million from the Army Corps' regulatory budget, which the regulatory division of the Army Corps of Engineers continues to grow and promulgate more regulations that make our country even less competitive, such as the expansion of the Clean Water Act that are currently proposed.

This would take money from that regulatory division and put it into the operating and maintenance division so that these moneys can be used to actually make our ports work again.

The bottom line is our harbors are showing, and we need to increase money to maintenance accounts so that our harbors can compete. In my district, the Port of Georgetown has not received maintenance dredging in over a decade. This is a port that handled 1.7 million tons of cargo in the year 2000. The economy in the area is largely dependent on the port, and the port is getting more and more shallow each year.

The State of South Carolina has pledged $18 million for port dredging. The ports authority in South Carolina has pledged $5 million, and even the Georgetown County voters have passed a referendum that will apply $6 million to dredge the harbor. Currently, Georgetown is waiting for the President or the Army Corps of Engineers to realize its importance and fund the Federal portion of this project.

It is vitally important for the Corps' maintenance account to be sufficient, which is why my amendment transfers $4.5 million from regulatory activities to maintaining our harbors.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 2145

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Idaho is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SIMPSON. It is my understanding the gentleman is going to withdraw the amendment after speaking on it.

Mr. RICE of South Carolina. If the chairman is going to oppose my amendment, I will withdraw it out of respect for the chairman.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Chairman, I certainly understand the desire and the need for sufficient funding for harbor maintenance. That was a debate we just had here on the floor, but this House adopted an amendment from my colleague from Michigan (Mr. HUIZENGA) to meet the annual target set for the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014. We hit the target we all agreed to.

Additionally, while I certainly take issue with some of the regulatory changes this administration is pursuing, the Corps does need funding for processing permits in a timely manner.

The underlying bill already eliminates funding for the changes to the waters of the United States. We do not want to slow down other necessary activities.

For these reasons, I must oppose the gentleman's amendment, but I certainly understand his concern and his desire with this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RICE of South Carolina. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank Chairman SIMPSON and Ranking Member KAPTUR for their work on this good piece of legislation.

Mr. Chair, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw the amendment.

The CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from South Carolina?

There was no objection.

The CHAIR. Are there further amendments?

If not, the Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

REGULATORY PROGRAM

For expenses necessary for administration of laws pertaining to regulation of navigable waters and wetlands, $200,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2017.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. GOSAR

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 6, line 6, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $424,000)''.

Page 28, line 13, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $424,000)''.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Arizona and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment which seeks to ensure the adequate resources for the Department of Energy's inspector general's office.

As a member of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, I am a firm believer in oversight of the Federal Government. The more sunlight on Federal activity, the more honest and efficient it will be. I am also a strong proponent of our inspector general community.

Since the Inspector General Act was passed into law, the IG community has saved taxpayers billions of dollars and has uncovered countless examples of wrongdoing in the Federal Government.

I just read a GAO investigation report yesterday that found that loans currently in the Department of Energy portfolio are expected to cost the taxpayers more than $2.2 billion. The report went on to state that $807 million of the $2.2 billion is a result of bad loans that have already defaulted. In fact, five major DOE loans have already defaulted from the agency's 2014 portfolio.

The report also noted that the cost to the taxpayers from these flawed DOE loans could even exceed the $2.2 billion estimated figure. ''The final credit subsidy cost of a given loan or loan guarantee will not be known until the life of the loan is complete . . . Both DOE loan programs can expose the government and taxpayers to substantial financial risk if borrowers default.''

Further, this committee noted in the committee report accompanying this bill: ''The committee is also concerned that the Department is failing in its responsibility to ensure that DOE contracts with incurred costs valued at billions of dollars per year are audited in a timely manner.''

Clearly, there is a lack of oversight and accountability within DOE that needs to change. It is the responsibility of the DOE inspector general to report to Congress on these issues so that we can rectify these problems and ensure taxpayers aren't exposed to another Solyndra.

I applaud the committee for recommending resources above and beyond last year's enacted levels, but the recommended level is still beneath the President's budget request.

Let's give the inspector general's office the resources it needs. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support the passage of this commonsense amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GOSAR).

The amendment was agreed to.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

FORMERLY UTILIZED SITES REMEDIAL ACTION PROGRAM

For expenses necessary to clean up contamination from sites in the United States resulting from work performed as part of the Nation's early atomic energy program, $104,000,000, to remain available until expended.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. MCCLINTOCK

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 6, line 12, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $2,500,000)''.

Page 21, line 5, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $400,000)''.

Page 22, line 3, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $22,661,000)''.

Page 22, line 20, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $34,000,000)''.

Page 24, line 7, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $227,000)''.

Page 25, line 5, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $32,262,000)''.

Page 25, line 25, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $18,000)''.

Page 27, line 7, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $2,000,000)''.

Page 27, line 13, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $5,119,000)''.

Page 35, line 17, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $1,632,000)''.

Page 49, line 22, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $5,000,000)''.

Page 51, line 24, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $23,101,000)''.

Page 57, line 11, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $128,920,000)''.

Mr. SIMPSON (during the reading). Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order on the gentleman's amendment.

The CHAIR. A point of order is reserved.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk continued to read.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from California and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, this amendment continues the effort to stop or, at least in this case, to freeze appropriations that are made for agencies whose legal authorizations lapsed many years and even decades ago.

Ever since 1835, the rules of the House have forbidden spending any money for purposes unauthorized by current law; yet today, about one-third of our discretionary spending is for unauthorized programs.

Why is that? Well, it is because the rule against unauthorized spending cannot be enforced because it is always waived by the resolutions that bring these bills to the floor.

The bill before us today contains $25 billion in unauthorized spending for programs that have not been reviewed by the authorizing committees since as far back as 1980, Jimmy Carter's last year in office.

I am sure that some—even many—of these programs are valuable and worthy of taxpayer dollars, but surely others are not. The fact that they have not been authorized in as many as 35 years ought to warn us to at least be a little more careful in continuing to fund them.

Rather than review our spending decisions and making tough choices about spending priorities, Congress simply rubberstamps these programs out of habit, year after year. It is no wonder we are so deeply in debt with so little to show for it.

My amendment does not defund these unauthorized programs, as the House rules require. It simply freezes spending on them at last year's level.

The cuts contained in this amendment total $129 million, or about thirty-six one-hundredths of 1 percent of the total spending in this bill.

This House has a responsibility to examine these programs, reauthorize the ones that work, and modify or end the

ones that don't. It has a responsibility, but it has no incentive, as long as we keep funding them and, worse, increasing the funding that these programs receive.

In a sense, this is a token. It is a symbol. Reducing this bill by thirty-six one-hundredths of 1 percent will have no appreciable effect on the $35.5 million in this appropriation or the $3.8 trillion the Federal Government plans to spend this year, but I hope that it will send a subtle but clear message that the Members of this House insist that the Congress reassert its constitutional responsibility to authorize Federal spending and to enforce its own rules that prohibit spending blindly on unauthorized programs.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the gentleman's amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Idaho is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SIMPSON. I have to tell you, in all honesty, I understand what he is trying to do, and I agree with him in many ways; but, when he says we have to observe the rules of the House, the rules of the House also allow for the Rules Committee to write a rule that overrides the rules of the House. If it is approved by a majority, guess what, that is what happens. We are following the rules of the House, but he raises a point that is of concern—and should be.

When I was chairman of the Interior Subcommittee, we tried to defund the Endangered Species Act and designations of critical habitat because the Endangered Species Act had not been reauthorized for something like 23 or 26 years.

We lost an amendment on the floor to put the money back into it, but we were trying to make a point—and I was supported by the chairman of the Resources Committee—but we were trying to make the point that the authorizing committees need to get busy and do their job. I fully believe that.

That was 8 years ago. We still haven't done anything to reauthorize the Endangered Species Act, and the chairman at that time supported what we were trying to do. I haven't seen any reauthorization bills come up.

Now, if you look at what is not authorized in the Federal Government right now—or where authorizations have expired—I think there is a reason for an expiration date. It is so that you go in and review the program and see if the need is still there, can we do it better, do we need to make changes, is there still a justification for the program.

The problem is the authorizing committees have failed in many respects in that responsibility. If we were to simply defund everything where authorizations have expired—I think the Department of State authorization has expired; I am not sure we want to defund the Department of State; some people might want to—but there is an awful lot. I think, in most senior programs, the authorizations have expired, and you can go through the list.

While the gentleman raises a very valid point and one that I would like to help work with him on trying to address, the Appropriations Committee is trying to do our job of oversight. That is why we have hearings.

Is it the best place to do oversight of the need for the programs? We do oversight on how the money is spent and so forth, but the authorizing committees are the best place to look at the programs and see in their totality if they are still needed or not.

While I sympathize—and I know that is not what the gentleman from California wants—while I sympathize with what the gentleman is trying to do—and even agree with what he is trying to do—I have to rise in opposition to the gentleman's amendment, but I thank him for bringing a very important subject to this floor.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Chair, I move to strike the last word.

The CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Ohio is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. I, as well as the chairman, appreciate the gentleman coming to the floor and pointing out some of the inadequacies of process here, but I wanted to just state for the record that a couple of the items that the gentleman targets, I think, would do damage to the country.

For example, the accounts that deal with cleaning up the cold war legacy, that means that communities across our country that sacrificed in the name of the country would have to wait even longer for a resolution to the contamination that exists.

It is astounding how much there is from coast-to-coast. When you start looking, you almost want to close the book because there is so much, and I think that the communities that have been dealing with these remediation problems over the years would not appreciate the gentleman's amendment this evening.

□ 2200

In addition to that, I wanted to say something about ARPA-E, where we have our advanced energy research going on. You know, the United States is not energy secure. We are still too vulnerable here at home on many levels, and ARPA-E provides us with a real global advantage.

I don't think we need to shave anything from ARPA-E because if I look at some of the competition that is coming at us from China, for example, it is even coming in very unfair ways, such as hacking into our intellectual property that any of our private companies hold.

We view ARPA-E as essential to our future, really, with what we are doing within the global marketplace. So I think the gentleman is very well-intentioned in trying to have regular order. I wish that it all worked so perfectly, but I don't think that we should hurt communities across this country nor the long-term energy interests of the Nation, because I think that is what would be done if the gentleman's amendment were to pass.

I just wanted to put that on the RECORD and rise in opposition, but I respect the gentleman for coming down here and for trying to perfect the way that we conduct the affairs of the Nation.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. I appreciate the gentlelady's kind words.

I would point out that this defunds nothing. All that it does is to freeze spending of those unauthorized programs at last year's level until the authorizing committees actually sit down and review them and revise them and reauthorize them. Nor is anything in the NDAA affected by this freeze.

I appreciate my friend from Idaho's sympathy, but I would trade it in a moment for his support. And I would point out that this amendment, the whole point of this amendment is that authorizing committees have got to review, reauthorize, revise, or repeal these measures. They have got to do one of those things.

But why should they, why would they want to go to all of the fuss and bother of reviewing these programs, taking on entrenched interests, asking hard questions, making people cranky in the process, when all they have to do, under our current practice, is sit there, do absolutely nothing, and the funding, just like the mighty Mississippi, just keeps rolling along.

We cannot continue down this course responsibly. We have a responsibility to the American people to do that heavy lifting, to go through these programs with a fine-tooth comb, to make the revisions that are necessary according to our own experience and, in the most important mandate this Congress has been given, to stop wasting people's money.

This measure is a very small step. To suggest that it is going to have dire consequences, cutting thirty-six one-hundredths of 1 percent of the total funds in this bill, is a measure of how out of control our thinking on spending has gotten.

So, with that, Mr. Chairman, I would ask for this single token, that we take a stand and at least freeze the unauthorized spending.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Chairman, how much time do I have left?

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Idaho has 2 minutes remaining.

Mr. SIMPSON. I thank the gentleman for his comments and for proposing this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I withdraw my reservation of a point of order.

The CHAIR. The reservation of the point of order is withdrawn.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the gentleman's

amendment. I would hate to get the idea, when he says stop wasting taxpayer money that, just because we are funding these programs that haven't been reauthorized, we are wasting taxpayer money. We actually look at these programs very deeply when we do the appropriations process.

And, in fact, I wouldn't want to suggest to the American people that we never eliminate any program that authorizations have expired on or whose need we have deemed has run out. When I was chairman of the Committee on the Interior, I think we eliminated something like 59 different programs that we no longer needed. So it is not that we sit here and just continue to fund things, but we do look at the programs, the need for the programs.

I fully agree with the gentleman about the need to somehow change this so that the authorizing committees can do their—or will do their—authorizations work. But the Appropriations Committee holds probably more hearings than any other committee in this body and looks at these programs very deeply.

There may be differences about what is necessary and what is appropriate for funding between Members of this body, but what we come out with is a bill that we think a majority of the Members of this body can support.

So I look forward to working with the gentleman from California to try to address what is a real problem that he brings up, but I would hope my colleagues would oppose this amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK).

The question was taken; and the Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California will be postponed.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

FLOOD CONTROL AND COASTAL EMERGENCIES

For expenses necessary to prepare for flood, hurricane, and other natural disasters and support emergency operations, repairs, and other activities in response to such disasters as authorized by law, $34,000,000, to remain available until expended.

EXPENSES

For expenses necessary for the supervision and general administration of the civil works program in the headquarters of the Corps of Engineers and the offices of the Division Engineers; and for costs of management and operation of the Humphreys Engineer Center Support Activity, the Institute for Water Resources, the United States Army Engineer Research and Development Center, and the United States Army Corps of Engineers Finance Center allocable to the civil works program, $180,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2017, of which not to exceed $5,000 may be used for official reception and representation purposes and only during the current fiscal year: *Provided*, That no part of any other appropriation provided in this title shall be available to fund the civil works activities of the Office of the Chief of Engineers or the civil works executive direction and management activities of the division offices: *Provided further*, That any Flood Control and Coastal Emergencies appropriation may be used to fund the supervision and general administration of emergency operations, repairs, and other activities in response to any flood, hurricane, or other natural disaster.

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY FOR CIVIL WORKS

For the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works as authorized by 10 U.S.C. 3016(b)(3), $4,750,000, to remain available until September 30, 2017: *Provided*, That not more than 25 percent of such amount may be obligated or expended until the Assistant Secretary submits to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress a work plan that allocates at least 95 percent of the additional funding provided under each heading in this title (as designated under such heading in the report of the Committee on Appropriations accompanying this Act) to specific programs, projects, or activities.

GENERAL PROVISIONS—CORPS OF ENGINEERS—CIVIL

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 101. (a) None of the funds provided in this title shall be available for obligation or expenditure through a reprogramming of funds that—

(1) creates or initiates a new program, project, or activity;

(2) eliminates a program, project, or activity;

(3) increases funds or personnel for any program, project, or activity for which funds have been denied or restricted by this Act;

(4) reduces funds that are directed to be used for a specific program, project, or activity by this Act;

(5) increases funds for any program, project, or activity by more than $2,000,000 or 10 percent, whichever is less; or;

(6) reduces funds for any program, project, or activity by more than $2,000,000 or 10 percent, whichever is less.

(b) Subsection (a)(1) shall not apply to any project or activity authorized under section 205 of the Flood Control Act of 1948, section 14 of the Flood Control Act of 1946, section 208 of the Flood Control Act of 1954, section 107 of the River and Harbor Act of 1960, section 103 of the River and Harbor Act of 1962, section 111 of the River and Harbor Act of 1968, section 1135 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986, section 206 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1996, or section 204 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1992.

(c) The Corps of Engineers shall submit reports on a quarterly basis to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress detailing all the funds reprogrammed between programs, projects, activities, or categories of funding. The first quarterly report shall be submitted not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 102. None of the funds made available in this title may be used to award or modify any contract that commits funds beyond the amounts appropriated for that program, project, or activity that remain unobligated, except that such amounts may include any funds that have been made available through reprogramming pursuant to section 101.

SEC. 103. The Secretary of the Army may transfer to the Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Fish and Wildlife Service may accept and expend, up to $4,700,000 of funds provided in this title under the heading ''Operation and Maintenance'' to mitigate for fisheries lost due to Corps of Engineers projects.

SEC. 104. None of the funds made available in this or any other Act making appropriations for Energy and Water Development for any fiscal year may be used by the Corps of Engineers to develop, adopt, implement, administer, or enforce any change to the regulations in effect on October 1, 2012, pertaining to the definitions of the terms ''fill material'' or ''discharge of fill material'' for the purposes of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.).

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. BEYER

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 10, beginning on line 10, strike section 104.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BEYER) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chairman, the amendment is very simple. It strikes section 104 of this bill.

Section 104 would prevent the Army Corps of Engineers from updating regulations pertaining to the definitions of ''fill material'' or ''discharge of fill material'' for the purposes of the Clean Water Act.

When Congress first enacted the Clean Water Act, and for nearly 35 years after its passage, the law kept America's lakes, rivers, and streams safe from mining pollution, protecting our wildlife and our drinking water. That is no longer the case today.

My amendment would remove this anti-Clean Water Act rider. Current and future administrations should have the flexibility to change the definitions of ''fill material'' or ''discharge of fill material'' should they wish to.

When Congress first enacted the Clean Water Act, the 404 permit process was supposed to be used for certain construction projects like bridges and roads where raising the bottom elevation of a water body or converting an area into dry land was unavoidable.

Under a 2002 rule change, the definition of ''fill material'' was broadened to include: ''rock, sand, soil, clay, plastics, construction debris, wood chips, and overburden from mining or other excavation activities.'' The revised rule also removed regulatory language which previously excluded ''waste'' discharges from section 404 jurisdiction, a change that some argue allows the use of 404 permits to authorize certain discharges that harm the aquatic environment.

The Clean Water Act, section 404(b)(1) guidelines are not well-suited for evaluating the environmental effects of discharging hazardous wastes such as mining refuse and similar materials into a water body or wetland.

In sum, the net effect of the 2002 rule change was to alter the Corps permit process in ways that Congress never intended. It was not congressional intent to allow mining refuse and similar material, some of it hazardous, to qualify

as ''fill material'' and thereby bypass a more thorough environmental review and meet Federal pollution standards. Downstream water users have every right to be concerned that the section 404 process fails to protect them from the discharge of hazardous substances.

Lower Slate Lake in Alaska is the perfect example. A permit allows the discharge of toxic wastewater from a gold ore processing mill to go untreated directly into the lake, despite the fact that the discharge violates EPA's standards for the mining industry.

Mining waste can contain toxic chemicals known to pose health risks to humans and aquatic animals, and continuing the practice of dumping this waste into our Nation's streams and rivers is dangerous and irresponsible. EPA estimates that 120 miles per year of headwater streams are buried with the chemical-laden discharge as a result of surface mining operations under the existing definitions of ''fill.''

Equally important, a 2008 EPA study found evidence that mining activities can have severe impacts on downstream aquatic life and the biological conditions of a stream. That same study found that 9 out of every 10 streams downstream from surface mining operations were impaired based on assessments of aquatic life.

Mr. Chairman, this provision is a preemptive strike against protecting our drinking water, and since there is no time limit on the provision, it would not only block the current Obama administration, but any future administration from considering changes.

I urge my colleagues to support my amendment and to strike section 104 from this bill.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Idaho is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SIMPSON. I thank the gentleman from Virginia. It seems like old times. You just changed your appearance.

Mr. Moran and I, your colleague before you, he and I had this discussion many, many times on the Clean Water Act and waters of the United States and fill material and so forth, and it seems like you just look different than he used to.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this amendment. The language in the bill is intended simply to maintain the status quo regarding what is ''fill material'' for the purposes of the Clean Water Act.

The existing definition was put in place through a rulemaking initiated by the Clinton administration and finalized by the Bush administration. The rule aligned the definitions on the books of the Corps and the EPA, so that both agencies were working with the same definition.

Changing the definition again, as some have proposed, could effectively kill mining operations across much of this country. For that reason, I support the underlying language in the bill. That is why we put it in the bill, and I oppose this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BEYER).

The amendment was rejected.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

SEC. 105. None of the funds made available in this or any other Act making appropriations for Energy and Water Development for any fiscal year may be used by the Corps of Engineers to develop, adopt, implement, administer, or enforce any change to the regulations and guidance in effect on October 1, 2012, pertaining to the definition of waters under the jurisdiction of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.), including the provisions of the rules dated November 13, 1986, and August 25, 1993, relating to such jurisdiction, and the guidance documents dated January 15, 2003, and December 2, 2008, relating to such jurisdiction.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. BEYER

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 10, beginning on line 19, strike section 105.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Virginia and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Chairman, my amendment would simply strike section 105. As it stands, section 105 would prevent the Army Corps of Engineers from finalizing its proposed regulation clarifying the limits of Federal jurisdiction under the Clean Water Act.

This language is not new. I understand we have seen it a number of times. The difference is that the conversation has since progressed, and almost everyone agrees that clarity is needed. Calls for the EPA to issue a rule even came from such notable organizations as the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, the American Farm Bureau Federation, the Western Business Roundtable, and the National Association of Manufacturers.

Prohibiting EPA from finalizing the rule, as section 105 would direct, would perpetuate this confusion, and there are countless cases that reiterate this point.

For example, the EPA acknowledged enforcement difficulties in a case in which storm water from construction sites carried oil, grass, grease, and other pollutants into tributaries to the San Pedro River, which is an internationally recognized river ecosystem supporting diverse wildlife but where the waters in question only flow for part of the year. The Agency stated that it ''had to discontinue all enforcement cases in this area because it was so time-consuming and costly to prove that the Clean Water Act protects these rivers.''

We need to end the confusion and, through a public comment process and appropriate congressional oversight, allow the administration to move forward and complete a formal rulemaking.

It also needs to be said that the opponents of the Clean Water rule have it wrong. The proposed rule respects agriculture and the law by maintaining all of the existing exemptions for agricultural discharges and water. It identifies specific types of water bodies to which it does not apply, areas like artificial lakes and ponds, and many types of drainage and irrigation ditches. It does not extend Federal protection to any waters not historically protected under the Clean Water Act, and it is fully consistent with the law and the decisions of the Supreme Court.

The administration has a strong, commonsense plan to make clean water a priority by protecting the sources that feed the drinking water for more than 117 million Americans.

If Congress blocks this proposal to protect clean water, 20 million acres of wetlands nationwide will continue to be at risk. Stopping this proposal will also impact the small businesses and communities that rely on clean water.

American businesses need to know when the Federal Government has authority and when it doesn't, and without updated guidance, businesses will often not know when they need Army Corps of Engineers permits. This uncertainty could subject them to civil and criminal liability and will certainly cost them extra money.

□ 2215

The clean water rule will largely restore but not expand historic coverage of the Clean Water Act at no direct cost to the public. EPA estimates that the clean water rule would provide up to $514 million annually in benefits to the public.

Updating the rules and guidance is essential. We need to allow EPA and the Corps to do their job and clarify their rules and guidance. If they fail to do it in accordance with existing law, more lawsuits will ensue.

Overall, these anti-Clean Water Act riders are part of an effort to return us to a time when we had no uniform national minimum clean water standard and States had conflicting policies or no policies at all. That was a time when rivers were so polluted, they caught fire, and responsible downstream States suffered the consequences of lax or weak upstream States' policies.

Today we have cleaner, more drinkable waters precisely because of the Clean Water Act.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this clean water rider and support our amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Idaho is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to this amendment. Last spring, the administration proposed a rule that would greatly expand the Federal jurisdiction over the Clean Water Act to include waters that were traditionally understood to be under State jurisdiction.

Let me repeat that. Many people believed that if the waters were not regulated under the Clean Water Act, they were unregulated. Not true. They were regulated by the States. And that is where it should remain.

Now, there became a question of, under the Clean Water Act, under ''navigable waters,'' what the heck does that mean? It was very confusing. Does it mean navigable by a steamship, navigable by a boat, a canoe, an inner tube? And the Court said, You need to clarify this.

Well, the EPA essentially said, Well, we can clarify that. We will just control all the waters and take them out of State control.

I think that is a problem, and I can tell you that it is a real problem for States in the West, particularly.

The administration's proposed rule is inconsistent with two separate Supreme Court decisions that clearly said the Corps of Engineers and the Environmental Protection Agency had gone too far in that Federal jurisdiction under the Clean Water Act was not as broad as they had claimed.

Deciding how water is used should be the responsibility of State and local officials who are familiar with the people and local issues.

Under the rule provided by the EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers, they are saying intermittent streams. Any streams that don't have water running in them, but maybe a month or two a year, now fall under their jurisdiction.

And under the connectivity rule, which is what this is—you know, the hip bone is connected to the leg bone is connected to the knee bone sort of thing—under the connectivity rule, while they say that this is not their intent, there is no way that you cannot eventually say that we are going to control groundwater also—not just surface water but groundwater also—because it is connected to the surface water also.

So while there may be a desire for clarity on the issue of Federal jurisdiction, providing clarity does not trump the need to stay within the limits of the law. The proposed rule would expand Federal jurisdiction far beyond what was ever intended by the Clean Water Act. The provision in the Energy and Water bill does not weaken the Clean Water Act. It stops the administration from expanding Federal jurisdiction.

For those reasons, I strongly oppose this amendment and urge my colleagues to vote ''no.''

I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BEYER).

The amendment was rejected.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

SEC. 106. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to require a permit for the discharge of dredged or fill material under the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251, et seq.) for the activities identified in subparagraphs (A) and (C) of section 404(f)(1) of the Act (33 U.S.C. 1344(f)(1)(A), (C)).

SEC. 107. As of the date of enactment of this Act and each fiscal year thereafter, the Secretary of the Army shall not promulgate or enforce any regulation that prohibits an individual from possessing a firearm, including an assembled or functional firearm, at a water resources development project covered under section 327.0 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on the date of enactment of this Act), if—

(1) the individual is not otherwise prohibited by law from possessing the firearm; and

(2) the possession of the firearm is in compliance with the law of the State in which the water resources development project is located.

SEC. 108. No funds in this Act shall be used for an open lake placement alternative of dredged material, after evaluating the least costly, environmentally acceptable manner for the disposal or management of dredged material originating from Lake Erie or tributaries thereto, unless it is approved under a State water quality certification pursuant to 33 U.S.C. 1341.

TITLE II—DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

CENTRAL UTAH PROJECT

CENTRAL UTAH PROJECT COMPLETION ACCOUNT

For carrying out activities authorized by the Central Utah Project Completion Act, $9,874,000, to remain available until expended, of which $1,000,000 shall be deposited into the Utah Reclamation Mitigation and Conservation Account for use by the Utah Reclamation Mitigation and Conservation Commission: *Provided*, That of the amount provided under this heading, $1,300,000 shall be available until September 30, 2017, for expenses necessary in carrying out related responsibilities of the Secretary of the Interior: *Provided further*, That for fiscal year 2016, of the amount made available to the Commission under this Act or any other Act, the Commission may use an amount not to exceed $1,500,000 for administrative expenses.

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

The following appropriations shall be expended to execute authorized functions of the Bureau of Reclamation:

WATER AND RELATED RESOURCES

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

For management, development, and restoration of water and related natural resources and for related activities, including the operation, maintenance, and rehabilitation of reclamation and other facilities, participation in fulfilling related Federal responsibilities to Native Americans, and related grants to, and cooperative and other agreements with, State and local governments, federally recognized Indian tribes, and others, $948,640,000, to remain available until expended, of which $22,000 shall be available for transfer to the Upper Colorado River Basin Fund and $5,899,000 shall be available for transfer to the Lower Colorado River Basin Development Fund; of which such amounts as may be necessary may be advanced to the Colorado River Dam Fund: *Provided*, That such transfers may be increased or decreased within the overall appropriation under this heading: *Provided further*, That of the total appropriated, the amount for program activities that can be financed by the Reclamation Fund or the Bureau of Reclamation special fee account established by 16 U.S.C. 6806 shall be derived from that Fund or account: *Provided further*, That funds contributed under 43 U.S.C. 395 are available until expended for the purposes for which the funds were contributed: *Provided further*, That funds advanced under 43 U.S.C. 397a shall be credited to this account and are available until expended for the same purposes as the sums appropriated under this heading: *Provided further*, That of the amounts provided herein, funds may be used for high-priority projects which shall be carried out by the Youth Conservation Corps, as authorized by 16 U.S.C. 1706.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. RUIZ

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 13, line 14, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $5,000,000)''.

Page 22, line 20, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $20,000,000)''.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from California and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Chairman, before I begin, I thank Chairman SIMPSON and Ranking Member KAPTUR for their hard work and collaboration on this important bill.

I rise today to offer an amendment to H.R. 2028, the Energy and Water Appropriations Act, that provides additional, critical resources for the Bureau of Reclamation to undertake projects that address the historic and severe drought conditions across the West.

Mr. Chairman, one of the worst droughts in modern history is ravaging our Nation's crops, choking our fragile economic recovery, and placing our water supply in unprecedented jeopardy.

Last year, more than 60 percent of the contiguous United States suffered drought conditions, and the West continues to bear the brunt of this burden. In the Olympic Mountains of northwest Washington State, the snowpack contained just 7 percent of the average. In California, the drought is the worst to hit the State since record-keeping started in 1895. 2013 was the driest year on record, and 2014 was the hottest.

The impacts of this severe drought are harsh and far-reaching, threatening public health, degrading the environment, increasing the risk of wildfires, and hampering a wide range of industries.

In 2012, California's agriculture industry contributed over $45 billion to the United States economy. Last year, because of the drought, hundreds of thousands of acres were left fallow because sufficient water was unavailable. According to a University of California

study, this cost the State $2.2 billion in direct economic output and the devastating loss of 17,100 seasonal and part-time jobs.

These effects will be felt by Americans across the country. This year, the price of fruits and vegetables is expected to rise 3 percent, in part due to the severe drought conditions in California.

Furthermore, continuing to draw down groundwater supplies in California will have dangerous public health impacts. In rural communities, where residents rely on wells for drinking water, reduced groundwater levels result in higher concentrations of contaminants, including dangerous nitrates and arsenic.

Stagnant pools have also created breeding grounds for mosquitoes. The California Department of Public Health announced in April that the State had a record-breaking number of deaths related to the mosquito-borne West Nile virus in 2014.

In addition to West Nile, the arid conditions could also increase the number of cases of valley fever, a potentially fatal disease caused by a fungus called Coccidioides that can grow in the soil and becomes airborne if the soil dries out. While the majority of people exposed to the spores do not exhibit symptoms, people who start to develop the disease can have cough, fever, headache, and, in rare cases, it can lead to death.

It is time for action at all levels of government to address the dangerous economic and public health impacts of ignoring this drought.

Back home in the southern California desert, local water agencies are working to help residents, businesses, and municipalities convert their lawns and landscaping into water-efficient desert landscapes.

At the Federal level, the Bureau of Reclamation is investing in public-private partnerships to help improve the delivery of water for agricultural users, which in turn allows them to invest in more water-efficient irrigation techniques, such as drip irrigation.

The Bureau can also help communities whose wells have run dry due to excessive groundwater pumping install relief wells that provide, in some cases, the only source of freshwater for an entire town. And through one of the most successful water conservation grant programs, the WaterSMART program, the Bureau has helped local water agencies, tribal governments, irrigation districts, and State agencies implement water conservation techniques that have conserved over 860,000 acre-feet of water since 2009.

For these reasons, Mr. Chairman, my amendment would simply shift funding away from taxpayer-subsidized fossil fuel research that benefits the wealthiest oil companies that can pay for the research themselves and redirect it toward critical Bureau of Reclamation activities to address the impacts of this devastating drought and help mitigate future droughts.

We must put the American economy, our constituents, and the public's health above politics and Big Oil. I urge my colleagues to come together to support my amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Idaho is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this amendment.

I understand the gentleman seeks to show support for additional funding for projects that are drought-related in California and other places, but we must be mindful of the balancing and competing priorities across this bill.

The gentleman would take $20 million out of the fossil energy account. As I have said before, fossil fuels—such as coal, oil, natural gas—provide nearly 85 percent of the energy used by the Nation's homes and businesses and will continue to provide for the majority of our energy needs for the foreseeable future.

The bill rejects the administration's proposed reductions to fossil energy and, instead, funds these programs at $605 million, $34 million above last year. With this additional funding, the Office of Fossil Energy will research how heat can more efficiently be converted into electricity in a cross-cutting effort with nuclear and solar energy programs, how water can be more efficiently used in power plants, and how coal can be used to produce electric power through fuel cells.

This amendment would reduce funding for a program that ensures that we use our Nation's abundant fossil fuel resources as well and as cleanly as possible. Therefore, I must oppose the amendment and urge other Members to do so.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Again, I thank Chairman SIMPSON and Ranking Member KAPTUR for their leadership and hard work on this bill.

I urge my colleagues to come together in a bipartisan fashion and support my amendment to ensure the Bureau dedicates essential resources towards projects that will help keep American-made food on the table and prevent a dangerous rise in food prices across the country, again, just taking money from taxpayer-subsidized research that they can afford on their own and putting it to combating our drought.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SIMPSON. I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. RUIZ).

The question was taken; and the Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California will be postponed.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. TIPTON

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 13, line 14, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $2,000,000)''.

Page 27, line 13, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $2,000,000)''.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Colorado and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Chairman, I thank Chairman SIMPSON and Ranking Member KAPTUR for their collaborative effort in bringing together this bill.

I appreciate very much Chairman SIMPSON's support of my floor amendment last year, reprogramming funds within the Bureau of Reclamation's water conservancy and delivery fund to advance and complete ongoing work that would provide efficient delivery of clean drinking water from an existing multipurpose reclamation project, as authorized by Congress in 1962.

Mr. Chairman, water is the lifeblood of the Western United States and is absolutely critical to the vitality of our communities and local economies.

Today I am offering a simple amendment that will bolster the Bureau of Reclamation's water and related resources account by $2 million, allowing the Bureau of Reclamation to proceed with ongoing water supply delivery projects at a more efficient pace to reach our shared goals in meeting increased water demands by developing and maximizing clean water supplies.

In Colorado, as is the case throughout the West, we have similar needs to move forward with engineering design work on the authorized features of existing reclamation projects. These projects improve water supply quality, address water shortage issues, improve conservation measures, and stabilize water supplies.

□ 2230

In the Western United States, water is an economic driver. In order to attract more economic growth, either in business or agriculture, every industry in the West is dependent upon an ample and safe water supply.

This amendment will provide Bureau of Reclamation increased funding to continue with these types of projects while simultaneously improving public health and protecting the environment. These projects are critically important during drought years so that water is appropriately allocated for both municipal and agricultural uses.

The Bureau's budget has been previously used for the California Central Valley Project, the Washington State Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project, the Arkansas Valley Conduit in Colorado, and the Lewiston

Orchards Project in the chairman's home State of Idaho.

It is our hope that this bill gives the Bureau of Reclamation the resources it needs to advance vital projects that resolve water shortage issues in the West while enhancing regional development and promoting job growth.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

At this time, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. BUCK), the coauthor of this amendment and my colleague.

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of this amendment from my colleague from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON).

Mr. Chairman, we have a history of borrowing for the future in this country. We have borrowed for fighting wars, for building roads, and for building space programs. Now, we are borrowing from the future, as opposed to for the future. We have $18 trillion of debt, and we will add to that debt this year.

This project was authorized in 1962, and it is required more recently by the EPA's interpretation of the Clean Water Act. We have 40 communities in southeast Colorado who are in violation of the Clean Water Act because of naturally occurring elements. This amendment offers those communities a future.

If we have to incur debt, let it be an investment for our children's future.

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Chairman, I yield the balance of my time to Chairman SIMPSON.

Mr. SIMPSON. I thank the gentlemen from Colorado, both of them, for offering this amendment and bringing this issue before the committee. We have no objection with the amendment and would be happy to accept it.

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON).

The amendment was agreed to.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

CENTRAL VALLEY PROJECT RESTORATION FUND

For carrying out the programs, projects, plans, habitat restoration, improvement, and acquisition provisions of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act, $49,528,000, to be derived from such sums as may be collected in the Central Valley Project Restoration Fund pursuant to sections 3407(d), 3404(c)(3), and 3405(f) of Public Law 102–575, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That the Bureau of Reclamation is directed to assess and collect the full amount of the additional mitigation and restoration payments authorized by section 3407(d) of Public Law 102–575: *Provided further*, That none of the funds made available under this heading may be used for the acquisition or leasing of water for in-stream purposes if the water is already committed to in-stream purposes by a court adopted decree or order.

CALIFORNIA BAY-DELTA RESTORATION

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

For carrying out activities authorized by the Water Supply, Reliability, and Environmental Improvement Act, consistent with plans to be approved by the Secretary of the Interior, $37,000,000, to remain available until expended, of which such amounts as may be necessary to carry out such activities may be transferred to appropriate accounts of other participating Federal agencies to carry out authorized purposes: *Provided*, That funds appropriated herein may be used for the Federal share of the costs of CALFED Program management: *Provided further*, That CALFED implementation shall be carried out in a balanced manner with clear performance measures demonstrating concurrent progress in achieving the goals and objectives of the Program.

POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION

For expenses necessary for policy, administration, and related functions in the Office of the Commissioner, the Denver office, and offices in the five regions of the Bureau of Reclamation, to remain available until September 30, 2017, $59,500,000, to be derived from the Reclamation Fund and be nonreimbursable as provided in 43 U.S.C. 377: *Provided*, That not more than 25 percent of such amount may be obligated or expended until Reclamation complies with congressional and statutory direction related to Technical Memorandum 8140-CC-2004-1 (''Corrosion Considerations for Buried Metallic Water Pipe'') and the associated pipeline reliability study: *Provided further*, That no part of any other appropriation in this Act shall be available for activities or functions budgeted as policy and administration expenses.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISION

Appropriations for the Bureau of Reclamation shall be available for purchase of not to exceed five passenger motor vehicles, which are for replacement only.

GENERAL PROVISIONS—DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

SEC. 201. (a) None of the funds provided in this title shall be available for obligation or expenditure through a reprogramming of funds that—

(1) creates or initiates a new program, project, or activity;

(2) eliminates a program, project, or activity;

(3) increases funds for any program, project, or activity for which funds have been denied or restricted by this Act;

(4) restarts or resumes any program, project or activity for which funds are not provided in this Act, unless prior approval is received from the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress;

(5) transfers funds in excess of the following limits—

(A) 15 percent for any program, project or activity for which $2,000,000 or more is available at the beginning of the fiscal year; or

(B) $300,000 for any program, project or activity for which less than $2,000,000 is available at the beginning of the fiscal year;

(6) transfers more than $500,000 from either the Facilities Operation, Maintenance, and Rehabilitation category or the Resources Management and Development category to any program, project, or activity in the other category; or

(7) transfers, when necessary to discharge legal obligations of the Bureau of Reclamation, more than $5,000,000 to provide adequate funds for settled contractor claims, increased contractor earnings due to accelerated rates of operations, and real estate deficiency judgments.

(b) Subsection (a)(5) shall not apply to any transfer of funds within the Facilities Operation, Maintenance, and Rehabilitation category.

(c) For purposes of this section, the term ''transfer'' means any movement of funds into or out of a program, project, or activity.

(d) The Bureau of Reclamation shall submit reports on a quarterly basis to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress detailing all the funds reprogrammed between programs, projects, activities, or categories of funding. The first quarterly report shall be submitted not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 202. (a) None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act may be used to determine the final point of discharge for the interceptor drain for the San Luis Unit until development by the Secretary of the Interior and the State of California of a plan, which shall conform to the water quality standards of the State of California as approved by the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, to minimize any detrimental effect of the San Luis drainage waters.

(b) The costs of the Kesterson Reservoir Cleanup Program and the costs of the San Joaquin Valley Drainage Program shall be classified by the Secretary of the Interior as reimbursable or nonreimbursable and collected until fully repaid pursuant to the ''Cleanup Program—Alternative Repayment Plan'' and the ''SJVDP—Alternative Repayment Plan'' described in the report entitled ''Repayment Report, Kesterson Reservoir Cleanup Program and San Joaquin Valley Drainage Program, February 1995'', prepared by the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation. Any future obligations of funds by the United States relating to, or providing for, drainage service or drainage studies for the San Luis Unit shall be fully reimbursable by San Luis Unit beneficiaries of such service or studies pursuant to Federal reclamation law.

SEC. 203. The Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Commissioner of Reclamation, shall—

(1) complete the feasibility studies described in clauses (i)(I) and (ii)(II) of section 103(d)(1)(A) of Public Law 108–361 (118 Stat. 1684) and submit such studies to the appropriate committees of the House of Representatives and the Senate not later than December 31, 2015;

(2) complete the feasibility studies described in clauses (i)(II) and (ii)(I) of section 103(d)(1)(A) of Public Law 108–361 and submit such studies to the appropriate committees of the House of Representatives and the Senate not later than November 30, 2016;

(3) complete the feasibility study described in section 103(f)(1)(A) of Public Law 108–361 (118 Stat. 1694) and submit such study to the appropriate committees of the House of Representatives and the Senate not later than December 31, 2017; and

(4) provide a progress report on the status of the feasibility studies referred to in paragraphs (1) through (3) to the appropriate committees of the House of Representatives and the Senate not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act and each 180 days thereafter until December 31, 2017, as applicable. The report shall include timelines for study completion, draft environmental impact statements, final environmental impact statements, and Records of Decision.

TITLE III—DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

ENERGY PROGRAMS

ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND RENEWABLE ENERGY

For Department of Energy expenses including the purchase, construction, and acquisition of plant and capital equipment, and other expenses necessary for energy efficiency and renewable energy activities in carrying out the purposes of the Department of Energy Organization Act (42 U.S.C. 7101 et seq.), including the acquisition or condemnation of any real property or any facility or for plant or facility acquisition, construction, or expansion, $1,657,774,000, to remain

available until expended: *Provided*, That of such amount, $150,000,000 shall be available until September 30, 2017, for program direction.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. GRIFFITH

Mr. GRIFFITH. I have an amendment at the desk, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 21, line 5, after the dollar amount insert ''reduced by $50,000,000)''.

Page 22, line 20, after the dollar amount insert ''(increased by $50,000,000)''.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Virginia and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Chairman, over the past 6 years, the policy of the current administration has been to wage a war on coal that has crippled the coal industry and left areas like Virginia's Ninth District economically devastated, and I believe it has put our access to reliable, affordable electricity in jeopardy.

The onslaught of harmful, burdensome, and unreasonable regulations on coal-fired power plants is continuing in the President's Clean Power Plan. States must come up with a plan for CO_2 in 13 months after the final rule is released, which is supposed to be that summer. That State plan is then to begin by 2020 and completed by 2030.

There are a number of clean coal technologies currently in development, but according to the testimony from the Department of Energy, these new technologies are not likely to be ready for prime time until 2025. That is 9 years after the States have to come up with a plan and 5 years after the States have to begin implementing that plan and halfway through the time to come into compliance.

This is not right. If we are to avoid rolling brownouts, coal will have to continued to be used; but, if we don't take action, it will be illegal to use coal.

While I fight and will continue to fight more for more reasonable regulations, we must take action to ensure that we can still use coal, should the next administration also be unreasonable and anticoal.

Mr. Chairman, to bend the curve of development and bring the new coal technologies to market, we must spend some money. My amendment will simply add $50 million for fossil energy research and development from energy efficiency and renewable energy for the purpose of aiding the development of these new clean coal technologies so we can continue to have reliable, affordable energy.

The very least we can do is to make sure that coal-fired power plants have access to these new technologies in a timely fashion so that they can meet these extremely burdensome regulations.

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate that the underlying bill provides a 6 percent increase in fossil fuel energy research. However, when districts like mine are seeing mine after mine shut down and power plants shut down because of numerous regulations on coal, it is clear that more needs to be done.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Ohio is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Chairman, I rise to oppose the gentleman from Virginia's amendment. I wanted to point out—perhaps he doesn't have the full numbers—but the figure that we have, we had a request from the administration of $560 million, and we actually increased the administration's request by $45 million to a level of $605 million for fossil energy research, which is more than we spent in this fiscal year of 2015. We are spending $571 million this year, so I would say that the fossil energy accounts have been rather well provided for.

I also want to say to the gentleman that you are taking the funds from the Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy account, and that account is not above last year. It is $266 million below last year. What is in the account, what remains there, is focused on American manufacturing—which is important in Virginia—and vehicle technology, which are really not partisan interests.

My own view is that, if you were to take the amount of funds that you are proposing out of the Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy account, you would decimate these programs and further erode manufacturing which has taken such big hits.

Let me also mention that since 2003, our country has spent $2.3 trillion importing foreign petroleum. This shifts vast amounts of wealth abroad and squelches thousands upon thousands of jobs in our country in the energy sector.

I agree with the gentleman that a diverse energy portfolio is necessary to eliminate our reliance on imported energy, and we need an ''all of the above'' strategy. Our bill provides that in terms of not just fossil energy, but renewable energies. We should be leading investment in these technologies across the board and expanding jobs in our country.

Though I appreciate the gentleman's interest—and I know Virginia has coal deposits, so does Ohio—but I really feel that the bill that we have worked out on a bipartisan basis provides very, very well for fossil energy, certainly better than the Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy accounts fared.

I would oppose the amendment, and I would ask our colleagues to join us in doing the same.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from Idaho (Mr. SIMPSON), the chairman.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the amendment.

My colleague's amendment would increase funding for the Fossil Energy research and development program and decrease the EERE account by the same amount as an offset.

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate my colleague's concern to protect the fossil fuel industry against overreach by this administration's Clean Power Plan proposal.

This amendment would advance research and development in allowing robust utilization of our abundant natural resources in a safe and efficient way. Therefore, I support the amendment and urge Members to do the same.

Mr. GRIFFITH. Using the remainder of my time, Mr. Chairman, I would have to say that I appreciate the gentlewoman's comments, and I appreciate the chairman's support.

The bottom line is that we are losing thousands of jobs in the central Appalachian region, and according to the Bristol Herald Courier in a recent article, 1,000 jobs have been lost in the last year alone in the coal fields. That is one concern.

We are shutting down this month several coal-powered power plants in my district, and we are going to have serious problems if we don't do something. If we are going to continue down this path, we have to help the industry. We have to help make sure that we are burning the coal in a clean manner, and this is the way to do it.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GRIFFITH).

The question was taken; and the Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Virginia will be postponed.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MS. CASTOR

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 21, line 5, after the dollar amount insert ''(increased by $266,161,000)''.

Page 22, line 20, after the dollar amount insert ''(reduced by $355,000,000)''.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentlewoman from Florida and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Chairman, my amendment increases the Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy account by $266 million, to simply restore it to last year's levels, with an offset from the fossil energy account.

My amendment will boost energy efficiency and renewable energy initiatives across America that have a proven return on investment for taxpayers.

This amendment is paid for by reducing—but not by eliminating—accounts that do not have the same return on investment for taxpayers.

Unless we adopt this amendment, America's commitment to energy efficiency and renewable energy will be slashed by $266 million below the 2015 enacted level and over $1 billion below the budget request.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I wish that we could meet the budget request this year, but that doesn't appear possible, but we should at least restore the money back to last year's levels, which is still a very modest investment in energy efficiency and renewable energy for America.

Investments in energy efficiency create jobs and help make our businesses more competitive compared to businesses all across the globe. In addition, energy efficiency reduces costs for consumers. Wouldn't that be revolutionary, that we put money back into the pockets of our neighbors back home?

The amount proposed for energy efficiency and renewable energy in the Republican bill is so low that America will have to reduce the number of research, development, and demonstration projects with industry, with our universities, and in our national labs. America should be a leader in innovation and technological advancement, but instead, the Republican bill says America should take a back seat.

Well, Mr. Chairman, America should take a back seat to no one. We are in the midst of a technological revolution when it comes to energy. Look at what is happening across our great country. We have an incredibly diverse energy portfolio and a growing clean energy and efficiency sector. This is especially important as we tackle the challenges of the changing climate.

Yet the Republican bill reduces investment in solar energy technology R&D within the Solar Energy Technologies Office by $81 million, or 35 percent, from last year. That means the Department of Energy's exciting SunShot Initiative goal of enabling cost-competitive solar electricity without subsidies by 2020 will be delayed for years.

That is extremely detrimental to the U.S. solar industry and the jobs it creates that currently employ over 174,000 Americans. It will send an unfortunate signal to the Chinese and foreign competitors that we are ceding this clean energy industry to them.

The Republican bill also would result in a significant reduction in core solar R&D and the national labs, including the National Renewable Energy Laboratory and Sandia National Laboratories, necessitating reductions in force.

The Republican bill will also eliminate support for solar industry job training for students and military veterans at more than 400 community colleges across 49 States. This network has been a critical source of trained employees in an industry that is growing and is expected to grow even more with over 200,000 jobs by the end of 2015.

Finally, the recently piloted Solar Ready Vets program would be at risk, and the planned expansion from 3 to 10 military bases would be affected and canceled. Veterans currently make up 10 percent of the solar industry.

□ 2245

If we do not unleash American ingenuity now, our neighbors back home will face increased costs of the changing climate, such as increases in property insurance, increases in flood insurance, all of this from extreme weather events, increased property taxes from having to protect drinking water supplies, and storm water infrastructure. I would say instead, let's invest in America.

My amendment shifts a little bit, not all, from older technologies into cutting-edge energy efficiency and clean energy that are so vital to America's future.

I appreciate Ranking Member KAPTUR's vision. She understands that this is our future. We are talking about American jobs in American manufacturing. I appreciate her work. And I appreciate Chairman SIMPSON's work on the appropriations bill.

I ask for an ''aye'' vote on the Castor amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Idaho is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Chairman, the gentlewoman from Florida says we should invest. We are investing. This amendment would increase funding for energy efficiency and renewable energy by $266 million, restoring it to last year's level, by using the fossil energy account as an offset.

This year, funding for EERE is $1.66 billion, $266 million below last year, and $1.1 billion below the budget request. The recommendation strategically focuses funding on three main priorities: helping American manufacturers compete in the global marketplace, supporting weatherization assistance programs, and supporting basic research into renewable energy sources. These are all areas with broad bipartisan support.

The House recommendation for this year was the result of a focused effort to ensure taxpayer funds are spent on the most advanced research projects within these priorities. Increasing funding for EERE by diverting funds from research into fossil energy strikes the wrong balance when considering the Nation's electricity needs.

Fossil fuel, such as coal, oil, and natural gas, provide the vast majority of the energy used by the Nation's homes and businesses and will continue to provide our energy needs for the foreseeable future. For example, fossil fuels produce nearly 11 times more electricity than renewable energy fuel sources.

I am not against renewable energy. I think they are an important part of the mix. They are cute, but they don't provide the majority of energy that is needed in this country.

This amendment would decimate funding for a program that ensures we use our Nation's fossil fuel resources as well and as cleanly as possible. Therefore, I must oppose the gentlewoman's amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I would say that the burgeoning jobs being created in American manufacturing and energy efficiency and renewable energy are more than just cute. They are the jobs of the future in America, a clean energy future.

I urge my colleagues to adopt the Castor amendment: vote for America, vote for American jobs, and vote for the future.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. CASTOR).

The amendment was rejected.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. LAMBORN

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 21, line 5, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $4,000,000) (increased by $4,000,000)''.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Colorado and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The purpose of this amendment is to increase the funding for the U.S.-Israel Energy Cooperation program from the current $2 million to $4 million. This critical program allows companies across the U.S. to develop cutting-edge technologies with new partners in Israel in order to advance America's energy goals.

Furthermore, the U.S.-Israel Energy Cooperative Agreement facilitates greater cooperation and sharing of knowledge between American and Israeli universities on alternative energy. Collaboration between the American and Israeli private sector and academia will significantly enhance U.S. efforts to develop alternative technologies and increase energy efficiency to the benefit of our national security, our economy, and the environment.

Let me be clear, this is not an aid program, but instead a cooperative agreement designed to connect the U.S. and Israeli private sectors in the development of innovative technologies to strengthen our energy security and independence. Reauthorized in 2014 through 2024, the cooperative energy program mandate was expanded to

cover collaborative research and development into renewable technologies, natural gas, and water—key areas of interest for the United States.

The program is also designed to leverage matching contributions from both the Israeli and American private sectors; thus, for every dollar Congress appropriates, $3 are invested, contributing to our economy in addition to our energy security. The program has already leveraged over $27 million in private sector investment. This is an excellent way to leverage a modest investment into critical energy innovation to the benefit of both countries.

I encourage all of my colleagues to support this amendment to make a greater investment in America's and Israel's energy future and to support an important bilateral energy cooperation agreement with one of our Nation's closest allies.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. SWALWELL OF CALIFORNIA

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 21, line 5, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $25,500,000)''.

Page 22, line 20, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $34,000,000)''.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from California and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of my amendment, which I offer along with Representatives PERLMUTTER, WELCH, LIEU, TONKO, MATSUI, and CONNOLLY, which would cut the increase provided to the fossil Energy Research and Development account back to its fiscal year 2015 level and put that money toward the Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, also known as EERE, account.

My amendment presents a question for the Congress this evening: Are we going to invest in the future of energy or are we going to continue to look backwards?

We are certainly an all-of-the-above country when it comes to where we get our energy; however, that does not mean we have to be an all-of-the-above country when it comes to how we spend our Federal research dollars.

For decades, we have relied on fossil fuels, fuels that dirty our environment, that are fundamentally changing our environment, that keep us dependent on foreign sources of energy and are a finite resource. Reliance like this is simply not sustainable over the long-term.

Energy that is clean and renewable is where our future lies. To put this in perspective, this budget proposes to cut the investment in renewable energy by $266 million from last year, and increase investments in fossil fuel by $34 million.

My colleagues on the other side often ask: Why can't we run government like a business? This would be similar to a business cutting its cell phone, iPhone, laptop, iPad budget and increasing its pager and landline budget. It is time that we start running government like a business and making investments in renewable energy because they will pay off for our future and also for health and jobs that will be created around them.

Young people understand this choice well. I have the opportunity to lead a group in the Congress called Future Forum, and we have gone across the country from New York to Boston to San Francisco talking to young people about what issues matter to them. And across the country the issue is always the same: Why can't this Congress be more forward looking as to where we get our energy?

Millennials know that they are a generation who will be living with the consequences of the energy choices we make here today. It is their environment that will be damaged. It is their climate that will be altered, and their energy choices that will be limited if we fail to invest in renewable clean sources of energy now.

I know the budget is tight and we have to make difficult choices about how to allocate scarce resources, and I understand and appreciate that some of the money supported by the Fossil Energy research and development account are seeking to improve how we use fossil fuels.

But how can we take limited resources to increase spending in any way to support fossil fuels and encourage their use over fiscal year 2016 by $34 million while cutting renewable energy by $266 million? This makes no sense.

Look at what other countries are doing. Germany right now receives 30 percent, 30 percent of its energy from renewable sources. Can we not do better than Germany? The only way we can is if we invest in the future. We shouldn't be increasing funding to continue to use energy sources of the past.

I urge all Members to support my amendment, to undo this increase and redirect that money towards supporting the energy of the future—renewable energy.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Idaho is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Chairman, it is the same debate we used on the other amendment, so I could just say repeat the same debate. The fact is we are investing in what we use: 85 percent of electricity produced in this country is produced by fossil energies. We invest in that to try to make it more clean. We are the Saudi Arabia of coal. Why would we walk away from that? We can do it cleaner. We can do it more efficiently, and that is what we are investing in.

We are still investing in renewable energies. It is not that we are just ignoring those other things. In fact, we are investing $1.66 billion in those things. Fossil energy that we use much more than we do renewable energies, only investing $605 million in it.

So our priorities, I believe, in this bill are in the right place. And while I appreciate what the gentleman is trying to do, I think it would unbalance the bill, and I would urge the rejection of his amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. SWALWELL).

The question was taken; and the Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California will be postponed.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. PERRY

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 21, line 5, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $22,300,000)''.

Page 27, line 13, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $22,300,000)''.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Pennsylvania and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Chairman, let me begin by thanking Chairman SIMPSON for working on the bill and being willing to listen to this issue.

This amendment seeks to highlight the fact that the Water Power Program is vitally important to reducing our dependence on foreign oil.

This bill, the underlying bill, cuts hydropower by over $22 million. What the amendment I am offering does is restores that funding and offsets it with Department of Energy administrative costs.

Hydropower is the Nation's most available, reliable, affordable, and sustainable energy source. Requiring only the power of moving water—rivers, streams, and ocean waves and tides—hydropower is domestic and renewable.

Hydropower is available in every region of the country. A range of technologies exist or are under development to tap the power of waves, tides, and river flows. Thousands of megawatts of potential are available from ocean energy projects from New England to the west coast and Alaska, and from in-river hydrokinetic projects proposed along the Mississippi River and others. 2,200 hydropower plants provide America's most abundant source of clean, renewable electricity.

The United States produces more electricity from hydropower than from any other renewable electricity source. It accounted for 56 percent of renewable generation in 2012 and 7 percent of the Nation's overall electricity generation.

New technology employed at existing hydro sites represents an opportunity for new sources of power. By installing more efficient turbines and enhancing performance, existing hydropower infrastructure can generate even more power, sustainably. Harnessing more of this energy will create a truly renewable and green energy source.

There are advantages over wind and solar. Hydro has a predictable year-round output, while solar and wind output can be variable in some areas and necessitates the use of large battery banks and/or alternate power sources.

□ 2300

Even routine, minor maintenance on a windmill can be difficult on the top of a wind tower, while hydropower provides relatively low maintenance. Hydropower facilities are quiet and often can be made unobtrusive, while many people report that considerable noise is generated by wind power.

Hydropower also faces a comprehensive regulatory approval process. It involves too many participants, including FERC, the Federal and State resource agencies, local governments, tribes, NGOs, and the public. Currently, there are 60,000 megawatts of preliminary permits and projects awaiting final approval or that are pending before the Commission in 45 States.

Pennsylvania, where I come from, is in the top 10 for hydropower potential, and, according to the Department of Energy, of the 80,000 total dams in the United States, 600 have the immediate capability to produce energy.

This amendment seeks to highlight the lost and underutilized capacity of abundant, economical, and clean energy right here within our communities while we irresponsibly spend hard-earned tax dollars on less viable options.

At this time, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw this amendment from consideration while simultaneously asking for favorable consideration on the bipartisan hydro amendment to be offered very shortly.

The CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MS. BONAMICI

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 21, line 5, after the dollar amount insert ''(increased by $9,000,000)''.

Page 27, line 13, after the dollar amount insert ''(reduced by $9,000,000)''.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentlewoman from Oregon and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Oregon.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Chairman, I rise today because of the power and potential of water and in support of a bipartisan amendment that I am pleased to offer with my colleague from Pennsylvania, Congressman PERRY, and with my colleague from Maine, Congresswoman PINGREE.

Mr. Chairman, our amendment would increase funding to the Department of Energy's Water Power Program by just $9 million, which is a small price tag that will yield a huge return on investment. This increase is offset by an equal amount by the departmental administration account. The modest increase that we are proposing will support hydropower and also the development of innovative hydropower technologies, along with marine and hydrokinetic energy technologies.

The development of these new technologies can offer the United States a chance to lead the world in an emerging area of abundant renewable energy. Marine and hydrokinetic energy—in particular, energy from waves, currents, and tides, which, unlike the Sun and wind, do not stop—is an exciting frontier in the renewable energy sector.

Currently, Oregon State University, the University of Washington, and the University of Alaska Fairbanks are using Federal funding from the Water Power Program to support the testing and research activities of the Northwest National Marine Renewable Energy Center, a center that will provide visionary entrepreneurs a domestic location to test wave energy devices, along with other technology, rather than traveling to Scotland to use the European test center. Without continued Federal investment, Europe will remain the leader.

When fully developed, wave and tidal energy systems could generate a significant amount of total energy used in the United States. As Congress promotes technologies that can help lower our constituents' energy bills, we must embrace new and innovative solutions, like marine and hydrokinetic renewable energy. With this modest increase, the Water Power Program can do that while continuing to support a Federal investment in conventional hydropower technology.

Mr. Chairman, I urge the adoption of the bipartisan amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition, but I am not opposed to the amendment.

The CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman from Pennsylvania is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Chairman, I see the amendment as a reasonable, bipartisan approach and agreement which has seen favorable consideration in this House in the past.

As I said just previously, hydropower is the Nation's most available, reliable, affordable, and sustainable energy source. It seems to me, while we spend a lot of money, time, and energy on unproven resources, this is one that has stood the test of time. As a matter of fact, it is one of the beginning sources of energy not only in the United States but around the globe, and if we should be spending any of our resources, this is one that we know. This is one that is in every community. This is one that is clean. This is one that doesn't create too much noise for people, and it doesn't hurt fish. All it does is produce power without doing anything else, so it is hard to argue why we wouldn't be in support of this amendment and this program.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to vote in support of this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. BONAMICI. I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania for his cosponsorship of this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, again, this is a modest increase in the Water Power Program, which supports hydropower technology as well as new and innovative solutions, like hydrokinetic renewable energy.

I urge the support of this bipartisan amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. BONAMICI).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. COHEN

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Chairman, I rise to offer an amendment.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 21, line 5, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $2,000,000)''.

Page 27, line 13, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $2,000,000)''.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Tennessee and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Chairman, this amendment would increase funding for the Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy account by $2 million for the SuperTruck II program.

The SuperTruck program was initiated by the Department of Energy to improve freight and heavy-duty vehicle efficiency. The Appropriations Committee acknowledged the success of the

SuperTruck I in their committee report, but, unfortunately, it recommended only $8 million of the requested $40 million for the SuperTruck II program to further improve the efficiency of these vehicles. SuperTruck II will continue dramatic improvements in the freight efficiency of heavy-duty Class 8 long-haul and regional-haul vehicles through system level improvements. These improvements include hybridization, more efficient idling, and high efficiency HVAC technologies.

By increasing the funding for the SuperTruck program by just $2 million, it will allow the Department of Energy to better achieve their freight efficiency goals. It will be good for the environment. It will be good for the trucking community. It will be good for America. This amendment is offset via a decrease in the departmental administration account.

I would like to thank Chairman SIMPSON and Ranking Member KAPTUR for their hard work on the bill, and I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on this amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COHEN).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. BYRNE

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 21, Line 5

In the ''Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy'' account, after the aggregate dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $1,657,774,000)''.

Page 21, Line 6

In the ''Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy'' account, after the dollar amount relating to program direction, insert ''(reduced by $150,000,000)''.

Page 57, Line 11

In the spending reduction account, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $1,657,774,000)''.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from Alabama and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alabama.

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Chairman, my amendment seeks to strike all funding of the Department of Energy's Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy program.

This program, under the Department of Energy, allows the government to invest millions—indeed, over $1 billion—of taxpayer money in high-risk research and development schemes for green energy projects. The government should not be in the business of subsidizing the research and development initiatives of individual companies. Let's be clear. Competition and innovation have been key aspects of the private sector's success in our country from day one, and the government should not take the role of a private investor.

Every business has a bottom line, which is itself a direct incentive for developing methods for becoming more energy efficient and innovative. By subsidizing this small sector of the energy economy, we are essentially allowing the Department of Energy to spend millions of taxpayer dollars on unconventional energy initiatives and projects that place taxpayer dollars at risk and that are not likely to produce a return on investment.

We as a Congress have continuously stated the need for an all-of-the-above energy strategy, but continued investment into the EERE program focuses on the small portion of a largely unproductive portion of the energy sector at the expense of more traditional energy sources, such as fossil fuels and nuclear, which have a proven, reliable track record.

I do want to applaud Chairman SIMPSON and the entire committee for their work on this bill. I know they face many tough choices when it comes to preparing these bills, and I do appreciate their hard work.

Ultimately, the American people are sick and tired of a Federal Government that continues to recklessly spend taxpayer dollars. They want to see Congress make the tough choices and rein in wasteful spending. I believe that eliminating funding for the EERE program would be a step in the right direction. It would be a small step toward restoring fiscal sanity in Washington. At a time when many Americans and small businesses continue to struggle, we must focus on reasonable energy strategies that allow for the most affordable and reliable energy resources for consumers and businesses alike.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the gentleman's amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Idaho is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Chairman, we have now seen amendments to put more money into the EERE and amendments to take money out of the EERE and now an amendment to eliminate the EERE.

I have to rise in opposition to this amendment. This bill supports an all-of-the-above approach to utilize our abundant natural resources and advance energy in new technologies to increase our energy security. A part of that approach includes strategic investments in the EERE accounts.

I agree that there are many activities in this program that could use a closer and more critical look. That is why this bill focuses funding on basic technological research and manufacturing advancements in this account. The bill reduces the EERE by $266 million over last year's level, but this amendment, I believe, would go too far. I must support the strategic balance of this bill. Therefore, I must oppose my colleague's amendment, and I urge others to do the same.

I yield to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR).

Ms. KAPTUR. I appreciate the chairman's yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this amendment.

I first want to invite the gentleman from Alabama to Ohio to see part of the new energy sector in our country. It is absolutely incredible, and it does involve high-level research to produce new energy technologies. I support nuclear, and I support fossil-based research, but I also support coal and tidal energy and wind and biofuels and geothermal—all of them—because we need them.

New investment in clean energy in our country in 2013 totaled $36.7 billion. The leading company in solar in our country and, frankly, globally is a U.S.-born company—born in Ohio—called First Solar. You mentioned nonproductivity. Their stock is sold on Wall Street. They benefited early on in that company's life by photovoltaic research beginning back in the 1970s and 1980s at the U.S. Department of Energy. It is really incredible to see the future being born, and I am hoping Alabama can take advantage of that kind of technology.

What concerns me, and one of the reasons I am on my feet at this point, is that they have competition from China. The first and second companies in the world that are being subsidized by the Chinese Government are in tough competition with the U.S.-born company, and we can't ignore the fact that global venture capital and private equity in new investment in clean energy increased from $1.4 billion in 2004 to $4.4 billion in 2013. The question is: Where is that going to be invested—in our country or someplace else?

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So I would just say that we have made tremendous progress in an all-of-the-above strategy. Renewable sources now account for 23 percent of all electricity generation globally. That is amazing progress. We are learning how to work in conjunction with the Earth.

Who would ever have guessed that ethanol would now consume 10 percent of what you put in your tank? People said you can't even get to 1 percent. Now they are looking to 15 percent. It is unbelievable what is happening in these fields.

I appreciate the gentleman wanting to be responsible. I think we are being responsible in providing an all-of-the-above bill, including new energy technologies that will help our country in future generations so we no longer have to be dependent on imported energy, which I view as our chief strategic vulnerability.

I thank the gentleman for yielding. I rise in strong opposition to the gentleman's amendment.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BYRNE. I rejoice with the gentlewoman from Ohio that there is a company there that is making money. We should always be about American companies making money. But if they are making money, they don't need a

subsidy from the government. I would like you to come to Alabama, where coal miners are losing their jobs because we have a war on coal in this country.

We give lip service to all-of-the-above, and then the administration has a deliberate policy of attacking coal as a means of energy for our country and putting people out of work. So I would invite you to come down and see the suffering of our people because of that one-sided strategy: we are going to attack coal, but we are going to give money to alternative energy. There is something wrong with that.

So I understand the gentlewoman wants to stand up for a great company in Ohio—I would love to come see it—because I think an all-of-the-above strategy is good for America, but we are picking winners and losers with this money, and the administration is picking losers by attacking coal as a source of energy and a source of jobs for our American people. So I would hope that we would care as much about those coal miners in West Virginia and Kentucky and Alabama.

Ms. KAPTUR. And Ohio.

Mr. BYRNE. And Ohio as we do about these alternative energy programs that we are subsidizing. No one is subsidizing those coal miners; no one is subsidizing their families that have lost their means of living, but we are going to subsidize all these other companies—maybe they are doing good things, maybe they are not—because we have a lopsided understanding about how to produce energy in this country.

Let the energy sector go. Let oil and natural gas and coal go. Look what we have done to the price of oil and the price of gas just over the last year because they have innovated on their own. They don't need the government to innovate for them. They need the government to get out of their way.

If the gentlewoman wants to respond, I would be happy to yield to her.

Ms. KAPTUR. I just wanted to say Ohio is a major coal-producing State.

Mr. BYRNE. Then you understand what I am saying.

Ms. KAPTUR. We will have more coal-fired utilities shut down in Ohio than almost any other State, so I identify with what the gentleman is saying. Frankly, I think that we, as a country, have to be much more responsive to our miners and to coal country USA. I represent the largest coal shipping port on the Great Lakes. I fully appreciate what you are saying.

I supported that industry from the day I got here. I have supported research into the clean coal program and continue to do so. I just want you to know that. We don't disagree on harming any sector. We need them all.

Mr. BYRNE. Reclaiming my time, I would just say I wish we could put money into that program like we do into this.

Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BYRNE).

The question was taken; and the Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Alabama will be postponed.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. MCCLINTOCK

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 21, lines 5 and 6, after each dollar amount, insert ''(reduced to $0)''.

Page 22, line 3, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $691,886,000)''.

Page 22, lines 20 and 21, after each dollar amount, insert ''(reduced to $0)''.

Page 57, line 11, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $2,954,660,000)''.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 223, the gentleman from California and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, this amendment is similar to the previous one, except this one requires energy companies of all kinds to fund their own research and development programs rather than continuing to require taxpayers to subsidize their activity to the tune of almost $3 billion. It does not affect the funds set aside for nuclear waste disposal or national defense projects.

For too long we have suffered from the conceit that politicians can make better energy investments with taxpayer money than investors can do with their own money. It is this conceit that has produced a long line of scandals best illustrated by the Solyndra fiasco. This research doesn't even benefit the common good by placing these discoveries in the public domain. Any discoveries, although financed by the public, are owned lock, stock, and barrel by the private companies that receive these public funds. Public costs, private benefit; this is nothing but corporate welfare, and that is what these energy subsidies amount to.

My amendment protects taxpayers from being forced to pay the research and development budgets of these companies. It gets government out of the energy business and requires all energy companies and all energy technologies to compete equally on their own merits and with their own funds.

Last year when we debated similar amendments, we heard of all the technological breakthroughs financed by the Federal Government, from railroads to the Internet. We heard promises of future breakthroughs from this massive expenditure of public funds. I freely recognize that if you hand over millions of dollars of public subsidies to a private corporation, perhaps in Ohio, that corporation will do very well. Some of these dollars might even produce a breakthrough that will then be owned by that private corporation, and then it will do extremely well.

But what the advocates of these subsidies fail to consider is Bastiat's dilemma between the seen and the unseen. We see the politically well-connected company that makes out like a bandit. What we don't see are the sacrifices that struggling families and small businesses must make as these taxes are taken away from them. You don't see small companies struggle by having to compete against their own tax dollars given to their corporate competitors by a doting friend in government. Nor do we see the breakthroughs and discoveries that these dollars might have purchased if they had been made by investors using their own money, making investments based on the highest economic return of these dollars.

Politicians using other people's money make investments based on the highest political return of these dollars. That is the principal difference between Apple Computer and Solyndra or between FedEx and the post office. These public subsidies, in effect, take dollars that would have naturally flowed into the most effective and promising technologies and divert them into those that are politically favored. Dollar for dollar, this minimizes our energy potential instead of maximizing it.

For example, hydraulic fracturing has revolutionized the fossil fuels industry, and it offers us the very real potential of becoming energy independent. After the 1973 oil embargo, the Federal Government spent $1.5 billion on oil and gas production research, much of it on shale production, and accomplished nothing. The government lost interest.

But private investors renewed research with their own money in the 1990s and began producing the technologies that are used in today's boom. Public investment failed miserably; private investment succeeded beyond our wildest dreams. In short, if the technology is promising, it does not need our help; and if it isn't promising, it doesn't deserve our help. In either case, we have no business taking from the earnings of struggling families and small businesses that pay the research and development budgets of big corporations.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Idaho is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Chairman, I rise to oppose this amendment. Hydraulic fracking has been going on for 40 or 50 years in this country, by the way.

This year the committee continues its responsibility to reduce government spending, and we have done that. We have worked tirelessly to that end. The

bill already cuts energy efficiency and renewable energy programs by $266 million below last year's request and $1.1 billion below the budget request.

The fossil and nuclear energy programs receive targeted increases of $34 million and $23 million, respectively. The increase to fossil energy targets advanced research that will increase the efficiency of power plant turbines and conserve water usage during electricity generation.

The increase to nuclear energy will support security upgrades for the Idaho National Laboratory to protect the Nation's nuclear energy materials and a range of nuclear security programs at the NNSA, Homeland Security, and other Federal agencies.

Although my colleague asserts the amendment would keep the government from intervening in the private markets, these applied energy programs are strategic investments for our energy independence. I appreciate my colleague's desire to reduce the size of the government. I agree with him. This amendment goes too far by eliminating the strategic investments we need to make for our future. I therefore oppose this amendment and ask my colleagues to oppose it also.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, I would simply respond to my friend from Idaho that he is right to point with pride to the fact that the Committee on Appropriations has reduced EERE spending by 16 percent. He is certainly on the right track. He is just building a little slowly in that regard.

We want to help him by doing what is right and restoring to the private investors the responsibility of using their own money to research and develop these energy breakthroughs and leave the Federal Government to doing what it does best, and that is staying out and letting the private sector succeed.

Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SIMPSON. I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK).

The question was taken; and the Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California will be postponed.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

ELECTRICITY DELIVERY AND ENERGY RELIABILITY

For Department of Energy expenses including the purchase, construction, and acquisition of plant and capital equipment, and other expenses necessary for electricity delivery and energy reliability activities in carrying out the purposes of the Department of Energy Organization Act (42 U.S.C. 7101 et seq.), including the acquisition or condemnation of any real property or any facility or for plant or facility acquisition, construction, or expansion, $187,500,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That of such amount, $27,000,000 shall be available until September 30, 2017, for program direction.

NUCLEAR ENERGY

For Department of Energy expenses including the purchase, construction, and acquisition of plant and capital equipment, and other expenses necessary for nuclear energy activities in carrying out the purposes of the Department of Energy Organization Act (42 U.S.C. 7101 et seq.), including the acquisition or condemnation of any real property or any facility or for plant or facility acquisition, construction, or expansion, $936,161,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That of such amount, $80,000,000 shall be available until September 30, 2017, for program direction including official reception and representation expenses not to exceed $10,000.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Chair, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) having assumed the chair, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2028) making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

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. 304. An act to improve motor vehicle safety by encouraging the sharing of certain information; to the committee on Energy and Commerce.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 29 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, April 30, 2015, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

1298. A letter from the Chief Counsel, FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Suspension of Community Eligibility (Cecil County, MD, et al.) [Docket ID: FEMA-2015-0001] [Internal Agency Docket No.: FEMA-8377) received April 27, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

1299. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Administrative Detention of Drugs Intended for Human or Animal Use; Correction [Docket No.: FDA-2013-N-0365] received April 28, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1300. A letter from the Secretary, Federal Trade Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rules — Revisions to Rules of Practice received April 28, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1301. A letter from the Secretary, Federal Trade Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rules — Revisions to Rules of Practice received April 28, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1302. A letter from the Assistant Director, Executive and Political Personnel, Department of Defense, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998, Pub. L. 105-277; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1303. A letter from the Assistant Director, Senior Executive Management Office, Department of Defense, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998, Pub. L. 105-277; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1304. A letter from the Assistant Director, Senior Executive Management Office, Department of Defense, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998, Pub. L. 105-277; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1305. A letter from the Assistant Director, Senior Executive Management Office, Department of Defense, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998, Pub. L. 105-277; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1306. A letter from the Director, Peace Corps, transmitting the Corp's FY 2014 annual report, pursuant to Sec. 203 of the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act), Pub. L. 107-174; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1307. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Sabine River, Orange, TX [Docket No.: USCG-2015-0236] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 27, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1308. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Xterra Swim, Myrtle Beach, SC [Docket No.: USCG-2015-0019] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 27, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1309. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Mantua Creek, Paulsboro, NJ [Docket No.: USCG-2014-0807] (RIN: 1625-AA09) received April 27, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1310. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Taylor Bayou Outfall Canal (Joint Outfall Canal), TX [Docket No.: USCG-2014-0386] (RIN: 1625-AA09) received April 27, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1311. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Consolidation of Officer in

Charge, Marine Inspection For Outer Continental Shelf Activities; Eighth Coast Guard District; Technical, Organizational, and Conforming Amendments [Docket No.: USCG-2013-0491] (RIN: 1625-AB88) received April 27, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1312. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Coquille River, Bandon, OR [Docket No.: USCG-2014-0213] (RIN: 1625-AA09) received April 27, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1313. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Special Local Regulations and Safety Zones; Recurring Marine Events and Fireworks Displays within the Fifth Coast Guard District [Docket No.: USCG-2014-1011] (RIN: 1625-AA00, AA08) received April 27, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1314. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's interim temporary final rule — Special Local Regulation; San Salvador Launch and Procession; San Diego Bay, San Diego, CA [Docket No.: USCG-2015-0138] (RIN: 1625-AA08) received April 27, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1315. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Special Local Regulation; Glass City Scrimmage; Maumee River, Toledo, OH [Docket No.: USCG-2015-0185] (RIN: 1625-AA08) received April 27, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1316. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Special Local Regulation; Hebda Cup Rowing Regatta; Detroit River, Wyandotte, MI [Docket No.: USCG-2015-0190] (RIN: 1625-AA08) received April 27, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1317. A letter from the Deputy General Counsel, Small Business Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Advisory Small Business Size Decisions (RIN: 3245-AG59) received April 27, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Small Business.

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. BISHOP of Utah. Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 308. A bill to prohibit gaming activities on certain Indian lands in Arizona until the expiration of certain gaming compacts (Rept. 114–95). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia: Committee of Conference. Conference report on S. Con. Res. 11. A resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2016 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2017 through 2025 (Rept. 114–96). Ordered to be printed.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky: Committee on Appropriations. Suballocation of Budget Allocations for Fiscal Year 2016 (Rept. 114–97). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. WOODALL: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 231. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1732) to preserve existing rights and responsibilities with respect to waters of the United States, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the conference report to accompany the concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 11) setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2016 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2017 through 2025; and providing for consideration of the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 43) disapproving the action of the District of Columbia Council in approving the Reproductive Health Non-Discrimination Amendment Act of 2014 (Rept. 114–98). 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 Mr. SWALWELL of California:

H.R. 2082. A bill to provide for loan forgiveness for STEM teachers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, 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. CAPPS (for herself, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. PETERS, Mr. SCHRADER, Ms. SLAUGHTER, and Mrs. TORRES):

H.R. 2083. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for patient protection by establishing safe nurse staffing levels at certain Medicare providers, 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 Mr. MARCHANT:

H.R. 2084. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to add certain tax-related crimes to the definition of aggravated identity theft, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. DENHAM (for himself, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, and Mr. NUNES):

H.R. 2085. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to enter into negotiations with interested local water and power providers for the transfer of ownership, control, and operation of the New Melones Unit, Central Valley Project, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. DENHAM (for himself, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. NUNES, and Mr. COSTA):

H.R. 2086. A bill to direct the Secretary of Commerce, with the Oakdale Irrigation District and the South San Joaquin Irrigation District, California, to develop and conduct a pilot program to remove nonnative predator fishes from the Stanislaus River, California, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia (for himself, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. CUMMINGS, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. CONNOLLY, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. NADLER, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. SERRANO, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. PIERLUISI, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Ms. NORTON, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. EDWARDS, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. HONDA, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. POCAN, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Ms. BASS, Ms. BONAMICI, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. SARBANES, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. LEE, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. LOEBSACK, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. TONKO, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. KILDEE, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. FARR, Mr. GRAYSON, Ms. LOFGREN, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, and Mr. MEEKS):

H.R. 2087. A bill to amend title 9 of the United States Code with respect to arbitration; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CONAWAY (for himself, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. CRAWFORD, and Mr. WALZ):

H.R. 2088. A bill to amend the United States Grain Standards Act to improve inspection services performed at export elevators at export port locations, to reauthorize certain authorities of the Secretary of Agriculture under such Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Ms. DELBENE (for herself and Mr. HANNA):

H.R. 2089. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to lower the cost of college education by establishing pilot programs to expand student access to digital course materials; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. COURTNEY (for himself, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, and Mr. CONYERS):

H.R. 2090. A bill to amend the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 to expand coverage under the Act, to increase protections for whistleblowers, to increase penalties for high gravity violations, to adjust penalties for inflation, to provide rights for victims or their family members, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. POLIQUIN (for himself, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. DUFFY, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, and Mrs. WAGNER):

H.R. 2091. A bill to amend the Fair Credit Reporting Act to clarify the ability to request consumer reports in certain cases to establish and enforce child support payments and awards; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. MESSER (for himself and Mr. POLIS):

H.R. 2092. A bill to require operators that provide online and similar services to educational agencies or institutions to protect the privacy and security of personally identifiable information, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, 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. CULBERSON (for himself, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, and Mr. CUELLAR):

H.R. 2093. A bill to preserve American space leadership, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, and in addition to the Committee on the Budget, 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. WESTMORELAND:

H.R. 2094. A bill to repeal titles I and II of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act; to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committees on Agriculture, the Judiciary, and 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. O'ROURKE (for himself, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. TAKANO, and Mr. MCGOVERN):

H.R. 2095. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to promote family unity, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. REICHERT (for himself, Mr. KIND, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. NEAL, Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. BOUSTANY, and Mr. PASCRELL):

H.R. 2096. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and the Small Business Act to expand the availability of employee stock ownership plans in S corporations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committees on Education and the Workforce, and Small Business, 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. NEWHOUSE (for himself, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. GOSAR, and Mrs. LUMMIS):

H.R. 2097. A bill to facilitate and streamline the Bureau of Reclamation process for creating or expanding surface water storage under Reclamation law; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. CRAWFORD (for himself, Mr. WOMACK, Mr. WESTERMAN, and Mr. HILL):

H.R. 2098. A bill to amend the Endangered Species Act of 1973 to require the Secretary of the Interior to publish and make available for public comment a draft economic analysis at the time a proposed rule to designate critical habitat is published; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. CARNEY:

H.R. 2099. A bill to amend the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to require the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection to develop a model form for a disclosure notice that shall be used by depository institutions and credit unions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. CHABOT (for himself, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. ROYCE, and Mr. ENGEL):

H.R. 2100. A bill to authorize the Secretary of State and the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development to provide assistance to support the rights of women and girls in developing countries, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. COOPER (for himself and Mrs. LUMMIS):

H.R. 2101. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to provide for expedited review of drugs and biological products to provide safer or more effective treatment for males or females, to amend the Public Health Service Act to enhance the consideration of sex differences in basic and clinical research, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mrs. DAVIS of California (for herself, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. RIBBLE, Mr. TAKAI, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, and Mr. FITZPATRICK):

H.R. 2102. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to reduce the incidence of diabetes among Medicare beneficiaries, 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 Mr. DOGGETT (for himself, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HUFFMAN, Ms. LEE, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. NORTON, Mr. POCAN, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. RUSH, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. VISCLOSKY, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. PASCRELL, and Ms. MOORE):

H.R. 2103. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand the denial of deduction for certain excessive employee remuneration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. ESHOO (for herself, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. PETERS, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, and Ms. SPEIER):

H.R. 2104. A bill to prioritize funding for an expanded and sustained national investment in biomedical research; to the Committee on the Budget, and in addition to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, Armed Services, and Veterans' Affairs, 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. GRIJALVA:

H.R. 2105. A bill to provide grants to States to ensure that all students in the middle grades are taught an academically rigorous curriculum with effective supports so that students complete the middle grades prepared for success in secondary school and postsecondary endeavors, to improve State and district policies and programs relating to the academic achievement of students in the middle grades, to develop and implement effective middle grades models for struggling students, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. GUINTA (for himself and Mr. KEATING):

H.R. 2106. A bill to provide exclusive funding to support fisheries and the communities that rely upon them, to clear unnecessary regulatory burdens and streamline Federal fisheries management, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. GUTHRIE (for himself and Mr. SCHRADER):

H.R. 2107. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to clarify the treatment of certain Medicaid enrollment brokers; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. HIMES:

H.R. 2108. A bill to require reports submitted to Congress under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 to also be submitted to the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Intelligence (Permanent Select), 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. HUIZENGA of Michigan (for himself, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, and Mr. HARDY):

H.R. 2109. A bill to amend the Endangered Species Act of 1973 to conform citizen suits under that Act with other existing law, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, 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. ISSA (for himself, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Ms. ESHOO, and Mr. COHEN):

H.R. 2110. A bill to prohibit the use of certain clauses in form contracts that restrict the ability of a consumer to communicate regarding the goods or services that were the subject of the contract; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas:

H.R. 2111. A bill to eliminate certain programs of the Environmental Protection Agency, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure, Agriculture, and Science, Space, and Technology, 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. LANCE:

H.R. 2112. A bill to direct the United States Postal Service to designate a single, unique ZIP Code for North Plainfield, New Jersey; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. LANGEVIN (for himself, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. TONKO, Mr. CONNOLLY, and Mr. BEYER):

H.R. 2113. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide for a corporate responsibility investment option under the Thrift Savings Plan; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Ms. LEE:

H.R. 2114. A bill to direct the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide assistance for individuals affected by exposure to Agent Orange, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, and Foreign Affairs, 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. PAULSEN:

H.R. 2115. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand and make permanent rules related to investment by nonresident aliens in domestic mutual funds and business development companies; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. PLASKETT:

H.R. 2116. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to establish the Virgin Islands visa waiver program; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. PLASKETT:

H.R. 2117. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the limitation on

the amount of distilled spirits taxes covered over to the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. PLASKETT:

H.R. 2118. A bill to amend the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States to extend to 2027 the production certificate program that allows refunds of duties on certain articles produced in United States insular possessions; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SHIMKUS:

H.R. 2119. A bill to amend title XI of the Social Security Act to require that State applications for State plan waivers under the Medicaid program be approved only if such applications are budget neutral, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SMITH of New Jersey:

H.R. 2120. A bill to encourage States to expand the protections offered to victims of sex offenses who are not in a familiar or dating relationship with the perpetrators of such offenses; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. STIVERS (for himself, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. MESSER, and Ms. SINEMA):

H.R. 2121. A bill to amend the S.A.F.E. Mortgage Licensing Act of 2008 to provide a temporary license for loan originators transitioning between employers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. ENGEL (for himself and Mr. SMITH of New Jersey):

H. Res. 227. A resolution condemning the murder of Boris Nemtsov, offering condolences to his family, friends, and colleagues, expressing solidarity with the people of Russia, and calling for an international investigation into this crime; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. HONDA (for himself and Ms. NORTON):

H. Res. 228. A resolution expressing support for the designation of May 7, 2015, as a ''National Day of Reason'' and recognizing the importance of reason in the betterment of humanity; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Ms. FOXX:

H. Res. 229. A resolution electing Members to certain standing committees of the House of Representatives; considered and agreed to. considered and agreed to.

By Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ (for herself, Mrs. WAGNER, Ms. MOORE, Mrs. LUMMIS, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. VARGAS, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, and Mr. KING of New York):

H. Res. 230. A resolution encouraging State-by-State adoption of a sexual assault survivors' bill of rights; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. FOSTER (for himself, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. MEEKS, Mrs. TORRES, and Mr. TIBERI):

H. Res. 232. A resolution encouraging greater public-private sector collaboration to promote financial literacy for students and young adults; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. KILDEE (for himself, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. LABRADOR, Mr. ENGEL, and Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN):

H. Res. 233. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that Iran should immediately release the three United States citizens that it holds, as well as provide all known information on any United States citizens that have disappeared within its borders; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. LATTA (for himself and Mr. WELCH):

H. Res. 234. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that telephone service must be improved in rural areas of the United States and that no entity may unreasonably discriminate against telephone users in those areas; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SALMON (for himself, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. POLIS, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. MARINO, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Ms. DELBENE, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. COOK, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. BERA, Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. CLAWSON of Florida, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Mr. BLUM, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. RUSH, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. CAPUANO, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. WILLIAMS, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. POCAN, Mr. COSTA, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. ISRAEL, Ms. BASS, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. SIRES, Mr. TONKO, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. FATTAH, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. JOLLY, Ms. MOORE, Mr. KILMER, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. PETERSON, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. PASCRELL, Ms. MENG, Mr. YOHO, Mr. KEATING, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Ms. HAHN, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. HONDA, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. BARR, Ms. EDWARDS, Ms. LEE, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. POE of Texas, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. COHEN, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. CHABOT, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, and Mr. GOSAR):

H. Res. 235. A resolution expressing deepest condolences to and solidarity with the people of Nepal following the devastating earthquake on April 25, 2015; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

PRIVATE BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas introduced a bill (H.R. 2122) for the relief of Enrique Soriano and Areli Soriano; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

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 Mr. SWALWELL of California:

H.R. 2082.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1 and 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mrs. CAPPS:

H.R. 2083.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. MARCHANT:

H.R. 2084.

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. DENHAM:

H.R. 2085.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. DENHAM:

H.R. 2086.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia:

H.R. 2087.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Sec. 8, Cl. 3

By Mr. CONAWAY:

H.R. 2088.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Pursuant to Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, Congress has the authority to regulate foreign and interstate commerce.

By Ms. DELBENE:

H.R. 2089.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. COURTNEY:

H.R. 2090.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clauses 3 and 18 of Section 8, Article I of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. POLIQUIN:

H.R. 2091.

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 ''To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes:'' as enumerated in Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. MESSER:

H.R. 2092.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, section 8, clause 18, of the United States Constitution

By Mr. CULBERSON:

H.R. 2093.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I. Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States of America.

By Mr. WESTMORELAND:

H.R. 2094.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Commerce Clause, Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the Constitution states that Congress shall have power to regulate the regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mr. O'ROURKE:

H.R. 2095.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

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. REICHERT:

H.R. 2096.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is provided by Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically Clause 1 (relating to providing for the general welfare of the United States) and Clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress), and Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 (relating to the power of Congress to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States).

By Mr. NEWHOUSE:

H.R. 2097.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. CRAWFORD:

H.R. 2098.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

the enumerated powers listed in Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. CARNEY:

H.R. 2099.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution, the Taxing and Spending Clause: ''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 . . .''

By Mr. CHABOT:

H.R. 2100.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3: To regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes;

Article 1, Section 9, Clause 7: No money shall be drawn from the treasury, but in consequence of appropriations made by law; and a regular statement and account of receipts and expenditures of all public money shall be published from time to time.

By Mr. COOPER:

H.R. 2101.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Constitutional authority in which this bill rests is the power of the Congress to regulate Commerce, as enumerated by Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mrs. DAVIS of California:

H.R. 2102.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8 Clause 3

By Mr. DOGGETT:

H.R. 2103.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. ESHOO:

H.R. 2104.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Pursuant to Article 1, Section 8.

By Mr. GRIJALVA:

H.R. 2105.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

U.S. Const. art. I, §§1 and 8.

By Mr. GUINTA:

H.R. 2106.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article: I Section: 8 Clause: 18, the Necessary and Proper Clause

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 Mr. GUTHRIE:

H.R. 2107.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. HIMES:

H.R. 2108.

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. HUIZENGA of Michigan:

H.R. 2109.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, clause 18 of the United States Constitution: 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. ISSA:

H.R. 2110.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas:

H.R. 2111.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 of the U.S. Constitution and Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. LANCE:

H.R. 2112.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 7, of the United States Constitution

This states that ''Congress shall have the power to . . . establish Post offices and post Roads''

By Mr. LANGEVIN:

H.R. 2113.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 3 of Section 8 of Article I of the Constitution.

By Ms. LEE:

H.R. 2114.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 of the Consititution

By Mr. PAULSEN:

H.R. 2115.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. PLASKETT:

H.R. 2116.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1 (General Welfare Clause)

Article 4, Section 3, Clause 2 (Territories Clause)

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18 (Necessary and Proper Clause)

By Ms. PLASKETT:

H.R. 2117.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 (Interstate Commerce Clause)

Article 4, Section 3, Clause 2 (Territories Clause)

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18 (Necessary and Proper Clause)

By Ms. PLASKETT:

H.R. 2118.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1 (General Welfare Clause)

Article 4, Section 3, Clause 2 (Territories Clause)

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18 (Necessary and Proper Clause)

By Mr. SHIMKUS:

H.R. 2119.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3: To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mr. SMITH of New Jersey:

H.R. 2120.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the Constitution.

By Mr. STIVERS:

H.R. 2121.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas:

H.J. Res. 2122.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 4 of the U.S. Constitution

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills as follows:

H.R. 25: Mr. SMITH of Missouri.

H.R. 169: Mr. BARR.

H.R. 187: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.

H.R. 303: Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mrs. COMSTOCK, and Mr. WESTERMAN.

H.R. 379: Mr. YARMUTH and Mr. GRAVES of Missouri.

H.R. 427: Mr. JORDAN.

H.R. 430: Mrs. TORRES.

H.R. 448: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 484: Mr. KILMER and Mr. DELANEY.

H.R. 504: Mr. HUDSON, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, and Mr. BLUM.

H.R. 511: Mr. DUFFY and Mr. BISHOP of Michigan.

H.R. 512: Mr. BOUSTANY and Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California.

H.R. 588: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.

H.R. 592: Mr. BERA.

H.R. 600: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.

H.R. 602: Mr. PERLMUTTER.

H.R. 664: Mr. GRIJALVA and Mr. POLIS.

H.R. 692: Mr. ZINKE and Mr. YOUNG of Iowa.

H.R. 699: Ms. SINEMA.

H.R. 704: Mrs. COMSTOCK.

H.R. 712: Mr. STEWART.

H.R. 721: Mr. KILDEE, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, and Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi.

H.R. 727: Ms. LEE.

H.R. 767: Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. HINOJOSA, and Mr. YOHO.

H.R. 775: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana and Mr. BERA.

H.R. 776: Mr. MESSER.

H.R. 793: Mr. RIBBLE and Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan.

H.R. 801: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.
H.R. 822: Mr. MULLIN.
H.R. 825: Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. CURBELO of Florida, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, and Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H.R. 828: Mr. BECERRA.
H.R. 835: Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 845: Mr. GRAVES of Georgia.
H.R. 864: Mr. MCDERMOTT.
H.R. 879: Mr. BLUM.
H.R. 891: Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. BARTON, Mr. OLSON, Mr. FLORES, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. THORNBERRY, Mr. GOHMERT, and Mr. O'ROURKE.
H.R. 907: Mr. CICILLINE.
H.R. 913: Mr. FATTAH.
H.R. 920: Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. SLAUGHTER, and Mr. HECK of Washington.
H.R. 921: Mr. BOUSTANY.
H.R. 928: Mr. RATCLIFFE, Mr. MACARTHUR, and Mr. FITZPATRICK.
H.R. 932: Mr. TED LIEU of California.
H.R. 985: Mr. KILMER.
H.R. 989: Mr. CHABOT and Mr. POLIS.
H.R. 1062: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.
H.R. 1086: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.
H.R. 1087: Mr. CURBELO of Florida.
H.R. 1089: Mrs. LAWRENCE and Ms. MCCOLLUM.
H.R. 1171: Ms. KUSTER.
H.R. 1188: Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. HUFFMAN, and Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.
H.R. 1194: Mr. TONKO.
H.R. 1233: Mr. POSEY, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. CURBELO of Florida, Mr. GRAVES of Georgia, Mr. COLE, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. ADERHOLT, and Mr. TIBERI.
H.R. 1247: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.
H.R. 1266: Mr. BABIN, Ms. GRANGER, and Mr. PITTS.
H.R. 1272: Mr. RUIZ.
H.R. 1275: Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. COHEN, Mr. HUFFMAN, and Mr. QUIGLEY.
H.R. 1276: Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. COHEN, Mr. HUFFMAN, and Mrs. NAPOLITANO.
H.R. 1278: Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. QUIGLEY, and Mr. VEASEY.
H.R. 1288: Mr. HUDSON and Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER.
H.R. 1300: Mr. LONG.
H.R. 1309: Ms. MENG, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. POLIQUIN, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. ROSS, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, and Mrs. BEATTY.
H.R. 1321: Mr. KILDEE.
H.R. 1344: Mr. MCKINLEY.
H.R. 1365: Mrs. WALORSKI.
H.R. 1384: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.
H.R. 1393: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 1399: Mr. ROSS and Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H.R. 1411: Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 1413: Mr. BARR.
H.R. 1431: Mr. ALLEN.
H.R. 1432: Mr. ALLEN.
H.R. 1448: Mr. HUFFMAN.
H.R. 1465: Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 1475: Ms. SINEMA and Mr. WEBER of Texas.
H.R. 1478: Mr. PEARCE, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. BLUM, and Mr. TIPTON.
H.R. 1479: Mr. ALLEN and Mr. LUETKEMEYER.
H.R. 1516: Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. MULLIN, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. COLE, and Mr. DEFAZIO.
H.R. 1523: Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. TIPTON, and Mr. TIBERI.
H.R. 1528: Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California.
H.R. 1530: Ms. DUCKWORTH.
H.R. 1550: Mr. BARR.
H.R. 1559: Mr. BENISHEK, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, and Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H.R. 1572: Mr. MCKINLEY.
H.R. 1574: Mr. RANGEL and Mr. HONDA.
H.R. 1594: Mr. POLIQUIN and Mrs. HARTZLER.
H.R. 1605: Mr. LABRADOR.
H.R. 1607: Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. COHEN, Mr. POLIS, and Ms. ESTY.
H.R. 1608: Mr. RIBBLE, Mr. DUFFY, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. HARPER, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, and Mr. RUSH.
H.R. 1610: Mr. ROUZER.
H.R. 1613: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. YOHO, Mr. ISSA, Mr. PITTENGER, and Mr. BENISHEK.
H.R. 1624: Mr. WESTMORELAND and Mr. MCKINLEY.
H.R. 1655: Mr. VALADAO.
H.R. 1660: Mr. TIPTON.
H.R. 1661: Mr. TIPTON.
H.R. 1664: Mr. HENSARLING.
H.R. 1666: Mr. VEASEY.
H.R. 1674: Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. YARMUTH, and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H.R. 1684: Mr. GIBSON.
H.R. 1699: Mr. MULVANEY and Mr. PITTENGER.
H.R. 1706: Mr. TED LIEU of California.
H.R. 1713: Mrs. TORRES.
H.R. 1726: Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 1739: Mr. ALLEN.
H.R. 1741: Mr. FORTENBERRY.
H.R. 1743: Mr. RANGEL, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 1752: Mr. FORTENBERRY.
H.R. 1759: Mr. BARR and Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 1763: Mr. HUFFMAN.
H.R. 1769: Mr. ROSS, Mr. JOLLY, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, and Mr. CONNOLLY.
H.R. 1782: Ms. GRANGER.
H.R. 1846: Mr. BUCSHON and Ms. KAPTUR.
H.R. 1861: Mr. SMITH of Nebraska and Mr. DOLD.
H.R. 1882: Mr. KILMER.
H.R. 1887: Ms. ESTY.
H.R. 1926: Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. HUFFMAN, and Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 1956: Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. VELA, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, and Ms. SEWELL of Alabama.
H.R. 1957: Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. VELA, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, and Ms. SEWELL of Alabama.
H.R. 1958: Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. VELA, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, and Ms. SEWELL of Alabama.
H.R. 1959: Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. VELA, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, and Ms. SEWELL of Alabama.
H.R. 1977: Mr. NORCROSS.
H.R. 1982: Ms. GRANGER.
H.R. 1985: Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS.
H.R. 1986: Mr. BLUM and Mr. ISSA.
H.R. 1993: Mr. BENISHEK and Mr. MOOLENAAR.
H.R. 1994: Mr. ROUZER, Mrs. RADEWAGEN, and Ms. SINEMA.
H.R. 1998: Ms. FRANKEL of Florida and Mr. SCOTT of Virginia.
H.R. 2025: Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H.R. 2032: Mr. TIPTON and Mrs. LUMMIS.
H.R. 2033: Mr. ELLISON, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Mr. CUELLAR, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. LEE, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. LOFGREN, Ms. MENG, Mr. CLEAVER, and Mr. CLYBURN.
H.R. 2044: Mr. BLUM and Mr. ALLEN.
H.R. 2048: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. WELCH, Mrs. CAPPS, and Mr. MARINO.
H.R. 2050: Ms. LOFGREN and Ms. LEE.
H.R. 2058: Mr. ROUZER, Mr. GUTHRIE, and Mr. ROONEY of Florida.
H.R. 2079: Mr. SCOTT of Virginia.
H.J. Res. 43: Mr. ALLEN, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. HILL, and Mr. FLEISCHMANN.
H. Con. Res. 18: Mr. VEASEY and Mr. SERRANO.
H. Con. Res. 40: Mr. DOLD.
H. Con. Res. 43: Mr. CARSON of Indiana.
H. Res. 26: Mr. BABIN.
H. Res. 28: Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. COHEN, and Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.
H. Res. 130: Mr. LATTA and Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN.
H. Res. 159: Mr. CROWLEY and Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.
H. Res. 186: Mr. COHEN.
H. Res. 194: Mr. GIBSON.
H. Res. 208: Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. SWALWELL of California, and Mr. VARGAS.
H. Res. 214: Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. SABLAN, and Mr. VARGAS.
H. Res. 225: Mr. O'ROURKE and Mr. KILMER.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAX BENEFITS, OR LIMITED TARIFF BENEFITS

Under clause 9 of rule XXI, lists or statements on congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits were submitted as follows:

AMENDMENTS

Under clause 8 of rule XVIII, proposed amendments were submitted as follows:

H.R. 2028

OFFERED BY: MR. ENGEL

AMENDMENT NO. 7: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used by the Department of Energy, the Department of the Interior, or any other Federal agency to lease or purchase new light duty vehicles for any executive fleet, or for an agency's fleet inventory, except in accordance with Presidential Memorandum—Federal Fleet Performance, dated May 24, 2011.

H.R. 2028

OFFERED BY: MR. WEBER OF TEXAS

AMENDMENT NO. 8: At the end of the bill, before the short title, insert the following new section:

SEC. 507. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used for the Cape Wind Energy Project on the Outer Continental Shelf off Massachusetts, Nantucket Sound.

H.R. 2028

OFFERED BY: MS. BONAMICI

AMENDMENT NO. 9: Page 21, line 5, after the dollar amount insert ''(increased by $9,000,000)''.

Page 27, line 13, after the dollar amount insert ''(reduced by $9,000,000)''.

H.R. 2028

OFFERED BY: MR. GOSAR

AMENDMENT NO. 10: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used for the Department of Energy's Climate Model Development and Validation program.

H.R. 2028

OFFERED BY: MR. BARTON

AMENDMENT NO. 11: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. The Secretary of the Army, acting through the Chief of Engineers, shall accept from the Trinity River Authority of Texas, if received by October 31, 2015, $30,191,026 as payment in full of amounts owed to the United States, including any accrued interest, for water supply storage space in Joe Pool Lake, Texas (previously known as Lakeview Lake), under contract number DACW63-76-C-0106.

H.R. 2028

OFFERED BY: MRS. BLACKBURN

AMENDMENT NO. 12: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. Each amount made available by this Act is hereby reduced by 1 percent.

H.R. 2028

OFFERED BY: MRS. BLACKBURN

AMENDMENT NO. 13: At the end of the bill, before the short title, add the following new section:

SEC. 507. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to finalize, promulgate, or enforce the Department of Energy's proposed rule entitled ''Energy Conservation Program for Consumer Products: Energy Conservation Standards for Residential Furnaces'' (80 Fed. Reg. 48: March 12, 2015).

H.R. 2028

OFFERED BY: MR. KING OF IOWA

AMENDMENT NO. 14: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used for attendance at, or participation in, the twenty-first session of the Conference of Parties (COP 21) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Paris, France, in 2015.

H.R. 2028

OFFERED BY: MR. DENT

AMENDMENT NO. 15: At the end of title III, insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used by the Department of Energy to finalize, implement, or enforce the proposed rule entitled ''Standards Ceiling Fans and Ceiling Fan Light Kits'' and identified by regulation identification number 1904-AC87.

H.R. 2028

OFFERED BY: MR. LUETKEMEYER

AMENDMENT NO. 16:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to continue the study conducted by the Army Corps of Engineers pursuant to section 5018(a)(1) of the Water Resources Development Act of 2007 (Public Law 110–114).

H.R. 2028

OFFERED BY: MR. SWALWELL OF CALIFORNIA

AMENDMENT NO. 17:

Page 21, line 5, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $25,500,000)''.

Page 22, line 20, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $34,000,000)''.

H.R. 2028

OFFERED BY: MS. CASTOR OF FLORIDA

AMENDMENT NO. 18:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. For an additional amount for ''Corps of Engineers-Civil—Expenses'' for the Water Infrastructure Public-Private Partnership Pilot Program, as authorized in section 5014 of the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–121; 33 U.S.C. 2201 note), there is hereby appropriated, and the amount otherwise made available by this Act for ''Corps of Engineers-Civil—Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works'' is hereby reduced by, $2,375,000.

H.R. 2028

OFFERED BY: MS. CASTOR OF FLORIDA

AMENDMENT NO. 19:

Page 21, line 5, after the dollar amount insert ''(increased by $266,161,000)''.

Page 22, line 20, after the dollar amount insert ''(reduced by $355,000,000)''.

H.R. 2028

OFFERED BY: MR. FLEMING

AMENDMENT NO. 20:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to pay the salary of any officer or employee to carry out section 301 of the Hoover Power Plant Act of 1984 (42 U.S.C. 16421a; added by section 402 of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Public Law 111–5)).

H.R. 2028

OFFERED BY: MR. PITTENGER

AMENDMENT NO. 21:

At the end of the bill, before the short title, insert the following new section:

SEC. 507. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to issue loans under title XVII of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16511 et seq.).

H.R. 2028

OFFERED BY: MR. GRAYSON

AMENDMENT NO 22: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to enter into a contract with any offeror or any of its principals if the offeror certifies, as required by Federal Acquisition Regulation, that the offeror or any of its principals:

(A) within a three-year period preceding this offer has been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against it for: commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (Federal, State, or local) contract or subcontract; violation of Federal or State antitrust statutes relating to the submission of offers; or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, tax evasion, violating Federal criminal tax laws, or receiving stolen property; or

(B) are presently indicted for, or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity with, commission of any of the offenses enumerated above in subsection (A); or

(C) within a three-year period preceding this offer, has been notified of any delinquent Federal taxes in an amount that exceeds $3,000 for which the liability remains unsatisfied.

H.R. 2029

OFFERED BY: MR. O'ROURKE

AMENDMENT NO. 8: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act, including the funds made available for ''CONSTRUCTION, MAJOR PROJECTS'', may be used to increase the funding for any Department of Veterans Affairs major medical facility project, as defined in paragraph (3)(A) of subsection (a) of section 8104 of title 38, United States Code, that is under construction as of the date of the enactment of this Act, above the amount specified in the prospectus for such project submitted under subsection (b) of such section and the detailed estimate of costs for such project submitted under paragraph (1) of such subsection.

H.R. 2029

OFFERED BY: MR. ENGEL

AMENDMENT NO. 9: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used by the Department of Defense, the Department of Veterans Affairs, or any other Federal agency to lease or purchase new light duty vehicles for any executive fleet, or for an agency's fleet inventory, except in accordance with Presidential Memorandum—Federal Fleet Performance, dated May 24, 2011.

H.R. 2029

OFFERED BY: MR. GRAYSON

AMENDMENT NO. 10: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to enter into a contract with any offeror or any of its principals if the offeror certifies, as required by Federal Acquisition Regulation, that the offeror or any of its principals:

(A) within a three-year period preceding this offer has been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against it for: commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (Federal, State, or local) contract or subcontract; violation of Federal or State antitrust statutes relating to the submission of offers; or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, tax evasion, violating Federal criminal tax laws, or receiving stolen property; or

(B) are presently indicted for, or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity with, commission of any of the offenses enumerated above in subsection (A); or

(C) within a three-year period preceding this offer, has been notified of any delinquent Federal taxes in an amount that exceeds $3,000 for which the liability remains unsatisfied.

H.R. 2029

OFFERED BY: MR. BOUSTANY

AMENDMENT NO. 11: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. (1) None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to pay any bonus or monetary award under chapter 45 or 53 of title 5, United States Code, to an employee of the Chief Business Office of the Department of Veterans Affairs who is responsible for processing emergency medical care claims until the percentage of emergency medical care claims processed within 30 days reaches 90 percent.

(2) The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit quarterly data to Congress on the following:

(A) The total number of emergency medical claims and the total number of billed charges for such claims.

(B) The total number of emergency medical claims and billed charges for such claims pending for more than 30 days.

(C) The number of veterans with unpaid claims under consideration in each Veterans Integrated Service Network.

H.R. 2029

OFFERED BY: MR. BENISHEK

AMENDMENT NO. 12: Page 58, after line 25, insert the following:

SEC. 242. Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress a report that describes the status, including the timeline for completion, of each Community-Based Outpatient Clinic to be established by the Department of Veterans Affairs, through construction or lease, that is not yet completed.

H.R. 2029

OFFERED BY: MS. ADAMS

AMENDMENT NO. 13: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. (1) Subject to paragraphs (2) and (3), amounts made available under the ''General Operating Expenses, Veterans Benefits Administration'' account for fiscal year 2016 may be used by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide discretionary competitive grants for State and local governments to establish or expand technology systems that develop a coordinated network of private, public and nonprofit services and resources to better serve veterans and their family members. A State or local government awarded a grant under this section shall work with an entity that has experience working with comprehensive coordinated networks, protects privacy of veterans and their families, ensures the quality of providers, and has a metrics system to effectively measure success of the network.

(2) Amounts used as described in paragraph (1) may not result in a more than 10 percent aggregate decrease in the total amount made available by this Act for the ''General Operating Expenses, Veterans Benefits Administration'' account.

(3) Each grant made under paragraph (1) shall be subject to the approval of the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate.

H.R. 2029

OFFERED BY: MR. POCAN

AMENDMENT NO. 14: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used to withhold any report of an Inspector General from any member of Congress in any case where the member of Congress has requested that such report be provided.

H.R. 2029

OFFERED BY: MR. POCAN

AMENDMENT NO. 15: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following new section:

SEC. 5____. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used to enter into a contract with any person whose disclosures of a proceeding with a disposition listed in section 2313(c)(1) of title 41, United States Code, in the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System include the term ''Fair Labor Standards Act''.

United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 114th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 161 WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29, 2015 No. 63

Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, enthroned above all other powers, thank You for the masterpiece of another day. Lord, our hearts ache because of the pain in our world. We see the anger, the violence, the death, the tears, and the despair. Forgive us when we forget that You are still in control of our planet and that the hearts of humanity are in Your hands. Lord, help us to remember that Your power is far above any conceivable command, authority or control. As our lawmakers strive to contribute to peace in our time, bless those who support them in their work. Help us all to trust You without wavering.

We pray in Your strong 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 PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PAUL). The majority leader is recognized.

IRAN NUCLEAR AGREEMENT REVIEW ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, yesterday, we were reminded yet again of Iran's determination to use every element of national power to expand its sphere of influence and undermine international law.

What we saw in the Strait of Hormuz simply underlines the danger posed by Iran, along with the pressing need for a clear-eyed understanding of the Iranian threat.

It is appropriate, then, that the Senate will resume consideration of the bipartisan Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act later today. I encourage Members to come to the floor, offer amendments, and work with the floor managers to schedule votes.

We have voted on one amendment to this bipartisan bill. I am sure we will take votes on several more significant amendments before the week is over.

WELCOMING THE PRIME MINISTER OF JAPAN

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, later this morning we will welcome an important friend of the United States to the Capitol, Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan.

I am looking forward to hearing what he has to say. I know many of my colleagues feel the same way because Prime Minister Abe doesn't just lead one of the most important economies and countries in the Asia-Pacific region, he leads one of the most important countries and economies in the entire world. Abe has proposed to tackle some tough structural problems other leaders in his country might not touch, but he knows the Japanese people can be persuaded to reward their leaders for taking risks.

Abe previously served in the Cabinet of a free-market Prime Minister who grabbed hold of economic third rails of Japanese politics and then rolled to a landslide victory when others counted him out. Perhaps that is why Abe feels liberated to pursue new initiatives of his own.

On the domestic side, Abe has proposed structural reforms. On the international front, Abe has worked to enhance the role and influence of democratic nations, such as the two of us, in the Asia-Pacific. Just this week in Washington, he signed important agreements with the United States on both cyber security and defense.

This all serves to underline the enduring importance of the U.S.-Japan alliance. It also reminds us that the Obama administration must do its part, too, by investing in the platforms and capabilities needed to make its announced pivot to Asia real. That is the only way to both bolster democratic nations such as Japan in the region, while also effectively countering China's aggressive encroachment upon the territorial and navigational rights of its neighbors.

Trade is another way to advance our common values and strengthen our national security and our economy. For years, Japan and the United States had a difficult trading relationship. Today, though, the U.S. and Japanese negotiators actually appear close to reaching an agreement that could significantly lower existing barriers to trade, benefiting both of our economies.

That breakthrough is being negotiated as part of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a trade agreement between Pacific nations such as Japan, Australia, and the United States. That would help ensure the region and the world play by fair rules, instead of ceding the fields to an increasingly aggressive China.

The Trans-Pacific Partnership could also, according to one estimate, support up to nearly one-quarter of a million new jobs in the United States, including more than 50,000 jobs in the manufacturing sector alone. But American and Kentucky workers and farmers will never be able to reap the rewards of selling more ''Made in America'' goods to the Pacific until Congress passes a bipartisan trade promotion bill.

Passing that bipartisan legislation is key to enhancing Congress's role in the trade process, while simultaneously ensuring Presidents of either party—because this is a 6-year TPA, it will apply

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

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to the next President—have the tools they need to secure a strong and enforceable trade agreement for American workers.

The bill recently passed the Finance Committee on an overwhelmingly bipartisan vote, and I intend to take it up after we complete action on the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act.

But, for now, let me just say that Congress is pleased to have the Prime Minister join us today. We thank Prime Minister Abe and his country for their enduring friendship.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

IRAN NUCLEAR AGREEMENT REVIEW ACT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am grateful for the work done yesterday and during the entire process of working toward an agreement on the important Iran legislation.

Senators CORKER and CARDIN have done a magnificent job. They are both good managers. I would suggest everyone who is concerned about amendments should come and talk to the two managers before they lay down their amendments.

There is a process for moving amendments forward. It has been very well articulated by both Senator CARDIN and Senator CORKER, so we know what rules we can move under today.

We know there are difficult issues with this bill—and those are some of the things we do here, work on difficult issues—not always but some of the time.

WASHINGTON NATIONALS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, Senator MCCONNELL and I love our jobs. We realize how important things are that we work on, but once in a while we take a minute and talk about one of our hobbies and that is watching baseball.

Because we are in Washington and have been for some time, we have been focused recently on the Nationals. They started off in a very bad fashion, losing, now—last night, they were in the process of a six-game losing streak. They brought in a pitcher because their star was injured. He gave up nine runs in two innings. So I think we were both fairly well going to acknowledge they were going to lose their seventh straight, but they won the game 13 to 12.

I admire the tenacity of the Republican leader because he watched the end of the game. I couldn't do that. I tried, but at the beginning of the ninth inning—they had given up more runs earlier—they were behind with one out, and I said: I am going to go to bed. I was surprised when I got up this morning and they had won. So we had a good laugh talking about the game today that they had won. As I indicated, I am sorry I didn't get to watch the last of the game. I decided I didn't have enough faith in the team, and I went to bed.

THE BUDGET

Mr. REID. Mr. President, budgets should be about reality, not ideology. The reality of the budget today is that our middle class is being pushed to the edge of extinction, and that is the truth, while there is an ever-widening gap between the rich and the poor. As I have said—I will continue to say—the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting much poorer. But perhaps the most brutal reality is that Congress is not doing its job, and the real brutal reality is that congressional Republicans don't even seem to care.

In the very near future, the Senate is expected to consider a conference report on the Republican budget resolution. It is a budget that is as irresponsible as it is immoral.

It is a budget based on the failed ideology of a political party out of touch with America's middle class, a political party that is out of touch with reality. It amounts to an all-out attack on working families, an attack designed to protect only the interests of millionaires, billionaires, and many special interests.

The Republican budget would deprive more than 16 million Americans of their health insurance. It allows big insurance companies to, once again, discriminate against women. It would cause people who have disabilities to be unable to get insurance—as it used to be before ObamaCare came into being. It threatens the coverage of hard-working Americans who lose their jobs or suffer from, as I have indicated, preexisting medical conditions.

The budget that is proposed by my Republican friends would also make deep cuts to Medicare at the expense of our Nation's seniors. It would raise taxes on working Americans by allowing the expansion of the earned-income tax credit and allows the child tax credit to simply expire, go out of existence.

It would end key supports that help young Americans afford college. At a time when student debt is higher than credit card debt—we have tried to resolve it on the Senate floor, but the Republicans vote unanimously no. They are not going to cut parents—these young men and women who have debt—any slack.

The budget they propose would undermine job training—and certainly at a time when we need it with the changing technology that creates jobs—for Americans who are simply trying to better themselves and get a good job or a better job.

Meanwhile, Republicans refuse to close a single tax loophole to reduce the deficit—not one. They will not end tax breaks for companies that send jobs overseas. They will not close loopholes for wealthy hedge fund managers. They will not do away with wasteful tax breaks for the oil and gas industry.

Once again, Republicans are attacking the middle class, and they are attacking it forcefully, while protecting the superwealthy.

The budget is just wrong. It is also dishonest.

It claims to be balanced. There is no balance in this budget. That is a word. The budget is no more balanced than the earthquakes they have had in Nepal. It claims to reach balance, but the claim is laughable, based on gimmicks and massive cuts that are left unspecified.

When you have editorials from magazines such as Forbes, a conservative magazine, denigrating the Republican budget, you know it is wrong. One of the worst aspects of this budget is it uses sequestration to undermine America's middle class, to underfund the investments needed for our security and our future.

Let's talk about sequestration for a minute, these automatic cuts. The example is the National Institutes of Health. It becomes very personal when you see these issues that face Americans—diabetes, the flu. The Presiding Officer is a physician who specializes in eyes. But the flu kills tens of thousands of people in America every year, and the NIH was on the verge of a universal vaccine for flu, any type of flu. As we know, what they do now, they try to find out what the flu is going to be, the variety of flu in a given year, and then they try to mix and match. Last year, that was effective at less than 50 percent. So if you got the flu shot—60 percent of people who got the flu shot got the flu anyway. But because of sequestration, they had to drop that. They have never gotten that money back—$1.6 billion.

I mentioned eyes. I have become very concerned about eyes in the last couple of months, and there are all kinds of programs at the NIH that could be funded much better dealing with problems such as I have.

So it is simply wrong that they are going to go forward with this sequestration. It is wrong.

Sequestration was never intended to be implemented. It was designed with cuts so deep and so stupid that Congress would never let them happen. But my Republican colleagues let them happen. Republicans recognize that sequestration poses a threat to our national security, and their budget uses a gimmick.

I am not calling it a gimmick—or at least I am not alone. We have Republicans—the junior Senator from Tennessee is talking about how he won't support the budget because he thinks there are some gimmicks in it, and many editorials have been written using that term over and over again. Their budget is not balanced, and it uses gimmicks to pretend.

They do everything in this budget to protect the Pentagon, but it doesn't

really because it is phony. They use the overseas contingency fund, which everybody knows is phony. They want to help the military. I want to help the military also. But, sadly, the Republican budget does absolutely nothing to provide similar protections for the middle class.

There is, however, some good news about the Republican budget, and it is this: The Republican budget isn't worth the paper it is written on. It is going to go nowhere. There is no chance of the budget actually being implemented. President Obama and the congressional Democrats are committed to the middle class, so we are not going to let it happen.

The administration has made it very clear that President Obama is not willing to lock in sequestration in any appropriations bill or in anything else. In a Statement of Administration Policy—the forerunner of a veto—the Obama administration said: ''The President's senior advisors would recommend that he veto . . . any legislation that implements the current Republican budget framework.'' Nor will the President accept fixes to defense without also fixing nondefense budget items. For President Obama, it is simply a matter of principle, and congressional Democrats fully agree with his principle. So the Republican budget isn't going anywhere.

If Republicans insist on moving appropriations bills based on that budget, it is a waste of their time. It will not happen. We will not let that happen. What we need is a budget that is based in reality, a budget that is fair to the middle class, fair to the American people, a budget that will only happen when Republicans abandon their extreme attacks on the poor and middle class and sit down and talk to us about the way forward.

I note that no one is seeking the floor, and I would ask that the Chair announce the business of the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 10:30 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided in the usual form.

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. CAPITO). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the time be charged equally between the majority and the minority.

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

Mr. REID. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

IRAN NUCLEAR AGREEMENT REVIEW ACT

Mr. FLAKE. Madam President, I come to the floor today to talk about S. 615, the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act. This bill establishes a process to guarantee congressional review of any agreement reached between the P5+1 and Iran.

Like everybody else here, my goal is to ensure that Iran does not acquire nuclear weapons. With that goal in mind, I have avoided supporting measures over the past 18 months that would impact the administration's ongoing negotiations. I believe it is incumbent upon us to explore every avenue of diplomacy to stop Iran from getting a nuclear weapon.

There have been suggestions that this legislation we are considering today will negatively impact the negotiations for a final agreement. To the contrary, I think this legislation will improve the chances of reaching a final accord. Most importantly, it will improve the chances that this accord will stand the test of time.

If approved, the President will have to negotiate knowing that Congress will ultimately review this agreement. That is only proper given that the terms of the agreement go far beyond—far beyond—the current administration.

In truth, Congress has always had a role here. It was the U.S. Congress that passed the sanctions that brought Iran to the negotiating table. It is only the U.S. Congress that can permanently lift the sanctions. Unfortunately, the administration would prefer to go it alone when it comes to the implementation of this agreement by using the waiver authority that was granted when these sanctions were passed.

There is no dispute that the President can lift these sanctions on a temporary basis. But since this agreement is slated to last well beyond the President's term and even the next President's term, any effective, enduring agreement has to have congressional buy-in. Let me repeat. If this legislation fails, the President will be able to sign a final agreement and have a nice signing ceremony, but an effective, enduring agreement to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon will require congressional buy-in.

We also need to recognize that we are not operating in a vacuum. Once an agreement that includes our allies is reached, the multilateral sanctions regime that has been so effective in bringing Iran to the negotiating table will be defunct. These sanctions have been effective because it has been Iran versus the West rather than Iran versus the United States. It is unreasonable to assume that such a united front can be reassembled before Iran obtains a nuclear weapon.

That is why the bill before us today is so important. It sets up a process for review by Congress of any agreement, preventing the administration from presenting Congress with a fait accompli. This legislation will not repeal any sanctions currently in place against Iran. Congress will still have to take action to lift these sanctions permanently. Its passage ensures that if Congress does repeal the sanctions, it does so because it chooses to, not because it has no other choice.

I would also like to take a moment to reflect on the process that brought this bill out of committee. Tough issues were thoughtfully worked out and compromises were made to get this bill language to a place where the bill was voted unanimously out of committee with a recorded vote. Thanks to firm commitments made by the chairman and the ranking member to keep this bill bipartisan, the White House—which for weeks had threatened to veto the bill—reversed its position just hours before the markup. This about-face was likely due to the fact that there were so many Senators on a bipartisan basis lining up to support this bill.

This legislation signals to the administration that it needs to keep Congress in mind when it negotiates. And, without poison pill amendments being added, the President will be forced to sign it.

Most importantly, I am hopeful that the passage of this bill out of committee signifies a return to a time the Foreign Relations Committee is able to work across the aisle on foreign policy matters. I realize it cannot always happen, but the ideal is when partisan politics can—as Senator Vandenberg put it—stop at the water's edge.

The reality is that given the myriad of foreign policy challenges that confront us around the globe, we do not have the luxury of partisanship, and nowhere is this more evident than with the legislation we are considering today. I hope we can come together and pass it.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

JOINT MEETING OF THE TWO HOUSES—ADDRESS BY THE PRIME MINISTER OF JAPAN

RECESS SUBJECT TO THE CALL OF THE CHAIR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 10:33 a.m., took a recess subject to the call of the Chair, and the Senate, preceded by the Secretary of the Senate, Julie E. Adams; the Deputy Sergeant at Arms, James Morhard; and the Vice President of the United States, JOSEPH R. BIDEN, Jr., proceeded to the Hall of the House of Representatives to hear an address delivered by His Excellency Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan.

(The address delivered by the Prime Minister of Japan to the joint meeting of the two Houses of Congress is printed in the Proceedings of the House of Representatives in today's RECORD.)

At 12:16 p.m., the Senate, having returned to its Chamber, reassembled and was called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. SASSE).

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

PROTECTING VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ACT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 1191, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1191) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Pending:

Corker/Cardin amendment No. 1140, in the nature of a substitute.

Corker/Cardin amendment No. 1179 (to amendment No. 1140), to require submission of all Persian text included in the agreement.

Blunt amendment No. 1155 (to amendment No. 1140), to extend the requirement for annual Department of Defense reports on the military power of Iran.

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

OBAMACARE

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I come to the floor today because I noticed that the minority leader, the Senator from Nevada, had some nice things to say about me on Monday in his remarks. He said that I was ''relentless'' in my ''condemnation of ObamaCare.'' Those are his words. I appreciate the minority leader's kind remarks, because he is right. As a doctor, I am relentless in my condemnation of the President's health care law, a law that has done incredible harm to so many people all across this country.

Minority Leader REID also said that he had the facts about the law. Most of those facts seemed to come from a New York Times opinion column by the renowned liberal icon Paul Krugman.

So let me share some real facts with the minority leader. The insurance plans offered in the health care exchanges are so expensive that they are a horrible deal for most Americans. That is why the President had to give out subsidies—to help hide the costs. The Congressional Budget Office said that Washington will spend $850 billion on those subsidies over the next decade. That is a fact.

According to a new study by the health research company Avalere, ObamaCare plans are extremely unpopular among people who don't get the huge subsidies to buy the plan. Only 2 percent of the people who don't qualify for subsidies have actually bought insurance through the exchanges. That is a fact. It is an alarming sign of how high the cost of ObamaCare really is.

It is not just the premiums that are sky high. This year, the average deductible for ObamaCare's silver plan is almost $3,000 for a single person and more than $6,000 for a family. Now, that is according to something called HealthPocket, which is a Web site that helps people actually compare insurance plans. That is a fact, and $6,000 is a lot of money for a hard-working family to pay for their deductible.

Now, the minority leader said that Paul Krugman's opinions should be treated like facts—not as facts but like facts—because as Senator REID said, ''this isn't some high school teacher talking about the merits of ObamaCare.'' Well, I agree on that point. High school teachers are far more likely to have had actual experience with the damage that is done by the ObamaCare health care law than has this New York Times columnist.

That is what we learned from a report at KMOX TV in St. Louis on April 23. Their report talked about the Parkway School District in Missouri. It was Senator REID who said this isn't some high school teacher. Well, this report from St. Louis said ObamaCare is forcing the school district to outsource the employment of substitute teachers. Why would they want to do that? It is in the face of a $4 million penalty for not offering health insurance to the part-time teachers. That is a fact. And those substitute teachers are real people who are being hurt by President Obama's health care law.

Here is another fact reported by Politico on Monday afternoon. This was their headline on April 27: ''Study: ACA exchange enrollees take tax hit.''

According to a new study by the tax preparers at H&R Block, almost two-thirds of people enrolled in ObamaCare exchanges had to pay back some of their subsidy with their taxes this month. The average amount people owed the IRS was $729. That is a fact. It is a big hit to a lot of families who thought they were going to get help to pay for their ObamaCare premiums. It does not even count the people who decided that the insurance was just too expensive and decided not to buy it. According to H&R Block, those people paid the IRS an average tax penalty of $178. That is a fact. It is only going to be higher next year when people sit down and fill out their taxes.

I remember another speech Senator REID gave on the floor on ObamaCare. On February 26, 2014, he said: ''Despite all that good news, there's plenty of horror stories being told.'' ''All of them are untrue.''

That was Senator REID a year ago.

Republicans had been citing—this is Senator REID—examples of people being harmed by ObamaCare, and Senator REID said that all of them were ''stories made up from whole cloth.''

Well, here is a horror story from the minority leader's home State newspaper—Nevada—very recently. This was an article from earlier this month, the Las Vegas Review-Journal, April 7. The headline was ''Past state ObamaCare sign-up glitches now haunt Nevadans at tax time.''

Here is what the article says:

How did a Reno collections agent end up in collections himself?

The answer:

He bought coverage in 2014 through the state's health insurance exchange.

According to the article:

Rick Furst is still ironing out wrinkles in a plan purchased in May through the Nevada Health Link and its contractor, Xerox. His cascade of issues has included bad coverage dates, unpaid medical bills and an incorrect tax-credit form.

This man told the Las Vegas newspaper, ''My credit was excellent, and now my credit is shot.'' His credit was excellent, and now his credit is shot. Does Senator REID think this man from his home State of Nevada made up his story out of whole cloth?

People are having their lives turned upside down by the disgraceful failure of these ObamaCare exchanges. That is a fact. It is a cruel and costly side effect of this terrible health care law. Paul Krugman of the New York Times did not talk about that fact in his opinion column in the New York Times the other day.

Another thing he and the minority leader are not talking about is the fact that many Americans now have less access to actual care because of the health care law. Well, they should have known about that fact; it was reported right there in the New York Times itself on Sunday, February 8, 2015, with the headline ''Insured, but not covered.'' ''New policies have . . . many

Americans scrambling.'' The article talks about the narrow networks many insurance plans had to create. This was to try to meet the requirements of ObamaCare without the premiums going even higher.

The story starts off by talking about one woman in New York City. Her name is Karen Pineman. First, she lost her existing health insurance policy because it did not meet all of the mandates President Obama said a health insurance policy had to include.

The President calls those benefits ''essential benefits.'' I call them excessive benefits. It is much more insurance than many people need, want, or can afford.

The article in the New York Times says that she accepted that she would have to pay a higher premium for a plan with a narrower network of providers and no out-of-network coverage. According to the article, she also accepted the fact that she would have to pay out of her own pocket to see her primary care physician because her doctor was not part of the narrow network that was now covered under her insurance. Well, she even accepted having copays of nearly $1,800 to put a cast on her ankle after she broke it playing tennis. Finally, the article says, her frustration bubbled over when she tried to arrange a followup visit with her orthopedic surgeon. The nearest doctor available in her network who treated ankle problems was in Stamford, CT. Remember, she lives in New York City.

This woman finally had enough. She told the newspaper: It is ridiculous. Didn't they notice that I was in another State?

Well, that woman, as reported in the New York Times, did not make up her story out of whole cloth. Those kinds of narrow networks are a fact under President Obama's law.

It is a fact that there are people who now have coverage and can't have access to care. There is a difference between coverage and care. You do not have to take my world for it; it is right there in the New York Times.

So the minority leader is correct. Republicans have been relentless in condemning the horrifying costs of the President's health care law. Republicans have been relentless in condemning the intolerable damage the health care law has done to people's access to health care.

Republicans will continue to be relentless because this health care law has been bad for patients, it has been bad for providers, and it has been terrible for American taxpayers. Republicans will continue to come to the floor to offer the facts about how the health care law has harmed American families. We will continue to offer solutions that deliver the real reform people have been asking for all along—the care they need from a doctor they choose at lower cost.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, if the Senator from Iowa is intending to speak, this Senator will only use about 5 minutes.

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

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I wish to embrace this package that the Senate Foreign Relations Committee has brought forth to the floor.

First, it is much needed bipartisanship which has been shown on the committee. That is a very good thing, given the fact that we have had so many contentious and divisive issues.

But, secondly, what it does is set up a process by which the Congress would express its approval or disapproval with regard to a future agreement that may be made between Iran and the United States to prevent Iran from building a nuclear weapon.

First is the process by which we would express that vote, and then if the agreement is concluded by the end of June, the actual vote on whether sanctions under the agreement should be lifted. So it is a two-step process, and it is often confused. That is why it is important to keep this committee bill clean.

As I have already expressed to the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee on the floor of the Senate 2 or 3 days ago, it is this Senator's intention that all of the amendments, which generally have a deleterious effect and that are generally considered poison pill amendments—this Senator will oppose them. It is my understanding that leadership of the Foreign Relations Committee will likewise oppose those amendments.

Then, I might say, assuming this legislation is passed and we have this process in place and the President has said he will sign it into law—if the framework, as announced a few weeks ago by the President, is fleshed out in the final details of the agreement, and those details, by the end of June, reflect the framework of the agreement that has been announced, it is this Senator's intention to support the agreement.

I do that, very simply, on what is in the best interests of the United States. If, in fact, this agreement, once completed—if the framework is fleshed out—prevents Iran from developing a nuclear weapon for at least a 10-year period—and there are other 15-, 20-, and 25-year period benchmarks in the framework—but if they are prevented from developing a nuclear weapon within 10 years, and we know there is a regime in place in order to detect that so we have the verification, and that because of the verification we have at least a year's advance notice so that appropriate action could be taken—if all of that is included within the agreement, it is this Senator's intention that I will support the agreement.

Why? Because if we keep Iran from having a nuclear weapon for 10 years at least, the world is going to be a very different place in 10 years. And what we will have done as a country is prevented Iran from going ahead and developing a nuclear weapon now, of which we would have to face those consequences with possible military action.

I do not shy away from supporting military action if that is necessary to prevent a nuclear weapon from being developed. But if we have a path to achieving the same thing, doing it diplomatically and having the guarantee of at least 10 years—if not 15 and 20—then, to this Senator, that seems to be in the interests of the United States.

I want to clearly state where this Senator is coming from. I happen to think that is in Israel's interests as well. The interests of the United States and Israel are inextricably entwined when it comes to the defense of that little democracy that is a beacon of democracy in that part of the world. I have some familiarity with the integration and the sharing of our military forces, as well as our intelligence apparatus.

It is clearly in the interests of the United States that we see that Israel's security is protected. From what I see of the framework of this agreement, if fleshed out, then I think that is in the interests of our country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mrs. ERNST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 10 minutes.

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

Mrs. ERNST. Mr. President, I rise to stress the importance of ensuring nuclear negotiations with Iran to preserve our national interests and our security, one that protects the security of our allies and partners in the region and maintains peace and stability in the world.

As a member of the Iowa Army National Guard and serving on the Armed Services Committee in the Senate, I am focused on strengthening our national security, developing strategies to confront terrorism, and discussing ways to support our exceptional military.

While I believe Iran's long-term goal is developing nuclear weapons, its most effective line of effort against us and our allies has been through its unwavering support of terrorism. The Obama administration should only accept a final deal which prohibits sanctions relief until Iran abandons its support of terrorism.

Providing Iran with sanctions relief would only enhance their opportunity to fund proxy groups which threaten our Israeli allies and whose activities have led to horrible consequences for

millions of people in Syria, Iraq, and Yemen.

While the Obama administration has been seemingly eager to relieve sanctions in an effort to convince Iran to sign a nuclear deal, Congress cannot stand by and watch as a deal is negotiated that paves the way for Iran to obtain nuclear weapons. We must take a step back and examine their actions, and it is absolutely crucial we understand who is on the other side of the negotiating table.

Iran continues to be the world's lead sponsor of terrorism and a supporter of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, who is responsible for killing hundreds and thousands of his own people, creating the gravest humanitarian crisis in modern history, and who facilitates the continued rise of extremism and sectarianism across the region.

Iran has shown unwavering support of terrorism and has aligned itself with groups that are hostile to the United States, our allies, and partners in the region. In fact, Iran continues to fund groups that threaten our Israeli allies, who are very concerned about Iran amassing nuclear capabilities and the direct threat they pose to the region. After this longstanding pattern of behavior, I do not believe we can trust that Iran will curb its ambitions or support for terrorist activity on their own.

Despite any agreement Iranian President Hassan Rouhani may agree to, I believe Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei will ultimately maintain his policy of attempting to obtain a nuclear weapon and may use any funds obtained through prematurely providing sanctions relief towards that end, as well as to support terrorists.

Iran's more than a quarter century long effort to obtain a nuclear weapon will not subside overnight. It is a faulty assumption to trust that Tehran is on the side of the rule of law. Iran has a very troublesome track record of deception when it comes to compliance and trustworthiness, which is why we need a deal that ensures America's and the world's ability to verify and enforce any agreement with Iran. This includes complete and open access at any time to all of Iran's facilities, to hold them true to their word and to verify their actions. We must also have the proper enforcement mechanism in place so that any broken promise garners an appropriate and immediate response.

This accountability can be enforced through renewed and strengthened congressional sanctions. Sanctions have been effective in the past, and we must keep this option on the table. In fact, these sanctions are what brought Iran to the negotiating table in the first place. So we must not be too quick to suspend them.

The ever-increasing and complex threats we face in the Middle East underscore how crucial it is that any longstanding agreement with Iran must go through Congress. This enables the American people to have a voice. Congressional review is supported by a bipartisan majority of my colleagues and a majority of Americans. It is common sense. We must have more oversight of this process and the opportunity for thoughtful consideration to ensure we have been very clear about our demands and the framework of any final agreement.

There is no doubt the administration shares my concern and the concern of many of my colleagues regarding the hundreds of thousands of Syrians who have been murdered with barrel bombs, sarin gas, the indiscriminate shelling of cities, been in prisons or the millions more who have been forced to flee their homes.

We must stop Iran from supporting this criminal regime which has helped engulf the region. Sanctions relief without ensuring funds would not go to Assad or to terrorist groups such as Hezbollah, which are key to the survival of the regime, would do nothing to help achieve a favorable political or military solution in Syria.

With that in mind, I cosponsored the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act, which has bipartisan support and is before the Senate today. This legislation embraces fundamental and core principles that lay the foundation for a good deal with Iran. This deal ensures congressional review of a final agreement. It demands that no congressional sanctions be lifted during the review period, and it safeguards congressional oversight of Iranian compliance.

This bill is a good starting point, and I want to praise the good work by the chairman of the committee for continuing to push for congressional review. Our ultimate goal must be to curb all Iranian terror, and this will never happen if we do not confront and contain Iran's nuclear ambitions.

I believe a final deal which does not address Iran's support of terrorism and other groups which subvert recognized governments is not in the best interests of our Nation, and an agreement without these assurances will miss an opportunity to provide stability in the region.

In closing, the bottom line is that Iran must never be allowed to develop a single nuclear weapon—not now or at any point in the future. A nuclear Iran presents one of the greatest threats to peace and stability in our time.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I thought I would take this time—I know Senator CORKER is at a lunch with some of our colleagues and is going over some of the issues concerning how we are going to move forward, but I thought I would take this time to at least tell our Members that we are working very hard to try to resolve some of the amendments Members want to offer.

I must point out that there have been no requests for amendments on the Democratic side. I know Senator CORKER is a little bit more busy than I am. He is trying to work with the number of amendments that have been filed by Republican colleagues. But we are trying to go through those amendments and see if there is a way consistent with the purpose of the bill that we can work out language that would accomplish what the author of the amendment is attempting to accomplish but consistent with the purpose of the bill—to make sure that we have an orderly way to review any agreement reached between the United States and our negotiating partners and Iran on its nuclear weapon program and that we get timely notice from the administration in regard to material breaches so that we can take action to prevent Iran from becoming a nuclear weapon state. There are also provisions in the bill that provide notification by the administration and important information so that we can do our work.

We are taking a look at these amendments and trying to see whether we can work our way forward in order to move this bill in the same method that it moved through the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. As the Presiding Officer knows, we worked together to try to get that accomplished.

We started the debate yesterday, and we are going to continue it today. Senator BARRASSO brought an amendment forward, which he wants to have pending, that would change the certification requirements. We are trying to work out a way in which we will be able to take that issue up before the full Senate. Senator CORKER and I are trying to resolve that issue as to how we can bring that forward.

I talked about this issue yesterday and explained the certification requirement to all the Members of the Senate. The President has to certify on a regular basis that Iran is basically in compliance with the agreement. If they can't do that, then we get into an expedited process for imposing sanctions or to take action against Iran.

There are a lot of amendments that have been filed—they are not pending—that would require additional certifications by the administration, and if the administration cannot make those certifications, there is an expedited process. The problem with going beyond the terms of the nuclear agreement on any of those certifications is that it affects the bill itself, and that is why we call them poison pills. I will try to explain that.

Senator BARRASSO's amendment dealt with a certification that Iran will

not be involved in terrorism against the United States or any of our citizens. But there are several other amendments that have been filed that would change the certification requirements so that the President would have to make those certifications or it could trigger expedited procedures.

Why do we call those poison pills? First of all, it changes the balance of what we are trying to do, and it is highly unlikely that we are going to be able to get that bill to the President for his signature. It will compromise what we are trying to do, and we are not going to be able to get the bill done. We will end up losing the bill. We will lose the opportunity for the committee to get the information and consider it. The committee needs to have a period of time in order to go through the review process. And the administration will not be able to exercise its waiver power for additional sanctions relief. All of that hard work will be lost. It is really counterproductive to what the authors of these amendments are trying to do.

The second consequence that could happen, if this is in the bill, is that the President would not be able to make the certification and we would very likely never get an agreement. Therefore, what will happen is that the United States will be accused of walking away from trying to negotiate an agreement with Iran. We would be isolated, and our chances of preventing Iran from becoming a nuclear weapons state becomes that much less likely to happen.

The third reason why these amendments are problematic and are poison pills has to do with the fact that it becomes a negotiating objective for the United States. These are good objectives. We don't want Iran to be able to sponsor terrorism. It is certainly something that is part of our policy. But if we make it a negotiating objective, then the administration has to achieve that in order to prevent sanctions from going into effect in order to achieve our objective. That makes it much more difficult to achieve the primary objective, and the primary objective is to stop Iran from becoming a nuclear weapons state.

Although these amendments are well intended, they have the consequence of just the opposite. These amendments will make it less likely that we will prevent Iran from becoming a nuclear weapons state.

The same is true on any certification. One of the amendments that have been filed says that we have to certify that Iran recognizes Israel's right to its own sovereignty. I want Iran to recognize Israel's sovereignty. We put very strong language into this bill and made it clear that Israel's security is of prime concern to us. It is in the bill. If we make it a certification requirement—think about this for a moment—it means our negotiators will have to figure out a way to negotiate with Iran something they don't want to do. And what will we have to give up in order to get that? What will they put on the table in regards to international recognition? It distracts us from objective to prevent Iran from becoming a nuclear weapons state, which is critically important to the security of Israel. These amendments do just the opposite of what they are intended to do.

I mentioned that because we are trying to move forward with this legislation. I hope that we can do it very quickly and we can find a path forward. We are going to try to accommodate the fair considerations of these amendments. But I urge my colleagues to take a look at their amendments, to work with Senator CORKER, to work with me, and let's see whether we can accommodate, within the framework of the legislation, any concerns that the sponsors of the amendments may have. Then we can do what the Senate Foreign Relations Committee was able to do on a 19-to-0 vote. It makes the Senate much stronger, and it makes the United States much stronger when we can come together on these amendments.

Our objective is to prevent Iran from becoming a nuclear weapons state, and the best way for us to do that is to speak with a united voice and the type of work we did in a bipartisan manner.

The people of Maryland and the people of this country want us to work together. They want us to resolve issues. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee was able to do that.

I urge Members who have filed amendments to work with us so we can find a way forward to make sure this bill remains intact and gives Congress the best chance for an orderly review of the process and gives us the tools we need to make America's position even stronger to prevent Iran from becoming a nuclear weapons state.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRUZ). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. PERDUE. Mr. President, I rise to speak in favor of the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act.

First, I wish to commend my colleagues, Senator CORKER and Senator CARDIN, for their leadership on this important bipartisan legislation. Because of their crucial leadership, the Foreign Relations Committee recently passed this bill unanimously in a 19-to-0 vote. One thing that is so important to remember, as we debate this bill, is that without this legislation, we would not have a say at all on the President's nuclear deal with Iran.

Now, I will be the first to say that an international agreement of this magnitude should have been considered the same as a treaty. But, unfortunately, the President chose to completely circumvent Congress in this process.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee, of which I am a member, did all we could to ensure that the American people, by way of Congress, get a say in this deal. If we let the perfect become the enemy of the good, however, and fail to pass this bill, the President will be able to go ahead and implement any and all aspects of a nuclear deal with Iran. This bill prevents the President from having a total free hand with regard to this potential deal with Iran and from prematurely lifting sanctions.

According to CRS, this lifting of sanctions would mean an estimated $130 billion in sanctions relief would start flowing to Iran. That is more than Iran's entire annual defense budget. Imagine what they could do with over $100 billion. They could continue to fund terrorism. They could continue to prop up Assad's regime in Syria. They could continue to fuel the Houthi rebellion in Yemen. And, yes, they could further fund development of their nuclear weapons program.

Congress passed the very sanctions credited with bringing Iran to the table, and I firmly believe that Congress should play a role in any decision to lift those sanctions. While the President may be able to waive sanctions on Iran later this year, permanent sanctions relief can only come from Congress.

My colleagues and I still have many questions about this deal, and we must take this opportunity to get a period of congressional review so we can get answers to these questions and prevent the President from prematurely lifting sanctions. We are truly facing a global crisis, and the world is watching.

As Prime Minister Netanyahu recently said before Congress, a nuclear Iran is not just a threat to Middle East security, and it is not just a threat to U.S. security. It is a threat, indeed, to global security. There is no scenario in which a nuclear Iran would be anything but catastrophic. Indeed, a nuclear Iran would spark a wave of proliferation in the Middle East and potentially worldwide. And if we don't like Iran's behavior today, imagine what their actions will be like if they have a nuclear weapon with the missiles to deliver them. Under no circumstances can we allow Iran to become a nuclear weapon state—not now, not in 10 years, not ever.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, I would like to talk about the important legislation we have pending right now on

the Senate floor. I do not see a greater threat to our security interests in this country than a nuclear-armed Iran. Our national security interests require a permanent and verifiable end to Iran's nuclear weapons program.

Today, I come to the floor to support the legislation that I was proud to be an original cosponsor of that will ensure that Congress reviews this agreement if there is an agreement reached with the Iranians and that we will have a voice on this agreement because without Congress's involvement in this—I believe it would be a huge disservice to the American people to not have their elected representatives weigh in on such an important matter.

What matters most is, is this agreement one that is transparent, verifiable, and will actually end their nuclear program because the country of Iran is the largest state sponsor of terrorism in the world. We cannot give one of the most dangerous regimes in the world the most dangerous weapon.

Iran described the United States of America as the ''Great Satan.'' Iran said it wants to annihilate or wipe out the State of Israel. Iran is a country that is supporting terrorist groups around the world. We can only imagine the devastation that could be wrought if Iran gets a nuclear weapon. So the stakes cannot be any greater with what is happening right now with the administration negotiating with this regime, which is not a regime we can trust, unfortunately. So the terms of this agreement matter.

The elected representatives of this country need to have a vigorous debate about this agreement in the Congress, and we need to make sure it is not an agreement that allows them to continue their march toward a nuclear weapon.

Some of the information that has been released so far about the framework the administration has put together has raised a number of red flags about where this agreement is going. It is my hope that this legislation passing will ensure that Congress is able to review the agreement to make sure it is one that ends their nuclear program.

Some of the concerns I already see with this framework agreement suggest that the administration is moving in a direction that would not fully force Iran to dismantle its nuclear infrastructure or require Iran to address its long history of deception regarding its nuclear program, including long-term questions about the program's military aspects. The framework that has been released would not address Iran's support for terrorism, its intercontinental ballistic missile program, or its stated desire to knock Israel off the map.

In order to ensure that we have an agreement that would end Iran's nuclear program and hold them accountable, we cannot have a situation where Iran keeps so much of its infrastructure and then can run up to a nuclear weapon or walk to it instead of running to it.

Even worse, as we look at the framework of this agreement and the inspection framework the agreement would require, we cannot have an agreement that does not allow unlimited inspections of Iran's nuclear program at any time, unannounced, because this is a regime which is not a trustworthy regime. Yet, as I look at the terms of the framework that the administration has announced, it seems we have a ''mother, may I'' approach to asking Iran whether we should go in and inspect their facilities. Well, that is going to be unacceptable. We need to ensure that the terms of this agreement, if reached, make sure we can show up at any time, anywhere, without notice to Iran, to inspect their facilities to make sure they are adhering to the terms of the agreement.

In short, the framework of the agreement that has been released by the administration suggests that this potential deal could eliminate hard-fought sanctions on which we worked together in this Congress on a bipartisan basis—economic sanctions that brought Iran to the table, which would take years to restore—in return for concessions that have only reversed Iran's program by days or weeks. Iran would retain a massive nuclear infrastructure, and they don't seem to be answering the tough questions about their support for terrorism or their missile program.

Iran's activities during these negotiations in supporting terrorism have continued. As their diplomats sit at the negotiating table and smile for the cameras, their government continues to support terrorist organizations such as Hezbollah and provide arms and funding to the murderous Assad regime in Syria that has murdered hundreds of thousands of innocent people. It has continued to destabilize Yemen. It is imprisoning innocent Americans and developing an intercontinental ballistic missile whose obvious purpose is to potentially deliver a nuclear weapon to the United States of America.

I intend to offer an amendment to the pending legislation that will address Iran's ICBM program because one of the concerns I have is that there doesn't seem to be any mention in these negotiations of Iran's development of ICBM capability that could be the delivery mechanism to deliver a nuclear weapon to hit the United States. I will offer that amendment to indicate to this administration that this issue needs to be on the table. We need to not only stop their nuclear program, we need to stop Iran's ICBM program, which some of our intelligence estimates have indicated could be successful as soon as the end of this year.

That is the testimony we have heard in the Armed Services Committee. So there is real urgency that we stop not only their nuclear program but also their support for terrorism and their work on an ICBM that could deliver harm—very grave harm—to our country. In fact, in February, Iran had actually successfully launched a long-range missile system and used a space launch that could be the potential manner in which they would deliver a nuclear weapon capability to our country.

So this is a real concern that we address their missile program in the context of this agreement. In fact, on January 29, 2014, the Director of National Intelligence, James Clapper, testified that ''we judge that Iran would choose a ballistic missile as its preferred method of delivering nuclear weapons'' capability. One of the real important issues that we need to debate and address when it comes to their state sponsoring of terrorism is what is happening in Yemen right now.

As we stand here, we have had a situation where Iran has been harassing and threatening cargo ships in the region, challenging a core American national security and economic interest in the freedom of navigation, particularly in key chokepoints like the Strait of Hormuz and the Bab el-Mandeb Strait.

If you look at our interest in what has happened in Yemen, Iran has supported the Houthis that have undermined the Government in Yemen. Why is that important to us? It is important to us because we had to leave Yemen, in part, as a result of Iran's support of terrorism in Yemen. Who presides in Yemen? Who is one of the great presences in Yemen? Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, a group that has vowed to attack our country, a group that has made attempts to attack us and our country. Iran is aiding the way, through their terrorism there, to give Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula more space to conduct attacks that can harm our interests and the interests of our allies.

So this legislation that is pending on the floor right now—if we were to not pass it, I think people need to understand the implications of it. The implications of not passing this legislation that is on the floor is that Congress would not have any say on these issues that are so important, would not have any say on whether the agreement that the administration is negotiating with Iran actually will end their program, actually will dismantle their nuclear program, actually will have a verifiable inspection regime that allows inspectors to go anywhere unannounced at any time to ensure that they are not cheating on whatever agreement is reached between us and the Iranians.

So this bill could not be more important. I thank the sponsors of this bill. I certainly thank Senators CORKER and CARDIN for their leadership in the Foreign Relations Committee, to ensure that the people of this country, through their elected representatives, on something of such importance when it comes to the national security of the United States of America—that their elected representatives perform their important oversight role here.

So I am hopeful we will pass this legislation that the U.S. Congress—I hope

the administration, with some of the concerns I have raised about this framework, really toughens what they are doing in this framework to end their program, to have a transparent, verifiable inspection regime to address the ICBM Program, to address Iran's state sponsorship of terrorism. I hope they will do that.

But I know that on behalf of my constituents, it is important, if any agreement is reached, that we have that debate here, that we have a voice in it on behalf of the American people. In doing so, we will protect the national security interests of this country to make sure that whatever agreement is entered into is really a good agreement, one that protects our country, which protects our allies, and ends Iran's nuclear program, as none of us can look in the mirror and think about one of the most dangerous regimes in the world having the most destructive weapon in the world. That is something that—as I think about all of the national security issues, this is on the top. So I cannot think of a more important debate we could have now or more important legislation that we could work on.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

THE NEW CONGRESS AND PATENT REFORM

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, the 114th Congress is just a little over 100 days old now, but we have actually seen what used to be called the world's greatest deliberative body actually get back to work and be producing results for the American people. Just a few months into this session, we have passed important legislation, from a budget—we will perhaps, as early as Tuesday, pass the first budget since 2009.

We repaired something called the doc fix, which maybe is inelegantly named but basically fixed a problem that had been lurking since 1977, when somehow we got the idea that we would be able to save money by cutting the reimbursement rates to doctors and hospitals. Then we were shocked, absolutely shocked, that some doctors would not see Medicare patients and some hospitals could not afford to build or expand in rural areas and the like.

Well, we got that off the table as well. Then, I am glad to say, last week we were able to pass some major antitrafficking legislation which, of course, dealt with the victims of human trafficking, the profile of which is about a 12- to 14-year-old girl who is literally in human bondage. So we have done some, I think, good work. There is a lot more we need to do.

Of course, the present legislation that enjoys broad bipartisan support is the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015. I, too, commend the chairman and the ranking member of the Foreign Relations Committee. I know this can be a frustrating process because other Members of the Senate now have ideas they want to offer by way of amendment. We are working through this. I think this will test their patience and ours in the process.

But this Chamber is poised to continue in the spirit of bipartisanship on other important issues as well: trade promotion authority, which, to me, is the essential link between us and the ability to pass important trade agreements.

Texas, as the Presiding Officer knows, is the leading export State in the Nation. We benefit from that because we understand that when you have markets for the things we grow or the livestock we raise or the manufactured goods we make, it is good for our economy, it is good for job creation. Well, trade promotion authority will be good for hard-working Texas families and families all across the country.

But there is another area that may not seem of great significance but I think is important, where I think we have another opportunity. That has to do with patent reform and particularly lawsuit abuse reform. Now, patents do not just affect the technology sector. They just do not affect the financial sector and Wall Street. It literally is a Main Street problem because you have restaurants now, you have real estate agents, you have hotels, motels, you have construction companies that have been sued by patent trolls, people who do not make anything, merely they hold a license to a patent and use that to file—frequently—frivolous litigation in order to literally shake down the defendant.

Many times it is people who cannot adequately defend themselves. Maybe they are a startup business, an innovator who has come up with a new idea or a better idea and they are thinly capitalized. Can you imagine what happens when they get sued by the patent trolls? Well, it is a sad and short story. Either they have to capitulate and pay the ransom or they go out of business entirely.

But patent reform is an issue whose time has come again. It is one I have been involved in for a number of years in the Senate. In 2011, after years of negotiations, Congress passed something called the America Invents Act. This is the first major patent reform in decades. This is something that makes America unique. You know, in Texas we believe in property rights. Well, what we are talking about is intellectual property rights. But when somebody smart or creative or innovative comes up with a better idea, our Constitution and our laws provide a means to protect that against people who would take it or steal it or infringe upon it. That is why patent law is so important.

But one of the issues left unaddressed was this rising tide of lawsuits and the threat of litigation, of which a wider and wider swath of stakeholders are now complaining loudly—again, not just the big technology firms but restaurants, hotels, motels, builders, real estate agents, and the like. So, in 2013, a number of Members of Congress began working on this legislation to address those frivolous claims, which really kill jobs because it kills innovation in the process.

Bills were introduced in the House and the Senate targeting the various aspects of this problem but focusing primarily on lawsuit abuse, lawsuits brought not to vindicate a legitimate claim by somebody who actually has lost something of value but merely somebody who is a holder of a license to sue, in essence, and uses it to shake down these small startup companies and innovators.

Well, we were able to see the passage, in December of 2013, of something called the Innovation Act in the House of Representatives. That legislation passed overwhelmingly, 325 to 91, with almost all Republicans and the bulk of Democrats supporting the bill. Here is the other thing. This is not just a Democratic or Republican issue. This is something the administration wholeheartedly supports.

In fact, this is one of the stories I told last year as I was traveling around Texas and elsewhere as evidence of the dysfunction, because, I asked: If Republicans are for something and Democrats are for something, if the majority of Congress is for it and the White House is for it, why is it we can't get it done? Well, the obstacle to getting it done was eliminated with the new majority in the Senate.

So I think we are poised to take good action here very soon. We are in a new Congress with a new leadership and a new majority. That is everything when it comes to reforming our broken patent system. Today, we had a broad bipartisan group of people, from the ranking member and the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, the former chairman, Senator HATCH, to Senator SCHUMER, who is in the leadership of the Democrats in the Senate, Senator KLOBUCHAR, and Senator LEE.

All of us announced this broad, bipartisan support for a new piece of patent reform legislation designed to attack this problem of lawsuit abuse and the shakedown of America's innovators and job creators and technology creators. So Republicans and Democrats alike have come to realize that under the status quo, too many of our most promising innovators, not to mention other businesses, are wasting time and money in frivolous, costly litigation. This legislation takes a number of commonsense steps that ends the exploitation of these so-called patent trolls.

Many of those are not particularly earth-shaking, but the culmination of them, I think, will have a real positive impact on this problem.

First, it would require plaintiff's in patent cases to simply explain the substance of their claim when filing the initial lawsuit. What frequently happens is a lawsuit will be filed with no real detail as to the nature of the claim

or the infringement of the patent. Then there would ensue costly and time-consuming discovery, until finally the plaintiff would figure out some claim they could make to hang their hat on. Well, we eliminate that by requiring upfront specific notice of what the infringement is in the nature of the claim.

Second, it would stay cases against the end users, including restaurants, motels, hotels, construction companies, and the like, and would give the party with the major incentive to defend the case the opportunity to do so. So the person who is actually responsible for the manufacture of a product—let's say a Wi-Fi device—the manufacturer would defend that case and not the hotel or motel that happened to deploy that Wi-Fi device in their hotel or their motel.

Third, the bill would bring greater fairness to the discovery process by limiting discovery until the court resolves threshold motions in the case. This is important because the court is going to have to make a decision whether this is a legitimate case that could go on and thus authorize the expensive and time-consuming discovery. If it is not a legitimate case, then that is the time for the court to address it by a motion to dismiss or some other legal device.

Fourth, it would curb the practice of sending abusive demand letters. What I have learned is that in patent litigation these days, there would be demand letters which literally would carpet bomb the people who were using some of this innovation, in an effort to shake them down. It causes a lot of expense, delay, and other consternation.

Fifth—and this is perhaps one of the most critical elements—it would allow courts to shift responsibility for the cost of patent litigation more often to the losing party when the court finds that the claim was not a reasonable claim to be brought. In other words, it was a privileged claim. So no longer can you file a lawsuit and pursue it, even though it is a bogus case, without any fear of actually having to pay the costs of the other side that prevails in a case involving an unreasonable use of the legal process.

So I believe, as many of my colleagues do, that these are sensible reforms, and it is one way we can take a step to protect better the access to justice for plaintiffs with legitimate claims of infringement and to deter those who simply abuse the system.

This is another promising area where I think the 114th Congress can distinguish itself from the 113th and previous Congresses by showing we can actually work together to try to solve real problems in a bipartisan way that hopefully will improve life just a little bit for the people we represent.

Entrepreneurs in Texas and throughout the country need this legislation to protect them from abuse of patent litigation practices that have burdened America's private sector for far too long.

The last point I would make is that I saw this morning the news that, basically, America's economy did not grow in the last quarter. Basically, the gross domestic product was, I think, a 0.2 percent increase. That is simply too slow of an economic growth to create the jobs we need for the population increases we are seeing.

So if we are going to get our economy growing again, which is the best way to raise the wages of hard-working American families, we are going to need to do a number of things, such as reform our tax system. We are going to need to rein in overreaching regulation, which is a wet blanket on the private sector and on job creation, and we are going to need to do efforts such as patent reform, as in this litigation reform legislation I have just been talking about. That will unleash this sleeping giant of the great American economy for the benefit of all Americans once again.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TOOMEY). The Senator from South Carolina.

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I wish to speak about the pending business before the Senate. Of all the things we will do, probably in our political lifetime, I can't think of anything more important than getting the Iran nuclear ambitions right.

I stand in two camps. I would love a good deal, and a bad deal would be a nightmare.

What is a bad deal? A bad deal would be one that would result in a North Korean outcome, where you lock in a capacity in the hands of the Iranians to be monitored by the international community. And one day they break out, you wake up, and you have a bomb.

A bad deal would be too much capacity in the hands of the Iranians. That would spook the Sunni Arabs who want to go buy a bomb of their own.

I cannot tell you the consequences to the world and to our Nation if you have a nuclear arms race in the Middle East. That is what a bad deal leads to.

A good deal allows us to wind down a hotly contested dispute between Iran and the world over the last 20 years without firing a shot. A good deal would be allowing the Iranians a peaceful nuclear power program, what they claim they want, with no real capability in a year—or any time—to make a bomb.

If all they want is a peaceful nuclear power program, I do not object.

I do object to the capability to enrich the uranium in a fashion that one day they could break out, as North Korea did—because I don't trust the Iranians.

So to Senator CARDIN and to Senator CORKER, you have navigated this very well. You have a Democratic President, who I think wants the deal way too badly, and we have a Congress who I think wants to have a say.

We created the congressional sanctions, and we should have a say as to whether they are waived based on the deal and the quality of the deal that they may negotiate with the Iranians and the P5+1. Since we created the sanctions, I don't think it is unfair to this President or to any other President to say: You need our vote. You need a debate to occur before we will agree to do that.

Now, is it a treaty? I don't think so. I would love it to be a treaty, but it is not.

The one thing I don't want to do, in the process of dealing with a very dangerous situation in the Middle East, is to turn the rules upside down in the Senate because I like a particular outcome.

Senator JOHNSON sincerely believes this is a treaty. I do not doubt his motivations at all. But I have come to conclude, right or wrong, that it doesn't meet the definition laid out by the Supreme Court and the precedents of the past.

When we did a deal with North Korea, it wasn't a treaty. Maybe it should have been, but it wasn't. So I don't think we are going to change the rules just because we have a very dangerous moment in American history, in world history, and a President some of us don't trust or like.

Condoleezza Rice says it is not a treaty. I don't think she would have said that if there had been any doubt in her mind.

I have had discussions with other Republicans who have served in prior administrations, and they have come to the same conclusion.

So we had a vote, which was a good thing, and the concept of it becoming a treaty was voted down. The debate was worthy of the Senate, and I applaud all those who were involved.

There are aspects of amendments that are pending that I would embrace in a New York minute, but I believe that some of these amendments—no matter how much I support the concept—would break apart a bipartisan coalition that has taken a year to form.

To Senator CARDIN and Senator CORKER, you have struck a balance that I think makes sense to me. A Democratic minority, I don't believe, is going to turn all the power regarding this deal surviving or being struck down to the Republican majority. If I were in your shoes, I would not do that.

And to my colleagues who ask that the Democratic minority with a Democratic President cede the entire process to us, as Republicans, that is probably a bridge too far.

I don't think a Republican President would like that outcome. I don't think a Republican minority would turn over to a Democratic majority the ability to act unilaterally on something of this consequence.

So what have Senators CORKER and CARDIN been able to do? They have brought the bill to the floor without a filibuster, allowing the debate and, hopefully, more votes.

To my Democratic colleagues, don't shut my Republican friends out. They

all have a say, and I will vote with you against some of the amendments that I like but that I just think would break the deal apart. Let's get the Senate back in business in a reasonable fashion.

What I would say is that the construct of this bill makes perfect sense to me. You need 60 votes to disapprove the deal. Sixty votes are required for any major action in the Senate. That has been the historical precedent of the Senate. So the Democrats are not asking us to do something that hasn't been around as a concept for a long time.

What does it require? It requires the 54 Republicans, if we are together, to convince 6 Democrats that this is a bad deal.

I think, if it truly is a bad deal, our Democratic colleagues—for the good of the Nation—and the consequences of a bad deal are understood by them—would join with us and say: This is not what we want, Mr. President; try harder. Rejecting a bad deal does not mean that we want to end diplomatic efforts. It means that we believe the deal in question falls short.

To Senator CORKER, you did a good job, because I don't think anybody in your shoes could have convinced the Democratic Party basically to deal themselves out.

To Senator CARDIN, you made it possible, along with Senator MENENDEZ, for us to have this debate and create, I think, a standard of disapproval consistent with the traditions of the Senate.

There may never be a deal, but if there is one, it has to come back here, and every American will get to hear the contents of the deal—while some think it is good, and while others think it is bad—and you will not have to wonder what we are doing with regard to the Iranians.

If the Republican Party cannot convince enough Members of the Democratic Party that it is a bad deal, then we will be disappointed, but that is democracy.

Israel is very worried about the framework. The Sunni Arab States are very worried about the framework. It is not a final deal yet.

Three things, I think, have to be there for me to be on board: anytime, anywhere inspections in Iran by international organizations of our choosing, including military facilities; no upfront signing bonus in terms of money until the Iranians comply with the initial phases of the deal, because they will take the cash and put it in their war machine; and whenever the inspection regime is supposed to terminate—10 years, 15 years or whatever date you pick—at that moment, the then-existing President, whoever he or she may be, has to certify that Iran is no longer a state sponsor of terrorism, because you would not want to end an inspection regime if they were still involved in state terrorist activity.

So the two leaders on this bill, from my view, have crafted a very good piece of legislation. People dislike it for different reasons, which means it is probably the balance we need—and I can't think of a better way to do this.

To those who think they have a better way, the only thing I can tell you is you better get some Democrats to agree with you. Because if you cannot, it is just all talk.

What BOB CORKER and BEN CARDIN have been able to do is they have given the Senate a voice that we wouldn't have otherwise. They have given the American people a chance to understand the deal better than any opportunity I know of, and they have given us the power that every Member of the House and Senate should want in this regard, a chance to have a say and to be recorded in history.

The outcome may not please you, but this is the best process I could think of, given the way the Senate works and the way democracy works, which means both parties are going to require a say in something this important.

So, well done. I look forward to voting for this deal. Any amendment you want to bring to the floor, I will vote for it if I think it is a good amendment that will not deconstruct the deal or unravel the deal. I will vote against the amendment if I think it will break the deal apart, even though I am sympathetic to it, because my goal is to get this right, to make sure that any final deal with the Iranians is explained to the American people through the House and the Senate debate, and that can only happen if this bill becomes law.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I wish to say, while the Senator from South Carolina is on the floor, that at the end of the day, this bill is the Graham vision. I mean, the fact is that this is Graham-Corker, Corker-Graham. It has evolved so that we could have the kind of support that we need to pass this into law.

But I thank Senator GRAHAM for his pushing to make sure we got to this point. There is no question. Look, you have been on this issue for months. You have pursued this. You have sold this publicly. You have worked with us as we have caused this to evolve to get the number of votes that we may get actually to cause this to become law. I don't know of anybody in our caucus or anybody in the Senate that has more of a foreign policy national security background—no one.

I thank you for your efforts to ensure that we do everything we can to make sure we have a voice in this agreement that may happen on June 30 or a few days thereafter. We wouldn't be here without your continual pushing.

I yield the floor for Senator CARDIN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, before Senator GRAHAM leaves the floor, I wish to concur with Senator CORKER's observations.

It was several months ago that Senator GRAHAM grabbed me on the floor of the Senate to talk about this being the most important responsibility we have—to have an orderly way to oversight any potential agreement.

So I really thank Senator GRAHAM for his attention to this issue. We wouldn't be here today if it weren't for his leadership on this issue, and I thank him for the manner in which he brought this issue forward so that we could find a way to get this done in a constructive manner.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I, too, want to begin today by thanking the Senators from Maryland and Tennessee for the work they have put into this process. It is important. It is important that Congress have a role in reviewing any deal the President concludes with Iran.

This is an extraordinary threat to the world. This is a nation which is run not by the individual with whom they are negotiating; Iran is a country governed and run by a radical Shia cleric who has ideas about the future of the world that are frightening.

What is more frightening is the information we have received from this administration about the framework they agreed to on April 2. It is a framework, for example, that would allow Iran to retain thousands of centrifuges and grant them the right to enrich uranium. It is an arrangement that would allow Iran to avoid dismantling its key facilities. It is an arrangement that allows Iran to continue to deny its past work on nuclear weapons. It is an arrangement that would allow Iran to retain a significant ballistic missile program, including efforts to develop a missile capable of hitting the very spot on which we stand right now. It is an arrangement that does nothing whatsoever on the cases of those Americans who are currently unjustly detained in Iran. It is an arrangement that does nothing to impact Iran's state sponsorship of terrorism or its brutal treatment of its own people. In fact, it is an arrangement that, if it goes through, will turn over billions of dollars into the hands of the chief state sponsor of terrorism on the planet. And it is an arrangement that will do nothing to bring an end to Iran's self-proclaimed support at the highest levels of its government for the destruction of the State of Israel.

Since April 2 of this year, by the way, the Iranians have made clear that they are not willing to do many of the things the White House itself has claimed are part of this deal. We are going to get to that in a moment, but understand that when the White House announced this deal, they put out a fact sheet. They said: This is what the deal is about. Iran is disputing it. They do not have the same fact sheet. In essence, what Iran is saying was agreed to and what the United States is saying was agreed to are, apparently at this

moment, two very different things. That alone should be concerning.

In addition to that, this deal is going to be a dangerous deal, a bad deal not just for the United States and our allies in the region but especially for our allies in Israel.

That is why it is important that Congress take a stand and ensure that this deal is not implemented unless its fundamental flaws are addressed.

That is why I supported this legislation in the committee. I voted for it so we could be here on the floor to strengthen it—not in a committee of just 20 members but here with all of our colleagues—over a number of days, potentially weeks, so the country could see what is at stake.

The first amendment I will offer today and hope we can overcome objections to is pretty straightforward. Here is what the amendment says: It says to the President that no deal can go forward unless the President certifies that the Iranian leadership has accepted Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state.

Why is that important? Because we will hear the argument that this has nothing to do with nuclear weapons, that this has nothing to do with the nuclear capacity of Iran. I am going to make the argument that that is not true.

The first reason is—we have to understand why it is important for Israel to exist as a Jewish state. Israel is not just a country; it is a homeland for the Jewish people, created in the aftermath of the Holocaust with the belief that never again would there not be a place for the Jewish people to go and seek refuge and be able to live if they faced persecution—as they have for thousands of years and as they do even now but especially in the aftermath of the Holocaust. So Israel is not just a country. It has a special and unique purpose that sets it apart from any other nation on Earth. It was created as a homeland for a persecuted people who survived despite the deaths of 6 million human beings in the Holocaust, maybe more. It is now a homeland where they will be safe.

It is also important to remember that beyond that, it is in the national security interests of the United States. What is Israel? Israel is a pro-American, free enterprise democracy. I promise that if there were more pro-American, free enterprise democracies in the Middle East, our lives would be a lot simpler and the world would be a lot safer and a lot better. But there is one, and this country must always be firmly on the side of that one country, this free enterprise, pro-American democracy in the midst of a region full of chaos and uncertainty.

Why is that relevant to this deal? Here is why it is relevant. This is not just a deal about what Iran is allowed to do in its nuclear program; this is a deal that would lift billions of dollars' worth of sanctions off of the Iranian Government. And what is the Iranian Government going to do when they get access to those billions of dollars? Are they going to donate it to charity around the world to feed the hungry and house the homeless? No. Are they going to use it to substantially improve the rights of their people in their own country? No. They are going to use those billions of dollars to do what they are doing now with less money: export terrorism to every corner of the globe.

Today, Iran is an active sponsor of terrorism in Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Bahrain, Latin America, and Europe. This is the same government that tried to assassinate the Saudi Ambassador here in Washington, DC. This is the same Iranian Government that blew up a Jewish center in Buenos Aires. This is the same Iranian Government that tried to detonate a bomb in Uruguay. They use terrorism the way normal countries use diplomacy. Yet, now we are going to turn over billions of dollars to them.

The reason why this has something to do with Israel is, what are they going to do when they have even more money to carry out these sorts of acts? They are going to invest it not just in their nuclear program, but they will invest it in their sponsorship of terrorism and they will invest it in their long-range rockets.

What have they told us they want to do with this increased capacity? What have they told us is the chief goal of this Government in Iran? Why do they need this terrorism? Why do they need those weapons? Why do they need those long-range rockets? Well, let's take them at their word. Here is why they need it. They need it because, according to a tweet put out by the Ayatollah in July of 2014, ''This barbaric, wolflike and infanticidal regime of Israel which spares no crime has no cure but to be annihilated.''

In November of 2014, the Supreme Leader posted a chart on his Twitter account. It had ''9 key questions about the elimination of Israel.'' I am holding it here, but it can be found online. Here are some of those questions:

''Why should the Zionist regime be eliminated?''

''What does elimination of Israel mean in the viewpoint of the Imam Khomeini?'' Meaning him.

''What is the proper way of eliminating Israel?''

''How will the proposed referendum succeed?'' Well, here he is talking about actually calling for a referendum in Israel, but the Jews can't participate in the referendum, according to him.

''Why do we oppose compromise proposals?''

The point is that this is a country led by a leader who has made it very clear repeatedly, time and again, that one of their main objectives is the destruction of Israel and ending Israel's existence as a Jewish state. When someone says that over and over again, we should believe them. This is not for domestic consumption to make him look good in Iran, the way some in the administration would argue. I believe they mean it. Do you know why I believe they mean it? Because they sponsor terrorism in an effort to kill Jews and Israelis.

In January of 2015, a suitcase full of explosives was found near the Israeli Embassy in Uruguay. The day after an individual left a suitcase bomb near the Embassy, a senior Iranian diplomat by the name of Ahmed Sabatgold left the country. Uruguayan authorities clarified a report claiming that he had been expelled from the country. They said no. They suggested that, in fact, he was a person of high interest with whom they would like to speak but that he left the country on his own.

So the reason why the existence of Israel as a Jewish state is directly tied to this deal is simple. We are about to turn over billions of dollars into their hands, and we have every reason to believe they will spend a significant portion of that money to destroy our strongest and most important ally in the region and one of the most important allies in the world.

The first amendment I have offered is pretty straightforward. It calls for any deal to require that Iran recognize Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state.

The second amendment I will propose is even more straightforward, even more on point. Here is what it requires. It requires that this final deal be the deal the President says it is. Here is what I mean by that. I filed an amendment that basically took the White House's own fact sheet—by the way, I have problems with that fact sheet. The deal as the President describes it is not a deal I believe will work. It is not a deal I believe will prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon. But just to take them at their word, just to prove this point and to ensure we are building safeguards into what we are doing here, I took the White House's own fact sheet, what they said the deal was about, and I say in this amendment that the final deal must be about those points that the White House already says it is. For the life of me, I don't understand why that would be controversial. My amendment is basically this. It says the deal has to be what you say it is. That is all my amendment says. Yet, somehow I have been told this is going to box in the White House. If it does, it boxes them in with their own words.

But here is the reason I am doing it. Iran apparently negotiated a very different deal than the one the White House thinks we have. For example, the White House says this deal will impose permanent inspections on Iran. The State Department fact sheet says: ''Iran's adherence to the Additional Protocol of the IAEA is permanent, including its significant access and transparency obligations.'' The Iranian fact sheet says: ''Iran will implement the Additional Protocol on a voluntary and temporary basis for the sake of transparency and confidence building.''

That doesn't sound like the same deal to me.

How about the inspection of military sites? In an interview on CNN, Deputy National Security Adviser Ben Rhodes said: ''If we see a site that we need to inspect on a military facility, we can get access to that site and inspect it.'' But on April 9, Iranian Brigadier General Hossein Dehghan said: ''Visiting military centers are among the red lines and no visits to these centers will be allowed.''

How about the scope of the sanctions relief? The State Department fact sheet says: ''United States and European Union nuclear-related sanctions will be suspended . . . All past U.N. Security Council resolutions on the Iran nuclear issue will be lifted simultaneous with the completion, by Iran, of nuclear-related actions addressing all key concerns.'' But Iran says: ''According to the reached solutions, after the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan of Joint Action, all of the U.N. resolutions will be revoked and all of the multilateral economic and financial sanctions by the EU and the unilateral ones by the U.S. will be annulled.'' So are the sanctions limited or total? We say they are limited; Iran says they are total.

There are three more differences. On the timing of the release, at a news conference on April 2, the President said:

> In return for Iran's actions, the international community has agreed to provide Iran with relief from certain sanctions—our own sanctions and international sanctions imposed by the United Nations Security Council. This relief will be phased as Iran takes steps to adhere to the deal.

So the President is basically saying that every time Iran complies with a portion of the deal, an additional sanction will be phased out; it will be in steps. If they do something, sanctions come off slowly. Trust but verify. That is what the American Government says. That is what the President said in his own words. But Iran says: ''We will not sign any deal unless on the very first day of its implementation all economic sanctions against Iran are lifted all at once.''

How about restrictions on enrichment? Are there restrictions for 10 years or for 15 years? The United States and the State Department Fact Sheet says:

> Iran has agreed to not enrich uranium over 3.67 percent for at least 15 years . . . Iran has agreed to not build any new facilities for the purpose of enriching uranium for 15 years . . . Iran has agreed to not enrich uranium at its Fordow facility for at least 15 years . . . Iran has agreed to not conduct research and development associated with uranium enrichment at Fordow for 15 years.

That is a lot of 15 years.

What does Iran say? On April 4, on an Iranian state TV channel, its Foreign Minister said:

> The limitations are for 10 years and then enrichment will continue its own scientific progress. We have accepted 10 years of limitations.

Last but not least, research and development—is it limited or not limited? The United States, in our fact sheet, says it is limited.

> Iran will not use its IR–2, IR–4, IR–5, IR–6, or IR–8 models to produce enriched uranium for at least 10 years. Iran will engage in limited research and development with its advanced centrifuges, according to a schedule and parameters which have been agreed to by the P5+1.

The group that negotiated all this.

That is what the U.S. fact sheet says. But what does Iran say? Iran says no.

> Iran will continue its research and development on advanced machines and will continue the initiation and completion phases of the research and development process of IR–4, IR–5, IR–6, and IR–8 centrifuges during the 10 year period of the Comprehensive Plan for Joint Action.

So these are at least six major points of difference where Iran is saying the deal says one thing and the United States is saying the deal says another. What my amendment does is it takes what we say the deal is and puts it in the bill and says: Any final deal must be what you told us it is, not what Iran says it is. Yet, somehow, apparently, that is controversial.

This is not a game. This is a very serious matter because this is a country—and I don't mean its people but its leaders—that has shown the willingness to sponsor terrorism and do atrocious things all over the world.

When you read in the newspaper about civilians being barrel-bombed and gassed and killed in Syria, do you know why Assad is able to do that? Because of the help he gets from Iran.

When you read about the rockets that flood into Tel-Aviv and Jerusalem and Haifa and cities all across Israel every couple years as Hezbollah launches attacks, hiding behind human shields while they are trying to kill Israelis, do you know how they are able to get them? Because of help from Iran.

When you read in the newspaper that yesterday the Iranian military hijacked a vessel in international waters, when you read that they tried to kill the Saudi Ambassador in Washington, DC, when you read that they tried to set off a bomb in Uruguay, when you read how in 1994 they did set off a bomb at a Jewish center in Buenos Aires, Argentina—this is who we are dealing with. Now they are on the verge of being able to enrich weapons-grade uranium and reprocess weapons-grade plutonium. Now they are headed quickly toward building a long-range rocket capable of reaching not just Israel but Europe and the United States.

This is a very significant moment because this President is about to sign a deal that will place in their hands billions of additional dollars. If this is the terrorism and the nuclear activity they are pursuing now with sanctions on them, imagine how much more they will be able to afford to do once the sanctions are lifted. That is why it is so relevant on this point of Israel but also on the details of this deal.

By the way, as I said, and I will repeat it, the State Department fact sheet, what the President says the deal is—I am not comfortable with that either. I don't think that will work. It is not as if I am celebrating what they say the deal is.

All I am asking is this: At a minimum, before you bring and sign a deal, at least let it be what you say it is. Don't come back here in 6 months and surprise us with ''By the way, it was the Iranian's fact sheet that had it right and not ours.''

So I hope we will be able to move on these amendments. I don't think they undermine this one bit. I think they are relevant to the debates we are having. I think they are relevant to the decision we are being asked to make. And it is about time this body takes this up. Congress has an important role to play. The people of Florida whom I represent speak on these issues on this floor through me and the senior Senator from Florida. We have a right to have these issues debated. This is not some minor issue we are talking about; this is the security not just of our strongest ally in the region but of our very own country.

So I hope we will have an opportunity to have debates on these amendments. When we hear people say: If these amendments pass, we are going to lose the support of the bill; the President might veto it—well, if you want to make that argument, make that argument, but let's have a vote on it. What is wrong with having a vote on an amendment? If you don't want to vote on the amendment because you disagree with me, stand up and say you disagree with the amendment and you vote no. If you agree with the amendment but you are going to vote against it because you think it unravels this process that is being put in place, then say that. But let's have a vote on it.

If you don't want to vote on things, don't run for the Senate. If you don't want to vote on things, don't run for office. Be a columnist. Get a talk show. Everyone who runs for office knows that what we are called to do here is vote on issues on which sometimes we are uncomfortable.

There is a microphone at your desk. Come to the floor and give a speech and explain to the world why you are voting against a deal that requires Israel to have a right to exist. And if you say you believe Israel has a right to exist but you are voting against it because you don't want to unravel the deal, people will respect it. You can make your argument, but vote. Don't tell me we can't have votes on these things. You can argue that we shouldn't pass it, and I will argue against you, but don't tell me we can't even vote on it because then what you are saying is you want to be protected from taking a position on it, you don't want to take a position that you think is tough, and that I find to be unacceptable.

So, Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending amendment in order to call up the two

amendments I just described, amendment No. 1141 and amendment No. 1148, en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, let me explain to my friend from Florida—a very valued member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee—that we have two pending amendments. We have also been working to get a vote on Senator BARRASSO's amendment dealing with terrorism. Senator CORKER and I are trying to work through many amendments that we can clear that Members have brought forward. They are working with us to get those amendments where we can consider them.

For an orderly process, since so many amendments have been filed—and, I might say, they have all been filed by Republican Members of the Senate—we need to make sure we have an orderly way to consider these amendments and vote on these amendments. For those reasons, I do object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, just as a point of clarification, I am a member of the committee that heard these amendments, particularly the one on Israel's right to exist. They were available to me at the time. I chose not to offer them in consultation with the Senators who worked so hard to put them together. I could have offered my amendment in the committee. I did not in order to work in a cooperative way to move it from the committee onto the floor.

I will admit that I did not speak to Senator CARDIN about this in particular, but I was told by multiple Members that the right place and the right time for me to offer this amendment would be on the floor, not in the committee, because the hope was to get it to the floor as quickly as possible. So in an effort to move this issue to the floor, I held back on filing this particular amendment with regard to Israel's right to exist on the assurances and on the conversations that we had that, in fact, when we got to the floor, these amendments would be heard.

Now, if, in fact, it turns out that today is not going to be the day we vote on the amendment, I understand that. I know there are a lot of other people with ideas they want voted on.

My understanding is and I have been told that there is potentially the effort here to say we shouldn't have any amendment or just have three or four amendments, and I think that is an unfair position to take. I am not saying that is what the Senator from Maryland is arguing. But I hope that at some point, as the order is established—I will continue to make this motion in the hope that this amendment can not just be pending but can be part of this debate.

I respect the views of my colleagues, some who I think will come to the floor and say they agree with me on the substance of it but don't want to vote on the amendment because they think it endangers the agreement we have in place or the bill that is in place. But I do think it deserves a vote, and I do think it deserves that debate.

So I hope in this orderly process that is established, these two amendments—I have filed seven, but I prioritized these two—these two will get the consideration I believe they deserve.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, as Senator RUBIO pointed out, we had no discussions about this. I don't know what Senators he is referring to, but let me just talk briefly about some of the points Senator RUBIO mentioned because I think it is important that we respond to them.

First, the bill we are considering, S. 615, is a bill that doesn't deal with the merits of a potential deal. It deals with the right way for Congress to review a potential deal that is reached between the United States and our trading partners and Iran concerning its nuclear weapon program. That is what this bill does. It doesn't say whether the President's agreement is a good one, a bad one, et cetera. It is a process for us to review it and take appropriate action because we are the ones who impose the sanctions. Only the Congress can permanently change or eliminate the sanctions. Therefore, it is important that we have an orderly way to review the potential deal. That is what it does—nothing more, nothing less.

It also, by the way, gives us the opportunity to get notice of material breaches and be able to take action to prevent Iran from becoming a nuclear weapons state if they, in fact, breach the agreement.

So the two points Senator RUBIO mentioned—the first is that there are different interpretations being given, one by the United States and one by the Iranians. Well, we think the first amendment we filed is going to help deal with that. It is pending right now. It requires us to get every official document of a potential deal in the language in which it is agreed to. So that amendment is pending—it is followed by Senator CORKER and me—for the reasons Senator RUBIO mentioned, and that is, we want to see the original text. We don't want to have the interpretation by the Iranians; we want to know what the language says. That is our responsibility. We are going to get that once we take up this first amendment—I hope it is approved—that will give us the original language text of every agreement and exhibit that is agreed to between the parties.

The second issue Senator RUBIO mentioned is Israel's right to exist and Iran acknowledging Israel's right to exist. I fully agree with Senator RUBIO. I don't think there is a Member of this body who doesn't want Israel legitimated by every country in the world. It is our key ally in the Middle East. It is a country that shares our values, that has a strategic relationship with the United States, and I could go on and on.

Since 1948, the United States and Israel have enjoyed a very close and important relationship, and we have taken so many actions in this body in order to protect Israel's right to exist. That is why we included your language and Senator BOXER's language in this bill where we say, ''The President should determine that the agreement in no way compromises the commitment of the United States to Israel's security or its support for Israel's right to exist.'' We have that in the bill.

What Senator RUBIO's amendment would have us do—and let me explain this. What his amendment would have us do is require that the President certify to us before he could submit any agreement—enter into any agreement—that Iran has recognized Israel's right to exist.

This agreement we are negotiating with our negotiating partners and Iran is to deal with Iran's nuclear weapon program. I know from my conversations with the Israeli Government that they think that is the most important thing for their existence—the most important thing—that Iran not become a nuclear weapons state. That is what Israel needs, and that is what we are trying to get.

The Rubio amendment, although it is not intended to do that, would say: No, that is not the most important thing. The most important thing is to negotiate the language, what Iran says about Israel, not their nuclear weapons program, and that the President must achieve that.

When you are negotiating, the more things you put on the table, the weaker position you are in in achieving the most important point, and that is making sure we have a strong agreement that Iran can never become a nuclear weapons state.

That is why this amendment will accomplish just the opposite as far as Israel's security is concerned. Yes, it is a poison pill. Yes, it will defeat this bill. That also happens to be true. And, yes, it will mean it will be almost impossible for the President to negotiate a nuclear agreement with Iran.

I think most people in this body and most people in America believe that the best course is a negotiated agreement with Iran. The unintended consequences of this amendment would make it virtually impossible to have that agreement completed.

So, yes, we could get into debate on the specifics of your amendment. I am more than happy to do that. But we have an orderly process here, and there are a lot of amendments that have been filed, and we are trying to work out a way to do this. Senator CORKER and I have been on the floor now for 4 or 5 days debating this issue, and we will debate any Member who wants to come by because we want do make sure we do have an open debate. But we are

going to follow an orderly process. And this amendment, as well-intended as it is, is an amendment that would very much compromise what we have tried to do in a bipartisan way, and that is to make sure that this Senate and the House have an orderly way to consider any deal struck between our negotiating partners and the United States and Iran. That is our responsibility, and we are going to stay focused on that, and we are going to end with a bipartisan product that is in I think the best traditions of the United States Senate.

So I respect very deeply my colleague's commitment to Israel. I do.

All of us are committed to Israel, but let's think about what is the most important thing for Israel, and that is having a strong agreement that prevents Iran from becoming a nuclear weapon state. Let's focus on that because that, I think, this bill helps us achieve.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I appreciate the passion of the Senator from Maryland. He makes points that I think are very relevant to debate once we are on the amendment. That is all I am asking for, a vote on the amendment. He is making an argument right now why he thinks we should not pass this amendment.

I respect the orderly process. I did not necessarily recognize that coming to the floor and trying to get my amendment pending would somehow unravel this orderly process, but I am more than happy to work within the orderly process, whatever that process entails. I would be more than happy to have it explained to me, where I fit in, in this orderly process, and at the appropriate moment we will file the amendment. But I wanted a vote on the amendment, and then the argument you made here today can be made.

The only other point I would make is it is true, tragically, that there are a number of countries in the Middle East that do not recognize Israel's right to exist. The difference is those countries are not trying to build a nuclear weapon, nor are they building long-range rockets, nor do they use terrorism as an instrument of statecraft, nor do they every Friday hold ceremonies in which their top leader chants ''Death to Israel'' and ''Death to America,'' nor do they actively support terrorist groups around the world that exist for the sole purpose of destroying Israel itself, nor do they have billions of dollars in sanctions that are about to be released.

At the end of the day, there is a big difference between what is happening in Iran and the billions of dollars we are about to turn over to them and these other countries that, unfortunately, do not recognize Israel's right to exist but are not going around actually actively trying to destroy the State of Israel.

The last point is on the differences in the details. Listen, I do not think the fact sheet the State Department put out is sufficient. I think the deal, as described by the President, is not good enough and will not lead to the prevention of a nuclear weapon. But all I am asking for in my amendment is for the deal he submits to be the one that he says he negotiated.

He has told us already we have reached a preliminary agreement. He has announced it to the world what that preliminary agreement is. All I am saying is what you submit to us must be what you told us it is. Here is why I say this: Because this negotiation has been going on for a while. Every month that goes by, Iran gains more concessions, and our position slips further and further.

If you look where we were at the beginning of this process to where we are today, it is a very different place from where we were not that long ago. We are in a very different place than we were in terms of what we had originally said. When this whole thing started 10 years ago, 12 years ago, the U.N. Security Council put sanctions on Iran and said you are not even able to enrich or reprocess. Now they are allowed to enrich and reprocess. They are even allowed to enrich and reprocess at an even higher rate for research purposes.

If these negotiations keep going on, we are going to end up building the bomb for them at the rate it is going, because every year and every month that goes by, they gain more and more concessions. All I am trying do is, at a minimum, freeze this in place and say, Mr. President, you have told us that you have negotiated a deal. Mr. President, you put out a fact sheet that told us what the deal is. You have represented it to the American people as the deal, and now all this will say is what you submit to us must be what you told us you agreed to on April 2. Do not come back here in 6 months and submit to us a deal, and as it turns out the Iranian fact sheet is the one we should have been relying on.

All I am asking, even though I do not think that what he has agreed to is sufficient—all I am asking in my second amendment is that the deal he submits be the deal he says it is, nothing more and nothing less.

I hope that through this orderly process the moment will arrive, before we vote on passage of this, that my amendments can be heard and voted on. I respect the arguments that others make about why they cannot support them and what they think they will ultimately do to the process. All I am asking for are votes on these amendments, and then everybody is free to vote the way they want and for the reasons they want.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I can, quite frankly, share the Senator from Florida's frustration, and I urge us to fully debate and begin voting on important amendments to this bill. I am all for any productive, orderly process, but I want it to be productive, to be inclusive, and to get going. I share the frustration that has been expressed on the floor that that is not quite happening right now.

In light of that, I want to be assured of moving forward and getting a vote on a very important amendment for me. I send a second-degree amendment to the desk, Vitter amendment No. 1186, as modified. I ask that it be a second-degree amendment to Corker amendment No. 1179 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Corker amendment is not pending.

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I have a parliamentary inquiry: What is the pending business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The pending amendment is amendment No. 1155.

AMENDMENT NO. 1179

Mr. VITTER. In that case, I call for regular order with respect to the Corker amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The amendment No. 1179 is pending.

AMENDMENT NO. 1186, AS MODIFIED, TO AMENDMENT NO. 1179

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I send this second-degree amendment to the desk, Vitter amendment No. 1186, as modified, to be a second-degree amendment to Corker amendment No. 1179, and I ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Louisiana [Mr. VITTER] proposes an amendment numbered 1186, as modified, to amendment No. 1179.

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment, as modified, is as follows:

(Purpose: To require an assessment of inadequacies in the international monitoring and verification system as they relate to a nuclear agreement with Iran)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

''(C) ASSESSMENT OF INADEQUACIES IN INTERNATIONAL MONITORING AND VERIFICATION SYSTEM.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—A report under subparagraph (A) shall include an assessment by the Secretary of State, in conjunction with the heads and other relevant officials of agencies with responsibilities under this section, detailing existing inadequacies in the international monitoring and verification system to the extent such inadequacies relate to the agreement transmitted pursuant to paragraph (1), as outlined and in accordance with findings and recommendations pertaining to verification shortcomings contained within—

''(I) the September 26, 2006, Government Accountability Office report, ''Nuclear Nonproliferation: IAEA Has Strengthened Its

Safeguards and Nuclear Security Programs, but Weaknesses Need to Be Addressed'';

''(II) the May 16, 2013, Government Accountability Office Report, ''IAEA Has Made Progress in Implementing Critical Programs but Continues to Face Challenges'';

''(III) the Defense Science Board Study, ''Task Force on the Assessment of Nuclear Treaty Monitoring and Verification Technologies'';

''(IV) the IAEA Report, The Safeguards System of the International Atomic Energy Agency; and the IAEA Safeguards Statement for 2010;

''(V) the IAEA Safeguards Overview: Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements and Additional Protocols;

''(VI) the IAEA Model Additional Protocol; and

''(VII) the IAEA February 2015 Director General Report to the Board of Governors.

''(ii) RECOMMENDATIONS.—The assessment required under clause (i) shall include recommendations based upon the reports referenced in such clause, including recommendations to overcome inadequacies or develop an improved monitoring framework and recommendations related to the following matters:

''(I) The nuclear security program's long-term resource needs.

''(II) A plan for the long-term operation and funding of the IAEA and relevant agencies increased activities in order to maintain the necessary level of oversight.

''(III) A potential national strategy and implementation plan supported by a planning and assessment team aimed at cutting across agency boundaries or limitations that impact its ability to draw conclusions—with absolute assurance—about whether Iran is developing a clandestine nuclear weapons program.

''(IV) The limitations of IAEA actors.

''(V) Challenges within the geographic scope which may be too large to anticipate within the sanctioned treaty or agreement or the national technical means (NTM) monitoring regimes alone.

''(iii) PRESIDENTIAL CERTIFICATION.—Not later than 30 days after the Secretary of State submits a report under subparagraph (A), the President shall certify to the appropriate congressional committees and leadership that the President has reviewed the Secretary's shortfall assessment required under this subparagraph, including the recommendations contained therein, and has taken necessary actions to address existing gaps within the monitoring and verification framework.

''(D) CLASSIFIED ANNEX.—A report under

Mr. VITTER. I would be happy to explain the substance of the amendment.

This is about verification, obviously a really crucial part of this debate. Many of us who have concerns about the President's proposed agreement do not think we have adequate means to verify any agreement in the context and the structure he has proposed. So, clearly, those verification issues are very, very important.

This amendment tries to address those in a substantive and significant and meaningful way. What the amendment does is actually specifically lists documented reports from groups such as the IAEA, the U.S. Defense Science Board Task Force, and others, which have highlighted specific verification problems. The amendment would require the President to report in a very detailed, specific way on those documented verification problems and make certifications regarding making progress on and solving those verification problems.

Again, I think this is absolutely necessary because I believe the present deal, as it is being put together, does not have adequate verification capability. This would help fill that hole. I am not sure it would completely fill that gap, quite frankly, but this is a good-faith attempt to address those very real issues by, again, delineating specific documented verification problems and requiring the President and his administration to address them, to report on that, and to make certifications regarding how they are addressing those specific documented verification problems.

I urge strong support of this good-faith amendment. This would dramatically, in my opinion, improve this agreement by helping address those verification concerns. I believe they are very legitimate concerns shared by many people on both sides of the aisle. I urge strong consideration and, ultimately, approval of this verification enhancement.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending amendment and call up my amendment No. 1180.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I know the good Senator from South Dakota knows that we are working with the other side to get a number of amendments ready to vote on today, and we certainly appreciate his constructive effort in letting us know what he is doing.

I object to making it pending because the other side—I am doing this on their behalf—wants to work through the tranche that we have right now.

I hope he discusses his amendment and maybe we can make it pending later today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Tennessee, who is managing this bill. I know they are trying to find a way forward, and I hope that will include getting some votes on amendments, including this one. I think this is a very reasonable amendment and one that certainly fits within what we are trying to accomplish here.

The Senate is in the midst of an important debate. This week we began a discussion on the role of Congress in approving or disapproving a nuclear agreement with Iran. Any agreement we reach with Iran must ensure one thing, and that is that Iran will never be able to acquire a nuclear weapon. That should be everything that this discussion is about.

A nuclear-armed Iran would threaten the safety, stability, and security of the entire world. It would also pose a direct threat to the United States and to our allies in the region. Given the stakes of this debate, it is critical that Congress have a role in reviewing any agreement so that the American people's voices can be heard. That is really what this is all about—giving the American people a voice on something that is of critical importance to America's national security.

I thank the chairman and the ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for forging together a bipartisan path forward to allow for such a congressional review.

While I support the underlying bill and appreciate the work of our bill managers, I do believe the bill could be significantly strengthened, and the amendment I am introducing today will help to do that.

My amendment, No. 1180, is one way that the Senate can strengthen the underlying bill. This amendment will require the Secretary of State to verify whether the International Atomic Energy Agency, or the IAEA, which would be in charge of inspections in Iran under any agreement, would have access to Iranian military bases. There have been recent reports that have indicated that the Iranian military is hostile to any inspection of military facilities.

General Hossein Salami, the deputy head of Iran's Revolutionary Guard, recently told Iranian media: ''They [the inspectors] will not be permitted to inspect the most normal military site in their dreams.'' Again, that statement was made by General Hossein Salami, who is the deputy head of Iran's Revolutionary Guard.

If the administration enters into an agreement that doesn't guarantee the inspection of Iranian military sites, the American people and our allies in the region will have very little reason to believe that Iran will comply with any agreement. Without such an agreement, Iran can conduct research on nuclear weapons systems on military bases outside the reach of international inspectors. That is not an acceptable scenario.

We must ensure that any deal with Iran is verifiable, enforceable, accountable, and promotes security and stability in the region and around the world. That goal is hard to achieve without a robust inspections regime that allows for international inspections of Iran's military sites.

Accordingly, I encourage my colleagues to support my amendment, which will help ensure that Iran cannot circumvent an agreement conducting

research on nuclear weapons systems at military facilities. A nuclear-armed Iran is a threat to the safety, security, and stability of the entire planet.

I hope that when an agreement about how to proceed with regard to amendments is reached, this amendment will be included among those amendments that will be debated and voted upon, because I do think it will strengthen the underlying agreement. I certainly look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides, not only to get this amendment adopted but also to ensure that Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon. That is first, foremost, and what this always needs to be about.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I am here on the floor this afternoon with my good friend from North Dakota, and I want to speak to an issue as it relates to the Iranian sanctions bill that we have on the floor in front of us.

This is about an issue that so many of us care deeply about—about our own domestic production here, about the strength of our economy, about the strength of our national security and how the United States in a global environment really stands toe-to-toe in good strong competition around the world. I want to speak today about U.S. oil—the ban on U.S. oil—and how this all intersects with Iran, Iranian sanctions, and specifically, the sanctions on Iranian oil.

I am submitting a bipartisan amendment to allow U.S. oil to compete with Iranian oil on the global market. I am pleased to be joined in this effort by Senator HEITKAMP, Senator HOEVEN, Senator LANKFORD, and, hopefully, others, as this discussion progresses.

Iran's Government is largely dependent on its exports of oil for its revenue source. It sends oil to countries such as China, Japan, India, and South Korea. The sanctions that have been imposed have really hurt Iran's economy. They have brought Iran to the table. The sanctions that have been in place have cost the government in Tehran some $40 billion in lost export revenues in 2014 alone, according to the Treasury Department.

Under the sanctions regime and the Joint Plan of Action, countries are still able to purchase Iranian oil, and I don't think a lot of folks understand that. They think the sanctions are in place and Iran can't derive a benefit from the oil exports. But in fact, companies are still able to purchase Iranian oil, up to 1 to 1.1 million barrels per day and—no surprise—countries have purchased up to that limit nearly every month since the JPA was implemented in November of 2013. So sanctions are in place, but Iran is still deriving the benefit of being able to sell Iranian oil to other nations.

It is worth pointing out that this is only possible because the State Department does not include condensate in its definition of crude oil. If you include the condensate volumes, then the limit of 1.1 million barrels per day was breached back in January of 2014, in February, March, April, and May—not June—in July, September, October, and December, and also in February of 2015, according to reports that came out of the International Energy Agency.

It simply does not make sense for us to lift sanctions on Iranian oil while we keep them on American oil. It just doesn't make sense that we would tell Iran that we are going to allow these sanctions to be lifted over there, but by keeping our oil export ban in place, we are effectively imposing sanctions on U.S. oil producers. This is a de facto sanctions regime against ourselves.

Now, one can understand why we have imposed sanctions on certain places—on Tehran, Moscow, and Damascus. However, we are effectively talking about sanctions on the Permian, on the Utica, on the Niobrara, and on regions where we have the ability to produce a resource that helps this country, helps to create jobs, and helps with all aspects of our economy. We are going to say: Iran, OK, we are going to relieve sanctions on you, but we are going to keep in place sanctions on U.S. oil producers.

So what this amendment does is to add a third section to the Corker-Cardin Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015. It would require a DOE report on Iranian crude oil and condensate exports. It would then lift the de facto ban on U.S. crude oil and condensate exports. It still preserves the emergency authorities of the President to prohibit exports if it is warranted. So there is that safety valve there.

The deadline for submission of this report to Congress would be 60 days following the enactment of the act. It would still be required even if an agreement with Iran were not reached. It would effectively address two issues—the relative ability of U.S. and Iranian oil producers to compete in the global market, which is pretty important out there, and the extent to which any agreement with Iran would increase Iranian oil exports through the lifting of sanctions.

As we know, American oil producers are generally prohibited from exporting overseas. Alaska is the one exception to the oil export ban. A very limited amount is exported over the years. Iran, on the other hand, currently exports over 1 million barrels per day of oil onto the global markets.

Now, we had a hearing in the energy committee a week or so ago. The Presiding Officer was there. We heard from the U.S. Energy Information Administration, the EIA. They estimated that lifting the sanctions on Iran would increase Iranian volume by some 700,000 to 1 million barrels per day. So if we lifted that, EIA estimates that Iran would then be in a situation where they would be able to put out onto the market, basically to new purchasers, 1 million barrels per day.

Think about what that does—giving them new markets for their oil. As they have new markets for their oil, they get paid for it. EIA estimates that given the price of Brent being where it is in this range right now, it would be $25 billion per year to Iran from the ability to put that out onto the market and gain new customers—an extra $25 billion.

How comfortable are we with that? How much of that $25 billion is going to fund terrorist organizations, terrorists, in areas that we are fighting directly and immediately today? What kind of sense does it make that we would say that we will remove sanctions on Iran, allowing them to move their product to new customers, gain potentially $25 billion additionally into their treasury to do who knows what with it.

At the same time, what this does is it harms American producers who are unable to compete with Iranian oil due to this outdated ban on U.S. exports that was imposed 40 years ago. So we are going to let a 40-year-old policy sanction us, sanction our economy and benefit Iran's. Lifting the ban on U.S. oil exports would let American oil compete with Iranian oil. It would reduce Iranian revenue from oil exports. It would send a strong signal to U.S. allies that still depend on Iranian oil that alternative supplies are available and lower global oil prices which would decrease the price of gasoline and other consumer fuels.

A few hours ago, on the other side of the hallway here, over in the House of Representatives, we heard from the Prime Minister of Japan. Japan is currently purchasing and is able to purchase oil from Iran. Don't you think that our friend Japan would much rather have security and diversity of supply if it were to come from their friend the United States? I sure think so.

The amendment that we have introduced lifts the ban by requiring, after 30 days have elapsed from the enactment of S. 615, that crude oil exports may be authorized on the same basis that they are currently authorized for petroleum products, whether it is gasoline, diesel, jet fuel or whatever it is. Currently, these petroleum products can be exported without a license. In fact, we are, here in this country, the largest exporter of petroleum products in the world. So think about this as you kind of shake your head and say: What is going on here? We are the largest exporter of refined products, but yet we impose a flat ban—an outright ban—on the crude itself.

So, again, we have a safety valve in the amendment that preserves the

President's emergency authority, which is derived from the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, the National Emergencies Act, and the Energy Policy and Conservation Act. They prohibit exports, under these various proposals, if needed for the safety and security of the Nation. We do not touch those. We do not impact them in that amendment at all.

So it is important to recognize that what we are doing here is we are looking at an outdated policy that is 40-years old. We are moving into present time and space, where we have a situation with a country that we have tried desperately to bring to the table to be a nation that will work with us rather than against us. Yet part of what we are considering is an action that would remove sanctions on them and continue to keep in place sanctions on this country.

It makes no sense to me. I would hope that my colleagues would consider it. I know that my colleague from North Dakota has given great thought to this, has great understanding about the issue, and also has great passion about how we ensure that from a national security perspective we are covered in all corners.

So I would ask my colleague from North Dakota, as she has reviewed an antiquated and an outdated policy, and being from a producing State such as North Dakota, where she is working to advance the opportunities not only for North Dakotans but for people all over this country, how people in North Dakota feel when it is suggested that we are imposing, effectively, domestic sanctions on them, while at the same time we would relieve sanctions on Iran.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, I want to thank my good friend from Alaska for giving me an opportunity to talk about this policy of sanctions that is wrong, wrong, wrong on so many levels. When we first looked at it, we need to understand that the embargo, or the limitation on the exportation of crude oil in this country, is a policy decision made by the President—initially, President Nixon—in response to a number of producers going around oil price support controls.

So this is a 1970's policy. Unfortunately, when we transitioned away from price supports for crude oil, we never removed this embargo, we never removed this restriction. That was a mistake at that time. It continues to be a colossal mistake for our growth towards energy independence in this country and our ability to use our energy and our oil for soft power and to actually provide a consistent and ready supply of crude oil to our allies so they are not beholden, not only to Iran, but to countries such as Russia.

So it is critically important that we examine some of the concerns that people have about lifting the embargo. Obviously, in North Dakota, we do not see any logic, because we are kind of a commonsense State. We do not see any logic behind not allowing crude oil to be exported but allowing every refined product that we could produce in this country access to a foreign market.

That makes absolutely no sense. If the logic behind this is to try and maintain stability and a lower gasoline price, then we should lock down gasoline and we should not export gasoline. The antiquated policy that we are talking about today did not have a lot of logic after we deregulated oil. It has even less logic in the dangerous world we live in. We know that so many of our foreign enemies rely on oil revenue basically to fund their terrorism activities, to fund their government, to supply the necessary government services that keep them in power.

We have an opportunity to say to our allies, whether it is Japan or in Europe, don't worry about whether someone is going to hold you hostage because you will not be able to heat your homes in the winter or provide gasoline to your communities and your consumers. Do not worry about that because we have your back.

But we cannot have their back if we don't have the ability to export our crude oil. The bottom line is that on every level, in terms of foreign policy, in terms of what we should be in this country—on every level—a policy of maintaining an embargo, a restriction against exports of crude oil makes no common sense—absolutely none.

But let's talk about domestic policy because I think some of the concerns that have been expressed to me by my colleagues, and I am sure Senator MURKOWSKI's colleagues, have been this: Well, won't this increase gasoline prices? I have to applaud Senator MURKOWSKI because very early on she heard that, and she said: Let's have some real intellectual work done. Don't rely on my economics 101. How about we actually get economists from Brookings, economists from the Aspen Institute, economists from all over the country, who have come to one single conclusion, which is, that it will not raise gasoline prices.

In fact, the conclusion is quite the opposite—that allowing us access to an international market could, in fact, reduce gasoline prices. Why would that be, you wonder? Because of the fluke of how we refine crude oil in this country, most of our refineries are based on heavy sour crude. The crude we produce in North Dakota is light sweet crude. We don't have a big refining capacity for light sweet crude, so we have a price reduction in our country.

So how are gasoline prices established? They are based on that higher crude oil price, because they are refining crude oil that comes in from other places such as Saudi Arabia. They are refining crude oils that come in from Venezuela, and they are charging an appropriate price. Some people would say there is a little bit of price creep here as we are looking at gasoline prices.

The ability to get our crude to market is absolutely critical. Now, there are a lot of people who also think that we should keep a captive market on a lot of our resources. We have heard this argument in natural gas, and we heard this argument in crude oil. They said: We should have a captive market. I have a constant reply. I say: I have a lot of hog farmers who like low corn prices. The solution for low corn prices has never been not to export corn.

This is the only commodity that is traded on a global price that does not have the ability to find its market. Now, what is the consequence of that? I would tell you, to my friend from Alaska, and I think she sees this, one of the things I sincerely believe is that the ability to produce oil—our domestic production of oil—had a lot to do with driving Iran to the negotiating table.

They saw that we could, in fact, infiltrate the market and take market share. That is threatening to a lot of the former OPEC countries that are wanting that captive market. If we had access to that market, we would be sending a message. So why don't we do the right thing here? Why don't we understand how this export ban on American crude oil is restricting our ability to use crude oil as an appropriate soft power opportunity? Why don't we talk about how actually allowing for the export of crude oil could drive down gasoline prices in the United States of America and continue the energy renaissance?

If we cannot find our market, if we cannot find our market in North Dakota for this production, guess what happens? It either goes into storage or it gets shut in where it is, which is in the field. Hundreds of thousands of jobs will be lost. But more importantly, our energy security in this country will be jeopardized and harmed.

This policy of opening up this restriction is so right on so many levels. I applaud the Senator from Alaska for bringing it forth in this context. I think it is critical to talk about it in this context. But I also applaud her for all of the work she has done and we have supported, as she has built out the case—the economic case—for why this policy makes no sense at any level.

It is wrongheaded. It is time to change it. This is an opportunity. We will not end because it is only fair to every oilfield worker out there, it is only fair to every owner of a royalty or minerals in place, it is fair to every operator, and it is fair to the people of this country to engage in trade, level the playing field, and make sure we are telling our friends and allies that they don't have to buy their oil from countries that threaten their security every day. We have a supply of oil that can readily be exported and provided to them.

I thank my good friend from Alaska for her continued advocacy on behalf of

consumers of this country and her continued advocacy on behalf of an energy-appropriate policy in the United States of America.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from North Dakota. She has articulated the case so well not only from a domestic perspective but from the international perspective as well. We need to appreciate that as we are recognized as a nation, as that superpower when it comes to our military strength and all those who serve us have to offer, that we are also an energy superpower. We have not yet embraced that as a responsibility, as an obligation to use that not only to our advantage but to the advantage of our friends and allies around the globe. That is an important transition, transformation we need to make.

We are mired down in policies that are decades old, based on history that is no longer relevant given the geopolitics of today. We have an opportunity to wake up to where we can be, how we can lead from an international perspective. It can begin with the strength of our energy and our energy resources, but we have to believe in our own possibilities. Right now, I think we are lagging in that.

I appreciate all that my colleague is doing in this effort to help educate people. I recognize that it takes a little bit of time to recalibrate the thinking, but we are doing that, and we are doing it for the right reason, based on common sense, based on strength of the economy, and based on national security, which should be our primary consideration right now. We will never have sufficient boots on the ground or budget for defense to be everywhere many would like to be around the globe. What other assets do we have? What else can we contribute? It can begin with our energy resources.

So we have great opportunities, and I forward to further discussions about not only what we are proposing in this amendment but how we can lead as a nation in the energy sector.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LEE). The Senator from Oregon.

FDA TOBACCO DEEMING REGULATIONS

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I rise to draw attention to the dangers of new and insidious tobacco products that are ensnaring our youth and to urge the FDA to take long overdue action to protect our children from these products.

First, I thank the Senators for coming to the floor today to join in making this critically important point. Senator BOXER is present, and she will be speaking next. Other Senators are planning to join us. So I appreciate their lifting their voices on this important issue.

Dr. Richard Wender, the chief cancer control officer for the American Cancer Society, said last year, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the landmark Surgeon General report on smoking and health, that ''the single greatest threat to the future control of tobacco is complacency.''

We are here today to call attention to a dangerous complacency that threatens the lives of our children, a complacency in completing rules that are essential to protecting our children from a lifetime of nicotine addiction. We are on the floor of the Senate today because this week marks the 1-year anniversary of the Food and Drug Administration's proposed ''deeming regulations'' on tobacco. Deeming regulations essentially say the FDA has the power to do what the law gave them to do in 2009 when we passed the act. These critical regulations have yet to be finalized, and it appears that there are not going to be finalized regulations this month or next or the month after despite the fact that we are now 6 years into this rulemaking regulation process.

Six years is a very long time. In 6 years, a lot of young Americans have become addicted to nicotine products. In 6 years, the industry has made huge strides in inventing new products designed to attract our children. In 6 years, a lot could have been done, and nothing has been done.

These critical regulations have not been completed, and it is time for the FDA and the administration to make getting this done a priority. This is one of the things that can truly impact the health of the next generation.

The tobacco industry is, as Judge Kessler said in United States v. Philip Morris, ''an industry . . . that survives, and profits, from selling a highly addictive product which causes diseases that lead to a staggering number of deaths per year, an immeasurable amount of human suffering and economic loss, and a profound burden on our national health care system.''

That is why, when it comes to tobacco and public health, the best way to save lives 20 or 30 or 40 years down the line is to prevent young Americans from becoming addicted to tobacco products today. But Big Tobacco knows this as well. They know that the best way to create a lifelong, reliable customer for their deadly product is to get our children hooked as young as possible. Now the industry refers to our children as ''replacement smokers'' to replace those who are dying. That is why they are working day and night to come up with new strategies and new products to keep kids in the pipeline, to keep new replacement smokers coming forward. They use cigars, cigarillos, tobacco candy, and snus.

Now they have the real winner—e-cigarettes. These products, such as flavored cigars, cost as little as 99 cents and are sold in colorful or cool packaging and come in flavors such as bubble gum, cotton candy, wild cherry, grape, candy apple, blueberry, chocolate, peach, and gummy bear e-cigarettes. Many of these products are cheaper and more accessible than cigarettes, and the candy-flavored versions are preferred overwhelmingly by young people.

This is a chart which shows the bottles of liquid nicotine that fuel these e-cigarettes. We have everything here from cotton candy to coffee. You name it, it is there. These are not flavors designed to appeal to adults; this is all about forming addiction in our children.

A new study released by the CDC this month found, alarmingly, that e-cigarette use had tripled among middle and high school students in just 1 year. In 2011, 1.5 percent; it doubled in the course of a year to 2.8 percent. It increased substantially in the year 2012 and 2013, and then we see it soared. E-cigarettes and vape shops have exploded across the county, and that has profound consequences for our children. Nearly one in seven high school students has used an e-cigarette in the last 30 years. That is 2 million teenagers nationwide, 2 million of our children responding to this very deliberate targeting by this demonic industry.

We have the power to do something about this. The FDA has power to do something about this because we, the legislature, gave it to them in 2009.

It is true that the long-term health effects of smoking e-cigarettes are yet to be fully calculated because it is a newer product, but there are some troubling studies we should pay attention to. What we know today is that nicotine is highly poisonous and that this vast, unregulated market of nicotine liquids threatens public health immediately.

Since 2011, poison calls related to e-cigarettes have skyrocketed—271 in 2011 to 3,808 poison calls in 2014, again showing the exploding use of this product. This industry doesn't even put this liquid nicotine into childproof containers. One brand called JJuice looks like little bottles of juice. It says ''juice'' on it. Yet, it is deadly if a child takes off that cap and drinks it. There were 14 times more poisonings in 2014 than in 2011, and yes, people die. A toddler died of nicotine poisoning just last December, and there were lots of close calls.

But tobacco companies see opportunities in these unregulated markets. They see opportunities to appeal to kids directly, market to kids more easily, and to sell to kids with fewer barriers.

There is no Federal law in place about the age at which children can buy e-cigarettes or the liquids that go into them. So it has been up to local communities to try to fill in those gaps, and they have been trying to do so, trying to catch up with the problem. The industry of e-cigarettes has exploited these opportunities.

This is where we are. Time is ticking. E-cigarette use is rising. And the rising numbers on this chart aren't just numbers, they represent our children, kids who every day, when we don't act, are

more at risk for a lifetime of dangerous addiction. This is 100 percent unequivocally unacceptable.

So to the FDA, to Health and Human Services, and to the Obama administration, it is time to quit stalling. Children are getting addicted, children are dying, and children will die more from nicotine diseases in the decades ahead. It is unacceptable.

No more complacency. Let's get it done, have it be the top item you wake up to fix every day. We expect more. I urge the administration to act quickly. Let's get these rules done.

It is a pleasure to yield the floor to my colleague from California, who has been a tremendous champion on this topic and will provide her insights. I am so delighted that she is on the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I thank Senator MERKLEY for his leadership.

This is an issue which is not getting the attention it should be getting, and we hope today, with the series of speeches we will start to make now, to wake up America to this threat.

I have a bill that would ban the advertising of these cigarettes to children. Senator MERKLEY showed you and told you the names. Let's take a look at that again. Can anyone really tell you with a straight face that these marketers are not going after children? Cotton candy, gummy bear, and popsicle—those are the flavors. I mean, we really were not born yesterday. This is what they are doing.

This is a moment for us—parents, grandparents, loving aunts and uncles—to stand up and say no to this. There are ways to do it.

Before I get into those ways, I thank Senators CORKER and CARDIN for their extraordinary leadership on the underlying bill in Iran that is on the floor. I express my thanks to the entire committee, both sides of the aisle of the Foreign Relations Committee. I have been on that committee the longest of anyone else, and this was a tough time. Everyone had a different position, and everyone was in a corner. We all came together, and we crafted a delicate compromise that essentially allows the Senate and the House to vote on whatever agreement may emerge. I say ''may.'' We don't know if there will be one from the administration on Iran's nuclear weapons. We know that if we go down the path of poison pill amendments, this whole thing could be lost.

I will close this little part and get right to the e-cigarettes with this.

I was listening to Senator RUBIO, whom I work with on the committee, and I love to work with him on issues where we find agreement, but he got up here and he said: All I want is a vote on my amendment, and we all know his amendment will derail this very delicately balanced agreement. He said: All I am asking for is a vote. And he said very eloquently: If you don't want to vote, don't be a Senator. And I thought: You are right about that. Then I checked his voting record and he stopped us voting on nominees 18 times in December alone.

So I say to my friends: Don't come down here and preach to us about the fact that we are trying to keep poison pills off this for the good of the world, to stop a war; OK? And don't tell us we are stopping you, when you stopped a lot of us 18 times in December alone and once on Loretta Lynch—once on the new Attorney General. I had to say that.

Mr. President, when I turn on the television, I don't know if it is 2015 or 1950. Tobacco companies are preying again on our youth. Just as we should be celebrating the decline of youth cigarette smoking rates, a new product is taking our high schools and middle schools by storm and they are called e-cigarettes.

As Senator MERKLEY so well explained, we are seeing a startling increase in the use of these cigarettes by our teens, with 2.5 million teens using them—2.5 million teens. If we do nothing, the CDC says that every year another 1½ million kids are going to be using e-cigarettes.

Now, what are they exposed to? Let us be clear, nicotine. We know nicotine is very dangerous to adolescent brain development. Let me say that again. Nicotine is very dangerous to adolescent brain development. In addition to nicotine, e-cigarettes have—and I hope young people are listening, including the ones right here—potentially dangerous chemicals, and chemicals we already know are dangerous, such as benzene, cadmium, formaldehyde, propylene glycol, and they also have nanoparticles that are present in traditional cigarettes—this all according to my health department in California.

Now, we already saw how these children are lured. They are lured by the cigarette companies. And by the way, the big cigarette companies—and I will finish in 1 minute and this is critical—have bought up the e-cigarette companies. I wrote to the executives and I said: Please, for the good of your children and my children and my grandchildren, don't advertise on television.

If you ever saw these ads on TV, Senator MERKLEY, and Mr. President, you would just think that e-cigarettes were curing all the illnesses of the world. Well, they are not. They are not, and the studies that are already coming out are quite alarming. Sales to minors should be banned, and 42 of our States have done so, but it is not nationwide. Online sales should be banned. Companies should not be advertising.

We have a potential crisis on our hands, and I will be working with Senator MERKLEY, Senator BLUMENTHAL, and all of my colleagues because we were not born yesterday. We have seen this movie before and we want our kids to be healthy. The FDA can take a stand by finalizing the proposed regulation today. Too many lives have been endangered while we stand here waiting.

Last month, more than 5,000 of my constituents signed a petition urging FDA to regulate e-cigarettes. Some of them told me why they were concerned, and I would like to share the words of Californian parents and teachers.

Susan from Long Beach wrote:

> I am a 7th grade health teacher and it is clear that students think ''vaping'' is okay and a healthy alternative to smoking. Shops selling e-cigarettes have popped up in all the stores around their neighborhoods advertising their products. A clear message needs to be sent that e-cigarettes are not for children under the age of 18.

Judith from Fairfield wrote:

> I teach high school, and too many students are using e-cigarettes, thinking they are safer than regular cigarettes. In the meantime, they are getting addicted to nicotine, and putting them at risk for a lifetime of impacts to their health.

Sondra from Corona wrote:

> I have worked in our local high schools for almost 15 years. The e-cigarettes definitely need to be regulated for people under 18. I am consistently told by students that ''these are better'' than traditional cigarettes. They don't realize the harm and the addictive qualities are still present.

Bob from Cathedral City wrote:

> We need to know what health and/or safety dangers are associated with e-cigarettes.

And finally Julie from Huntington Beach wrote:

> My 14-year-old son was offered an e-cig. They are too easy for children to get.

My constituents deserve Federal oversight of e-cigarettes. To protect the public health and our children, I join my colleagues and urge the Administration to finalize the pending regulation. I also call upon Congress to advance legislation that protects consumers from the health consequences of e-cigarettes. The data does not lie. We cannot wait another day.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from California for her kindness and my apologies for all the talking in the background.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, we should be doing everything we can to ensure that our children are safe from products that harm their health. Thanks to life-saving public health interventions, and FDA regulation under the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act, we have seen reduced smoking rates among young people across the country. But, unfortunately, in recent years tobacco companies have found new ways to target children, through the promotion of e-cigarettes and other unregulated tobacco products.

Last year, the FDA took an important initial step toward regulating these products with its proposed tobacco deeming rule. But, we are here today, a full year later, without a finalized rule to help ensure tobacco companies aren't profiting off of selling our children an addictive, hugely harmful bill of goods.

Today, tobacco companies are marketing e-cigarettes with celebrity endorsements and cartoons that are

geared toward a younger audience—using tactics that they are banned from using to promote traditional cigarettes. They are producing kid-enticing candy and drink flavored products, which we know children are more likely to use. In fact, because they are unregulated, children can go online and buy them without their parents knowing.

Mr. President, it is unacceptable that e-cigarette companies are using the same tactics that tobacco companies used for years to promote smoking. So we should be doing everything we can to right this wrong, and prevent our youngest generation from becoming a new generation of smokers.

We know just how harmful and addictive these products can be and I am proud my home State of Washington has begun to regulate these products and is taking strong steps towards combatting their use among children.

But, there is still much more work to do to across the country to keep e-cigarettes and other unregulated tobacco products out of the hands of our kids, and that work starts with making sure the FDA finalizes its deeming rule.

So I stand with all of my colleagues today to urge the FDA to move quickly to finalize and implement last year's proposed rule, and put in place restrictions that would:

Prevent marketing targeted to minors,

Eliminate the sale of flavored e-cigarettes that appeal to children,

And end online sales.

These would be strong steps to further protect our children and I look forward to working with my colleagues, and the FDA to ensure they are implemented as quickly as possible.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I am glad to join with several of my colleagues to talk about electronic cigarettes and the Food and Drug Administration's, FDA, role in regulating these products.

Over the last year, e-cigarette use among high school students has tripled from 4.5 percent to 13.4 percent, according to recent CDC data. In fact, research from the University of Michigan's annual Monitoring the Future survey shows that in 2014 more teenagers reported using e-cigarettes than traditional tobacco products. One year ago, the FDA took an important initial step by proposing to regulate e-cigarettes, but more must be done to strengthen this rule and ensure that the same practices used by Big Tobacco for years to promote smoking are not used by e-cigarette companies to create a new generation of smokers.

I am pleased that the FDA has proposed prohibiting e-cigarette sales to minors, as well as prohibiting vending machine sales and free samples, to prevent sales and use by minors. Further, the proposed FDA rule requires e-cigarette manufacturers to list product ingredients and for tobacco products containing nicotine to carry an addiction warning label. While I commend FDA on proposing these important steps, the rule must be improved to address the marketing of these products to children and e-cigarette flavorings and be finalized as soon as possible. Indeed, I sent a letter last week with nine of my colleagues—many of whom are also speaking about e-cigarettes today—urging the FDA to strengthen and finalize this rule.

E-cigarette companies are taking a page out of the Big Tobacco playbook, using celebrity endorsements of their products, cartoons, and advertising in magazines with youth readership and at music festivals and sports events targeted at children. According to a 2014 study in the journal Pediatrics, exposure to e-cigarette marketing by children aged 12 to 17 increased by 256 percent between 2011 and 2013, exposing 24 million children to e-cigarette advertisements. In this context, it is unsurprising that youth use of e-cigarettes has skyrocketed during the same timeframe. It is well known that tobacco advertising influences consumer behavior, especially that of children, so it is my hope that the final e-cigarette deeming rule will address this issue.

As for the use of candy, soft drink, fruit, and other flavors in e-cigarettes, the FDA itself acknowledged in the proposed rule that children are the most likely to be attracted by and use these flavored tobacco products. The Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act prohibits these kinds of flavorings from being used in traditional cigarettes and that same scrutiny should be applied to e-cigarettes and refill liquids so that children are not attracted to these products.

We have come a long way since I proposed legislation in the late 1990s to deny tobacco companies tax deductions for advertising to children. I was an original cosponsor of the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act, which became law in 2009 and incorporated the goals of my bill to keep the tobacco industry from targeting children as new customers. This law provides the FDA with the explicit authority to protect the public from deceptive cigarette advertisements, prevents the targeting of minors, and removes certain harmful ingredients from cigarettes.

This was an important effort. But we must be ever vigilant and continue to address new tobacco-related concerns as they arise, such as e-cigarettes. Until the deeming rule is finalized, e-cigarettes will continue to operate completely unregulated, with an increasing number of children taking up this addictive habit every day. I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues on the issue and I join them in strongly urging the FDA to strengthen and finalize the e-cigarette deeming rule quickly so that the agency can begin regulating these tobacco products.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the time until 5:25 p.m. today be equally divided in the usual form and that it be in order to call up the following amendment: Barrasso No. 1147; further, I ask that following the use or yielding back of time, the Senate vote on the amendment; that there be no second-degree amendments in order to the amendment and that there be a 60-affirmative-vote threshold for the adoption of the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 1147 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1140

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, on behalf of Senator BARRASSO, I call up amendment No. 1147.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Tennessee [Mr. CORKER], for Mr. BARRASSO, for himself, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. RISCH, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. LEE, Mr. CRUZ, and Mr. SASSE, proposes an amendment numbered 1147 to amendment No. 1140.

Mr. CORKER. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To require a certification that Iran has not directly supported or carried out an act of terrorism against the United States or a United States person anywhere in the world)

On page 17, between lines 21 and 22, insert the following:

''(v) Iran has not directly supported or carried out an act of terrorism against the United States or a United States person anywhere in the world; and

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I certainly appreciate the hard work done by Senator CORKER and Senator CARDIN and their efforts on getting this bill to the floor in a bipartisan way through the committee and bringing it up for a vote.

The amendment I am bringing today is something that was in the bipartisan agreed-upon bill that was introduced in the first place, with nine Democratic cosponsors. Then, this specific component, dealing with terrorism and the certification of terrorism, was removed in the managers' package as it went to committee. So I think it is important and there is bipartisan support for what I am doing. This amendment basically restores—restores—the terrorism certification that was in the original bipartisan Senate bill.

Every 90 days, the President will be required under this amendment to certify to Congress that Iran has not directly supported or carried out an act of terrorism against the United States or against an American citizen anywhere in the world. If there is evidence of terrorist activity by Iran against us, then Congress will have a more streamlined process to address it.

Right now there a number of different reports that have to be made to Congress as a result of this bipartisan legislation. This was the only one that

was removed in the managers' package. I think it is very important the American people get regular certifications from the President on this important point. Congress and the American people need to know if Iran is directly supporting acts of terrorism against our country and our people. If they are, I believe Congress must have an opportunity to respond quickly.

There actually have been some changes in the legislation to require some additional reporting components with relation to terrorism. I agree it is an improvement, but reports to Congress with information and evidence of Iran's terrorist activities are critically important, and I think it is even more critical for the President of the United States to acknowledge Iran's actions and for Congress to be able to have the opportunity to respond quickly. That is why I believe this amendment is so important.

Congress can always do more to ensure the safety and security of our citizens, but we must make it clear to Iran that Congress will be able to respond immediately to terrorist actions against us. I am restoring this opportunity with my amendment and recommending an ''aye'' vote.

I thank the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, first, let me thank Senator BARRASSO for the way he has worked with our committee, the way he has worked with us on the floor to get this amendment pending. We had a chance to debate this amendment yesterday, and today we have debated it. So I think the issue has been well debated.

I certainly agree with the intent of the sponsor of the amendment. As a result of his work in our committee, we have strengthened the reporting requirements on Iran's terrorist activities, which I have read into the RECORD before. It is very strong, and it has been strengthened as a result of the managers' amendment that Senator CORKER and I worked on.

We also have an assessment on Iran's human rights violations. We make it clear that nothing in an agreement would affect the sanctions imposed against Iran for its terrorist activities, its ballistic missiles or its human rights violations. So all those tools are available to us.

I object to this amendment because it affects the underlying bill itself. It jeopardizes the bill because it requires the President to make a certification that, in fact, he will probably not be able to make. Therefore, it not only jeopardizes the bill, it jeopardizes the ability to have a negotiated agreement and it weakens our position internationally and makes it less likely we can get Iran to give up its nuclear weapons program.

For all those reasons, I urge my colleagues to vote no on the amendment. We have already covered this in the notice requirements that have been provided in S. 615. It is an issue we all care about. This amendment, though well intended, would not advance it, and I urge my colleagues to defeat the amendment.

I yield back all of our time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

Mr. CARDIN. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI).

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

The result was announced—yeas 45, nays 54, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 168 Leg.]

YEAS—45

Ayotte	Fischer	Portman
Barrasso	Gardner	Risch
Blunt	Grassley	Roberts
Boozman	Heller	Rounds
Burr	Hoeven	Rubio
Capito	Inhofe	Sasse
Cassidy	Isakson	Scott
Cochran	Johnson	Sessions
Collins	Kirk	Shelby
Cornyn	Lankford	Sullivan
Cotton	Lee	Thune
Crapo	McConnell	Tillis
Cruz	Moran	Toomey
Daines	Murkowski	Vitter
Ernst	Paul	Wicker

NAYS—54

Alexander	Franken	Murphy
Baldwin	Gillibrand	Murray
Bennet	Graham	Nelson
Blumenthal	Hatch	Perdue
Booker	Heinrich	Peters
Boxer	Heitkamp	Reed
Brown	Hirono	Reid
Cantwell	Kaine	Sanders
Cardin	King	Schatz
Carper	Klobuchar	Schumer
Casey	Leahy	Shaheen
Coats	Manchin	Stabenow
Coons	Markey	Tester
Corker	McCain	Udall
Donnelly	McCaskill	Warner
Durbin	Menendez	Warren
Feinstein	Merkley	Whitehouse
Flake	Mikulski	Wyden

NOT VOTING—1

Enzi

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is rejected.

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, as we discuss the Iran nuclear agreement and the President's administration is attempting to negotiate the agreement, I come to the floor of the Senate to remind Coloradans, and indeed Americans, about some of the activities that have taken place in our relationship with Iran over the past several decades.

Following the Islamic Revolution in Iran, the ruling mullahs held 52 American diplomats hostage for 444 days, releasing them only on January 20, 1981, the day that President Ronald Reagan was sworn into office. Two years later, on April 18, 1983, a truck ladened with explosives rammed into the U.S. Embassy in Beirut, Lebanon, killing 17 Americans. On October 23, 1983, there was a similar attack on the U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut which killed 241 American servicemen. Overwhelmingly, the evidence led to Iran and its wholly owned subsidiary Hezbollah as the perpetrator of these attacks.

Several weeks ago, we had the opportunity to visit with Prime Minister Netanyahu in Israel to discuss the negotiations that were taking place and the details of the negotiations. Those details have emerged in a couple of pages of documents which were released by the White House. But they are still lacking in great detail and in the specifics of the framework.

Prime Minister Netanyahu described the negotiations to be a dance of porcupines in the Middle East. There is concern about the negotiations and where they would lead. Indeed, the Prime Minister made the comment that Iran is now putting its finger on the jugular of the world. Over the past 24 to 48 hours, we have indeed seen that happen in the Strait of Hormuz and with the boarding by Iran of a cargo ship that falls under the protective umbrella of the United States of America.

So we continue to see an Iranian regime that has not changed in more than 30 years. It has not changed in the last 48 hours. They have targeted and killed Americans during the Iraq war, supported Shiite militias, and supplied deadly explosives that have been used to kill and target our troops. Iran continues to prop up the murderous Assad regime in Syria. They regularly threaten to wipe Israel off the map and abuse the human rights of their own people. They have imprisoned Americans, reporters, and refused to release them.

There is no doubt that we must avoid a nuclear Iran and do everything in our power to make sure that Iran doesn't possess a nuclear infrastructure. But the questions that we have today lead more and more to a conclusion that they will continue to maintain a nuclear infrastructure.

Secretary Schultz and Secretary Kissinger made it very clear in an op-ed they wrote for the Wall Street Journal several weeks ago. We have entered this negotiation and somehow siloed off or bifurcated the issue of political restraint with nuclear restraint. We have somehow decided we will have tunnelvision on one issue without acknowledging, admitting or negotiating the other acts of violence, death, and destruction that the Iran regime has pursued for not just 30 years ago, not just 15 years ago, and there is also what is happening around the world and in the Middle East today.

I hope we can emerge from these negotiations with a strong deal, a deal that allows us the inspection of military bases without question upon demand, and with the fact that we will remove their nuclear infrastructure, that we can assure that they are no longer a regime that is leading state-

sponsored efforts to wipe Israel off the map, and that we can indeed protect Americans from the reign of terror that has been a state-sponsored effort.

There is nothing less that we should ask of this administration or any administration. We need to protect the American people. At the negotiating table—when we sit 2 or 3 feet across from the people with whom we are negotiating—we cannot ignore what is happening through state-sponsored terrorism. We cannot ignore the cargo ships in the Strait of Hormuz that have been stormed. We cannot ignore what has happened in Yemen or Hezbollah. We cannot ignore the reality that we face today of an Iran that has not changed in 30 years.

The fact is our sanctions have worked, and the fact is that increased sanctions could work as well. I hope before this negotiation is signed off and agreed to, they will realize who is making the negotiations happen and possible and that more needs to be done to protect Americans and protect the world from an Iran that simply doesn't have a dangerous threat posed to us from nuclear weapons but which poses the danger through state-sponsored terrorism which they continue to pursue today.

I thank the Presiding Officer for the time.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING MICHAEL W. DOWNING

Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, today I rise to recognize the exceptional service and the extraordinary life of Rockingham County High Sheriff Michael ''Mike'' W. Downing of Salem, NH, who passed away recently following his battle with cancer.

Sheriff Downing was a knowledgeable, respected and compassionate public safety professional, a problem solver, and a concerned community member. He was one of a kind, and was beloved by everyone who knew him.

Raised in Salem, Mike attended Saint Joseph's School and graduated from Salem High School in 1972. He went on to serve our Nation as a member of the U.S. Army 82nd Airborne Division, after which Mike began what would be a long career of service to the State of New Hampshire, first as a N.H. State trooper after graduating from the 47th New Hampshire Police Academy. He continued his career in law enforcement service, joining the Salem Police Department where he rose to the rank of detective sergeant. Mike was a graduate of the Command Training Institute at Babson College, and earned an associate's degree from Southern New Hampshire University and a bachelor's degree from Franklin Pierce College.

After his retirement from the Salem Police Department, Mike continued his public service through his work in the State legislature. He served three terms as a State representative and then served two terms as a State senator, where he held the position of senate minority leader. In 2010, Mike returned to his law enforcement roots and was elected the High Sheriff of Rockingham County. Downing was serving in his third term as sheriff at the time of his passing.

In addition to his professional and elected service to the State of New Hampshire, Mike was very active in his local community. He gave generously of his time and energy as the 301st captain commanding of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company of Massachusetts, an ASA Salem softball coach, a NH Little League coach, a member of the Knights of Columbus, trustee of Amvets Post 2, a past president and board member of Salem Haven Nursing Home and Silverthorne Adult Daycare, a member of the Rockingham County Law Enforcement Association, Rockingham County Chiefs of Police Association, International Chiefs of Police Association, the National Sheriffs' Association, the NH Sheriffs' Association and a founding board member of Isaiah 58, a nonprofit organization focused on helping the homeless population of Rockingham County.

Most recently, he was honored as the 2015 recipient of the Chief John P. Ganley Community Service Award which is presented to an individual ''who has exhibited concern, involvement and leadership in the community of Salem; while providing inspiration to others, through his or her dedication, integrity and courage in the manner exemplified by Chief John P. Ganley during his life on earth.''

Sheriff Downing leaves behind the love of his life, his wife Heidi Downing and their five children, Jennifer, Jessica, Kaitlin, Kelsey, and Michael along with six grandchildren, Charlotte, Bella, Jacob, Logan, TJ, and Max. He also leaves his parents, Delbert and Teresa Downing. We are all deeply saddened by the loss of our friend Mike, an extraordinary man and proud New Hampshire son who served our State and Nation with honor, courage, and dedication. He represented the very best of our State, and I ask my colleagues to join me in sending Heidi and her family our deepest condolences and our gratitude for Mike's life of service to the people of New Hampshire.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator SANDERS and I be permitted to engage in a colloquy.

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

COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, last week marked an important step as we worked in a bipartisan manner to improve the lives of survivors of trafficking. We were able to move the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act forward and help provide direct supports and services for these survivors, thanks to support from the Community Health Center Fund.

Community health centers are the safety net providers of our health care system. In my home State of Washington, they provide full health care services for working families across the State, and they work tirelessly to ensure that individuals get the supports and services they need. Community health centers help keep health care costs down and keep people out of the emergency room by improving health outcomes for the populations they serve.

Our community health centers were strengthened by the work in the Affordable Care Act, and I am proud that we were able to once again work together to strengthen them as part of the Medicare and CHIP Reauthorization Act earlier this year.

This was a very unique circumstance, and it is not a precedent for Congress to draw on the Community Health Center Fund for other purposes. It is my hope and intention that this was the one and only time Congress draws money from the health center fund to pay for other programs. This funding was intended to keep the health centers program whole so that more than 1,300 health centers nationwide can continue to provide access to care for their patients for the next 2 years.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, as you know, I have worked for many years to ensure all Americans have access to primary care. Community health centers are instrumental in providing that access to primary medical, oral, and mental health care. Right now, community health centers provide primary care to 24 million patients in 9,000 underserved communities in every State and territory across the country.

Until last month, health centers were facing a 70-percent reduction in funding this fall due to the expiration of the Community Health Center Fund. On an overwhelmingly bipartisan basis, I was very pleased that Congress was able to extend the health center fund in the Medicare and CHIP Reauthorization Act bill for 2 years to avert this massive cut to the program.

Although I supported legislation to provide funds for victims of trafficking, taking money recently allocated to community health centers in the SGR bill to pay for health care services for victims of trafficking was not a good solution. Both of these programs serve important populations with significant health care needs, and I understand from those who negotiated this agreement that the funding transfer was a special circumstance as a way to move forward on this bill.

It is my hope and understanding from the bill sponsors that this was the one and only time Congress draws money from the Health Center Fund to pay for other programs.

Mrs. MURRAY. I am proud of the progress we have been able to make for survivors of trafficking and that we were able to use community health centers funding to help this very vulnerable population at a time when they need it the most.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator CASEY and I be permitted to engage in a colloquy.

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

63RD NATIONAL PRAYER BREAKFAST

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, earlier this year, Senator CASEY and I had the honor of serving as the cochairs of the National Prayer Breakfast. The annual event is a longtime tradition that celebrates the importance of faith and fellowship in our lives. This year's breakfast featured moving prayers, songs, and speeches from a number of notable guests, including race car legend Darrell Waltrip.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, Senator WICKER and I would like to thank all of the individuals who were involved in making the 2015 National Prayer Breakfast a great success. Thousands of people from across the country and world participated, including President Obama and His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

On behalf of Senator WICKER and myself, I ask unanimous consent that the full transcript be printed in the RECORD.

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

63RD NATIONAL PRAYER BREAKFAST, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2015, WASHINGTON, DC, CO-CHAIRS: SENATOR ROBERT P. CASEY, JR., SENATOR ROGER F. WICKER

The Honorable ROGER F. WICKER: Good morning, everyone. I am Senator Roger Wicker from Mississippi, and together with my colleague, Senator Bob Casey from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, we welcome you to the 63rd Annual National Prayer Breakfast.

It is an honor to serve with Bob as cochairman this year, and we thank you for joining us this morning. Each year this event is one of the most special and memorable in Washington. Today, some 3,500 of us have gathered in this ballroom and in auxiliary rooms down the hall. We represent all 50 states and 130 nations. As the Psalm says, ''Oh, let the nations be glad and sing for joy, for Thou shall judge the people righteously and govern the nations of the earth. Let the people praise Thee, oh God. Let all the people praise Thee.'' So, for the 130 nations represented in this room today—be glad, be joyful, and praise God.

Since 1953, the National Prayer Breakfast has exemplified and celebrated the power of prayer and fellowship in our lives. We come together as Ephesians 5:19 directs us, ''Addressing one another in Psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart.''

We have a truly remarkable program with guests and performers this morning. Like our weekly prayer breakfasts in the Senate and the House, we will have Scripture, prayers, songs, and speakers sharing their stories and reflections. Our hope is that you leave today with new blessings and perspectives about the strong community of faith in this country and around the world.

The Honorable ROBERT P. CASEY, JR.: My name is Bob Casey and I'm honored to be here this morning with my co-chair, Roger Wicker, my friend who has labored with us these two years. Roger, we're grateful for your work.

In just a few minutes we'll have the opportunity to give a warm welcome to the President and the First Lady when they arrive. And in the meantime, we hope you are enjoying your breakfast and getting to know those at your table, if you don't know them already. We're honored you're with us.

And now to lead us in our first prayer, I'm happy to welcome Rabbi Gregory Marx to the podium. For more than twenty-five years, Rabbi Marx has been the spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Or in Maple Glen, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. We are grateful that he is with us today. And he will do our prayer and then we'll have a break, and then we'll go to the second part of the program. Rabbi Marx.

Rabbi GREGORY S. MARX: Thank you, Senator. Good morning.

The Biblical prophet, Micah proclaimed: It has been told you what is good, and what the Lord requires of you, only to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God. Justice without mercy leads to harsh judgment. Mercy without justice creates a world where there's no accountability, no moral goodness. At this moment, may God bless us with both mercy and justice so that we may tenderly care for those in need of compassion and rejoice in the good of others. We celebrate this morning our uniqueness as well as our commonality. We come from our different faith perspectives, yet are united in a fervent desire to strengthen the hands and the hearts of those who seek to build an enduring society, which tolerates neither bigotry nor hatred. Master of the universe, inspire us to release those reservoirs of spirit and mind which make us truly partners with you. Grant us patience and hopefulness in our daily tasks. May we never give in to despair, despite their enormity. Give us love for truth above cleverness, for people above things, for God above all else. Remind us in the immortal words of Abraham Lincoln, that religious devotion is not about having God on our side, which mistakenly prompts us to condemn the faith of others, but rather it is about being on God's side, which requires devotion to civic duty, tolerance, humility, justice, mercy, and peace. Be with us, oh God, as we seek to establish new ties of friendship across religious, racial, and ethnic boundaries, to create innovative opportunities of service, to rejoice in the growth of all of our children. And to lovingly and faithfully support our fellow men and women who are in need of God's care and affection. May God bless our beloved and noble country and those who defend her, so that each may one day sit under their own vine and fig tree and none shall be afraid. Give us, oh God, the good sense and understanding to buttress the moral fiber of American life, that we may gird ourselves with integrity, and to successfully meet the immense challenges before us. Keep us, oh God, from pride which prevents us from seeing the need for real change and steel us with a commitment to stay the course when necessary. Most of all, oh God, shield us from impatient judgment towards those who differ from us. May we always remember that you are exalted, oh God whenever and wherever men and women work together to fulfill Micah's prophetic vision of justice, mercy, humility. And let us say, Amen.

Senator WICKER: Thank you Rabbi Marx. At this point, continue enjoying your breakfast and the conversation with our table guests. The President and his party will be here in a few moments.

[Applause]

Senator CASEY: May everyone have a seat. Thanks very much everyone. We're honored that the President and the First Lady are with us. As Senator Wicker and I said earlier, we're honored you're with us this morning, and we're grateful for the folks who helped put this breakfast together every year.

I'm honored to share with everyone in this audience an excerpt from a message from Rome, by Pope Francis. This message is to all of us gathered here at this National Prayer Breakfast, and he writes in part, and I quote:

''Dear Friends, I send prayerful good wishes for you, for the fruitfulness of your work. I ask you to pray for me, and to join me in praying for our brothers and our sisters throughout the world who experience persecution and death for their faith. Upon you, your families, and those whom you serve, I cordially invoke God's blessings of wisdom, joy, and peace.''

We're honored that the Holy Father would send us that message. The entirety of the message will be read at today's luncheon. While Pope Francis couldn't be with us today in person, His Excellency the Papal Nuncio, the Holy Father's representative in the United States is here today and we're honored by his presence.

All of us, as well have the extraordinary privilege today to be joined at this breakfast by another inspirational spiritual leader and peacemaker, His Holiness the Dalai Lama. We're honored by his presence. [Applause]

When I was in state government in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, I worked in the finance building, and right over the building in the front of the building, was an inscription that I think is a good summation of what it means to be in public service. And I'm quoting from that precept inscribed on the building—here's what it says: ''All public service is a trust given in faith and accepted in honor.'' Senator Wicker and I, and those who are in the room who are elected officials, have accepted that honor to serve. We also feel privileged. I know this is true of Roger, and me, and so many others, but we're privileged to do our work in the Senate, but the excessive partisanship and politics that occurs in this town too often gets in the way and divides the Senate. That's why the weekly prayer breakfast on Wednesdays, on every Wednesday that the Senate is in session, is a way for us to have an oasis from the politics of the place. We gather at that breakfast for prayer and to share some time with each other every Wednesday morning—just as we're doing this morning with people from so many different states, different countries, backgrounds, faiths, and beliefs. We're reminded this morning of the journey, the journey of faith that we're all on, and we believe that faith is a gift, and a gift that we're blessed by today and express gratitude. Senator Wicker. [Applause]

Senator WICKER: Thank you, Bob. The Senate prayer breakfast dates back to World War II when a group of legislators met in the Senate restaurant. We can only imagine the conversations that took place during those early days as the deadliest conflict in human history swept the globe. Then as now, the weekly meetings which occur when the Senate is in session have remained largely low profile. In January of 1943, an article from

the Washington Post describes them as without fanfare, front-page publicity or ballyhoo, and that is still true. In many ways our prayer breakfast is a welcome sanctuary from the politics and the partisanship we hear about. Each week we sing a hymn, we hear prayer requests that we call the ''sick and wounded report.'' We actually join hands and we pray together. And we hear a presentation from one of our members, but not before a very thorough introduction of that member by either Senator Mike Enzi or Senator Jim Inhofe. Now, Senator Inhofe and Enzi are here today, and I think it's high time that something be said about their introductions. Everything we do at the prayer breakfast is off the record, but this needs to be said about Senator Enzi and Senator Inhofe's introductions. Neither opposition research professionals nor the FBI have a thing on Enzi and Inhofe when it comes to background checks. Mike and Jim relentlessly call former classmates, teachers, old friends, and relatives to discover something a little unusual about each week's presenter. Sometimes I wince. Sometimes I cringe. But the introduction always ends on a high note with a verse of Scripture and the suggestion that our speaker is much like a Biblical character of old. Thank you for that, Jim. Thank you for that, Mike.

And then we hear from the Senator himself or herself, a Democrat one week, a Republican the next week. What we learn about each other is a lot. During my time in the Senate prayer breakfast, we've heard from our own American sniper, our own astronaut, he's here today, our own missionaries, and we've had several, and our own award-winning composer. From camp directors, to university presidents, we've heard the good and the bad. We've heard about difficult family backgrounds. We've heard about financial bankruptcy and home foreclosures, and we've heard about spiritual journeys, from the heights of achievement to really, really tough times. It has been said, ''There is so much good in the worst of us and so much bad in the best of us that it ill behooves any of us to find fault with the rest of us,'' and that is true about the attendees in the Senate prayer breakfast. In short, on Wednesday mornings we learn we are a lot like you, and you, and every other child of God, and almost always I come away with a blessing. This morning, I acknowledge and thank the people who have gone before Bob and me in the Senate prayer breakfast leadership over the period of six decades, and along with Bob, I'm honored to continue in their tradition.

Now at this time, it is my pleasure to recognize a few distinguished guests at our head table who will not be given the opportunity to speak. And I'll ask the next three ladies to stand and remain standing, Mrs. Stevie Waltrip, Mrs. Therese Casey, and Mrs. Gayle Wicker. Thank you for joining us, ladies. Thank you so much, you may be seated.

And it is my very special honor at this point to ask each of you to give our appreciation and love to the First Lady of the United States, Mrs. Michelle Obama. [Applause]

And now, it is a special privilege for me as a Senator from Mississippi to introduce a familiar face from home. Jasmine Murray is from Columbus, Mississippi. She has been a broadcast communication major at Mississippi State University. She was a finalist on American Idol. And she was a finalist in the Miss America Pageant where she proudly represented my home state of Mississippi. Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome Miss Mississippi, Jasmine Murray. [Applause]

Ms. JASMINE MURRAY: [Singing]

Why should I feel discouraged, why should the shadows come,
Why should my heart feel lonely, and long for heaven and home,
When Jesus is my portion? A constant friend is He:
His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches over me;
His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches over me.
I sing because I'm happy,
I sing because I'm free.
His eye is on the sparrow,
And I know He watches me.
His eye is on the sparrow,
And I know He watches, I know He watches, I know He watches me.
I sing because I'm happy,
I sing because I'm free.
His eye is on the sparrow,
And I know He watches me.
His eye is on the sparrow,
And I know He watches me.
He watches me. I know He watches me. He watches me.

Ms. MURRAY: Thank you.

Senator WICKER: Thank you! Jasmine, that was wonderful. Thank you, that was just great. I'm delighted to introduce our next guest. He's a former Mayor of San Antonio and current Secretary of Housing and Urban Development. As a member of the President's Cabinet, he represents the executive branch of the family while his twin brother, Joaquin, covers the legislative side as a member of the House of Representatives. Please warmly welcome to read from the Old Testament, Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, Julian Castro. [Applause]

The Honorable JULIAN CASTRO: Thank you. Thank you so much Mr. President for the great assist, good morning, and to Mrs. Obama, and to co-chairs Senator Casey and Senator Wicker, and to all of our distinguished guests. It's a great honor to join you on this day of prayer and of peace. Last week I had the opportunity to travel to Los Angeles where I met some of our nation's most vulnerable citizens, men and women living every day with homelessness. Although they have endured incredibly difficult circumstances, it was clear to me that they have never let their hardship extinguish their hope. I spoke with an older woman who spends her nights on a tattered quilt over cold concrete. Night after night, that wears on a person's body, yet this woman's spirit was unbroken and her faith is a true testament of strength and of grace. And it was this angel in the City of Angels, who reminded me that the true measure of our progress is how we care for those with the least.

The passage that I will read speaks to the hope we must preserve, the needs we must meet, and the common humanity that we must always honor. A reading from the book of Isaiah:

Is this the manner of fasting I would choose, a day to afflict one's self, to bow one's head like a reed and lie upon sack cloth and ashes? Is this what you call a fast, a day acceptable to the Lord? Is this not rather the fast I choose—releasing those bound unjustly, untying the thongs of the yoke, setting free the oppressed, breaking off every yoke? Is it not sharing your bread with the hungry, bringing the afflicted and homeless into your house, clothing the naked when you see them and not turning your back on your own flesh? Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your wound shall be quickly healed. Your vindication shall go before you and the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer. You shall cry for help, and he will say, ''Here I am.'' If you remove the yoke from among you, the accusing finger and malicious speech, if you lavish your food on the hungry and satisfy the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom shall become like midday.

Thank you, and may God bless you. [Applause]

Senator CASEY: Thank you, Secretary Castro. Our prayer for the poor this morning will be offered by Sister Mary Scullion, a woman who has devoted her life to service, advocacy, and of course, God. She is one of the founders of Project HOME in Philadelphia; I'm proud to say that today. Project HOME is a truly exceptional organization that does the important work of providing housing, employment opportunities, and medical care and education for the homeless and the impoverished. For her work, Sister Mary was named one of Time Magazine's world's 100 most influential people in 2009. Sister Mary.

Sister MARY SCULLION: It's an honor to be here, Mr. President and Mrs. Obama, thank you very much, and all honored guests. And greetings to everyone from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

God of compassion and justice, we humbly come before you with gratitude and a clear understanding that it is in you that we all find our home. For when we are rooted in your truth and grace, we are empowered to pray: thy kingdom come. We recall how through the ages, you've been a God of compassion, justice, and liberation, with a special love for the poor and the oppressed. We remember your servant Moses leading your people out of bondage. We recall Jesus, healing the sick and proclaiming good news to the poor. We recall those times in our own nation's history when moved by the promise of liberty and empowered by Your Spirit, courageous leaders worked to end slavery, to enfranchise women, to welcome immigrants, and to expand economic opportunity for all. Your constant revelation, God, is one of nonviolent liberation from anything that oppresses the human spirit. As we gather here, millions of your beloved children are suffering under the burden of poverty, oppression, and violence. Our prayers today can only be authentic if they compel us to act. Let us hear the cry of the loving parents struggling to provide for their children. Let us hear the cry of those all around our world impacted by violence, and those in our nation who suffer the wounds of gun violence. Let us hear the cry of millions of children whose magnificent gifts and possibilities are lost in under-resourced schools and economically plundered neighborhoods, condemning them to a life of persistent poverty. Let us hear the cry of our veterans suffering from the wounds of war, especially those who are homeless. Open our eyes, Lord, so we can see suffering as a prophetic sign that calls us to radical transformation. God, we know that our faith does not give us answers; it gives us courage. As a people of faith, we pray for the courage to live truthfully, justly, and compassionately. Help us to see through our hypocrisy and falsehood, empower us to stand squarely on the side of those who are poor and struggling on the margins. Help us to move beyond our ideological polarizations and economic disparities. Form us into a united community that affirms each person's dignity and works towards a shared prosperity. Let us build a society free from the scourge of poverty, a society that truly reflects Your Kingdom. Most of all, let us understand that your ancient call for compassion and justice is in truth, an invitation to us for fullness of life, and richness of human community. As we meet the needs of those who are poor, we are healing ourselves and our nation. As we ensure that all families have enough to eat, we are building the banquet table for everyone. As we work to provide health care and education, we are making our whole society healthier and wiser. As

we bring those living on our streets home, we are finding our own way home because none of us are home until all of us are home. Fill us with that same spirit of liberation that filled Jesus and the prophets. Fill us with that spirit of joy, of hope that inspired the prophet Isaiah in his powerful challenge. If you spend yourselves on behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness and your night will become like the noon day. God of compassion, God of justice, fill us with this yearning and give us the strength, the grace, the courage to make it real each and every day as we pray: thy kingdom come. Amen. [Applause]

Senator WICKER: Thank you, Sister Mary. A few minutes ago when I said, ''Perhaps someone within the sound of my voice could come to my assistance,'' I guess that did include you, Mr. President. Though I thought perhaps someone else would step forward, but thank you young man for figuring that out.

I first became involved in the Prayer Breakfast as a House member, and I'm delighted today to introduce to say a few words, the co-chairs from the House Prayer Breakfast. Congressman Robert Aderholt, serving his 10th term from Alabama, and Congressman Juan Vargas, serving his second term from California, are the co-chairs in the House, and by virtue of that, they will be the co-chairs of the next breakfast, the 64th Annual National Prayer Breakfast. Ladies and gentlemen, Robert Aderholt and Juan Vargas. [Applause]

The Honorable ROBERT B. ADERHOLT: Good morning. It's a real honor for Juan and myself to be here on behalf of the House breakfast, which meets every Thursday morning at eight o'clock, about this time in the Capitol, when the House is in session. The House of Representatives weekly prayer group meets and we come together as Democrats and Republicans. We come together once a week, not promoting a party; we're not promoting a particular issue, or a particular agenda. I'm a Republican from Alabama, Juan is a Democrat from California but we come together that one hour during the week to promote Jesus.

We're told in John 3 that Jesus said, ''Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the son of man must be lifted up . . . that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.'' And that is what we promote during that week—Jesus of Nazareth. And we are honored to be here this morning. We're glad to be here with our colleagues and all of our friends, and our family from literally around the world and it is an honor to work together in a bipartisan effort and to work as I say, with our colleagues and especially this year to work with my colleague, Juan Vargas from California. [Applause]

The Honorable JUAN C. VARGAS: Thank you, and greetings from the Prayer Breakfast. Mr. President, it was great to see the assist that you gave today. We went to law school together, played against him a couple times in basketball, he didn't assist like that. It was a little rougher out there. That was great to see.

We do come together every Thursday morning and we call it the best hour of the week. We come together as Democrats and Republicans. Who would have guessed—a California Democrat and someone from Alabama who is a Republican? But we come together and we pray, and we bring Jesus into our prayers and we lift up the country, we lift up the Congress. And we know that special things can happen, and they do. And because of that, I think we're all here today and appreciate very, very much the prayers that you all have for us. We know that you pray for us throughout the country. I've gone to many, many services where we hear that you pray for your leaders, you pray for the President, you pray for all of us in public office. And we love that and understand that, and we bring those prayers up too. So again, thank you very much. And for all of my colleagues, I invite you to come and pray with us every Thursday morning. It's the best hour of the week from eight in the morning until nine, and it really is something special. You get to meet people that you wouldn't otherwise. Who would have known that I would have loved Louie Gohmert? Louie Gohmert has been one of our leaders and it's just fabulous to come and pray with him. He brings us Jesus every Thursday, so thank you very much. It's an honor to be here. [Applause]

Senator CASEY: Thank you very much for the Members of Congress. I'm pleased to introduce The Honorable Deborah Lee James, the 23rd Secretary of the United States Air Force. She joins us today to offer a prayer for the leaders of our nation. Secretary James, of course is a distinguished leader in her own right for our nation's military, and has the responsibility of managing more than 690,000 Air Force personnel and a budget of 110 billion dollars. Please welcome Secretary Deborah Lee James. Madam Secretary. [Applause]

The Honorable DEBORAH LEE JAMES: Thank you so much, Senator Casey, Senator Wicker. It is truly an honor and a privilege for me to come before all of you today. Mr. President, Mrs. Obama, Senators, Congressmen, distinguished guests, friends and allies from around the world, may I please invite all of you to join me in a prayer for our national leaders.

Oh mighty God, it is in you that we trust. We ask for your blessings on our President, Barack Obama. Lord, grant him the wisdom and the vision to lead our nation toward a more just, peaceful, and prosperous world. Help him to keep the beacon of American freedom burning brightly as an inspiration to all who long to live free from fear, free from want, free to speak, and free to worship as they choose. We ask you also, Lord, to bless our First Lady, Michelle Obama. Strengthen her as she works to inspire all of America's children to reach higher and to live healthier lives, so that one day they will be ready to build strong families of their own, compassionate communities, and contribute to a better world. Please guide our Vice President, Joe Biden, Lord, and all the members of the President's cabinet. Grant to these and all others who serve and advise our President the grace to lean not only on their own understanding, but also to trust in you with all of their hearts. Lord, bless our lawmakers sent from every corner of America to form our Congress. Grant them the priceless gifts of insight, courage, and unity. Shepherd them by your spirit to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with you. Grant our Chief Justice and all of our judicial leaders across the nation your wisdom, Lord, that they may judge the law impartially as instruments of your will. And very close to my heart, Lord, please, please protect our men and women in uniform and all who stand in harm's way to preserve the freedoms we cherish for our children and grandchildren. And as you watch over those serving far from home, also please encourage those who wait for their return, and comfort those who have suffered unspeakable losses. Lord, may the service and sacrifice of those who have gone before us, and the lives of the heroes who walk amongst us, let those individuals inspire the rest of us to give our country, and our communities, and our families the very best that we can with our wholeness of heart, particularly in these uncertain times. Being always mindful and grateful to you, Lord, for the many blessings that you have bestowed on us, Amen. [Applause]

Senator WICKER: Thank you, Madam Secretary. Thank you so much. As you can see from the program in front of you, our next speaker was to be King Abdullah II of Jordan. We all know the heartbreaking circumstances his country is experiencing at this point. They required that His Majesty King Abdullah return to Jordan. Our prayers are with the people of Jordan during this troubling time of crisis. The passage that King Abdullah was expected to read is from the New Testament, Luke 10, and I will read this passage at this point. Luke 10:

On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus, ''Teacher,'' he asked, ''What must I do to inherit eternal life?'' ''What is written in the law?'' he replied. ''How do you read it?'' He answered, ''Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself.'' ''You have answered correctly,'' Jesus replied. ''Do this and you will live.'' But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, ''And who is my neighbor?''

In reply, Jesus said: ''A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was and when he saw him he took pity on him. He went to him and he bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine, and then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. The next day, he took out two denarii and gave them to the inn keeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.' Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hand of robbers?''

The expert in the law replied, ''The one who had mercy on him.'' Jesus told him, ''Go and do likewise.''

May God add His blessing to the reading of His Holy Word.

Senator WICKER: At this point it is my pleasure to introduce to you our next guest. He too has been recognized by Time Magazine. For 2014, he was one of the persons of the year of Time Magazine. Dr. Kent Brantly and his colleagues became known as the Ebola fighters for their work saving lives and caring for those affected by this deadly disease. As a doctor with the Christian relief organization, Samaritan's Purse, Dr. Brantly contracted Ebola in Liberia. Now fully recovered, he gives thanks to God and to the power of prayer. Today he is with us to offer a prayer for the leaders of the world, please warmly welcome Dr. Kent Brantly. [Applause]

Dr. KENT BRANTLY: Let us pray. Our Father who art in heaven. The Lord, the Lord, the God of compassion and mercy, slow to anger and abounding in love and faithfulness, lover of all peoples of the earth, there is no God like you in all of heaven above or on the earth below. You keep your covenant and show unfailing love to all who walk before you in wholehearted devotion. Hallowed by thy name. Remind us that all nations are as nothing before you, their governments but a shadow of passing age, all authorities are intended to be your servants, to do good to the people under their care and to ensure justice for those who have been wronged. But we all, including our leaders, will stand before your judgment seat, oh God, and as surely as you live, oh Lord, every knee will bow

and every tongue confess and give praise to you. Thy kingdom come on earth. Grant to thy children throughout the world, and especially to the leaders of the nations the gifts of prayerful thought and of thoughtful prayer that following the example of our Lord, we may discern what is right and do it. Bless the leaders of the nations that they may not walk in the council of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners, or sit in the seat of mockers. Bless the leaders of the nations that they might delight in the law of the Lord, that they might meditate on it day and night that Thy will might be done on earth as it is in heaven. Help us, Lord to protect and to provide for all who are hungry and homeless, especially those who are deprived of food and shelter, family and friends. For true religion that is acceptable to you, oh Lord, is this, to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to flee corruption. Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive us for neglecting to seek peace and pursue it, and finding ourselves in each new crisis more ready to make war than to make peace, for choosing violence and war over peace and reconciliation. We have not loved you with our whole heart, and we have not loved our neighbors as our selves. Forgive us for neglecting the needs of our people, for choosing corruption and greed over integrity and generosity. Forgive us for oppressing the minority while the majority is filled with pride and self reliance. We have all sinned and fallen short of your glory, oh Lord. Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Let us not seek revenge but reconciliation. Let us not delight in victory but in justice. Let us not give ourselves up to pride, but to prayer. Lead us not into temptation. Be present, Lord, to all your children. Be present to those who are killing, and to those who are being killed. Be present to the oppressed and to the oppressor. Be present to the leaders of the nations. Deliver us from evil. Subdue our selfish desires to possess and to dominate. Forbid us arrogance and victory, and self-pity, and defeat. Bless the leaders of the nations, Father, that they might act justly and love mercy, and walk humbly with you, oh God. For yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever and ever. In the name of Jesus we pray, Amen. [Applause]

Senator WICKER: Thank you Dr. Brantly, and please pass along our good wishes to our friends at Samaritan's Purse. Ladies and gentlemen, the National Association of Stock Car Auto Racing, commonly known as NASCAR, is second only to the National Football League in terms of TV ratings in our country. NASCAR races are broadcast in over 150 countries. Our keynote speaker this morning is one of the best known figures in NASCAR. Simply put, Darrell Waltrip is one of the great race car drivers in history. In 1 Corinthians 9:24 we hear, ''Do you not know that in a race, all runners run.'' (The internal combustion engine had not been invented back then.) ''All runners run but only one receives the prize.'' Well, Darrell Waltrip has received that winning prize some 84 times. He's driven 809 races and 237,773 laps. His life story includes an important faith journey. I believe God has placed a message on Darrell's heart that can benefit us today. But first, let's see this clip from 1991 at the Daytona Speedway.

[Clip from Daytona Speedway, showing Darrell Waltrip's car crashing]

Senator WICKER: Well, he made it. Ladies and gentlemen, Mr. Darrell Waltrip. [Applause]

Mr. DARRELL WALTRIP: Let's go racing boys. I always chuckle when I see that clip because my insurance man says, ''Have you ever had an accident?'' I've had a couple. But good morning, Mr. President, First Lady, all of the distinguished guests, Congress members, everybody that's here this morning. This is a huge honor for a kid that grew up in Owensboro, Kentucky, and now resides in Franklin, Tennessee.

So, I knew about the Prayer Breakfast. I'd heard about it. It's been going on since the early 1940s, so I'd heard about it for a long time. But I have to tell you a quick story:

When the ''committee'' called me and asked me, ''Would I like to come have breakfast with the President?'' I said, ''Wow, they must know it's my birthday. What an honor to go to Washington, D.C., and have breakfast with the president. Oh, this is going to be great.'' ''And by the way, we'd like for you to be the keynote speaker.'' ''Ah, I'll get back to you on that.'' But I thought about it, prayed about it—and I've got a lot of really great friends that pray for me all the time—but I thought about it, Mr. President, and said, ''I've got it. I'm not a brain surgeon, and I'm not running for office, so I'm the perfect guy to be here this morning.'' [Applause]

I hope that was okay. My wife told me maybe I shouldn't say that, but she's sitting down there shaking her head now. But anyway, I'd like to introduce my family. You've already met my beautiful, redheaded wife Stevie. Jessica and Sarah, my two daughters, and their husbands, Fausto and Matthew, are out there, and it makes me feel so good to have them here this morning with me. I love my family, and I love the Lord.

If the room should start vibrating just a little bit—don't get excited, don't get nervous—it's just all my friends back in Franklin, Tennessee, my Tuesday morning Bible study group, all my friends over in Charlotte, North Carolina, at Motor Racing Outreach, our ministry at the track. All my friends are praying for me right now. And I don't know if you can feel it or not, but I certainly can, and I'm thankful for it. So if it starts shaking a little bit, it's okay. It's just the Lord. He's amongst us. [Applause]

Being here this morning reminds me of this: Before you start a big event as a driver, like the Daytona 500, which comes up in a couple of weeks on Fox, you go down on pit road, you get in your car—and quite honestly, I did it for 30 years but it never failed, always that adrenaline, those butterflies, being excited, nervous. Because when they dropped the green flag and they say, ''Let's go racing boys,'' you didn't really know what was going to happen. And so, that's kind of how I feel this morning. I really don't know what's going to happen here, folks. They kept asking me, ''Do you have an outline?'' I said, ''No, I've never really done an outline for a speech before.'' That's when they thought maybe I wasn't the right guy for this show.

I've got to tell you this. I probably shouldn't, but I'm going to: So, they call me up, and they tell me all the great speakers that have been here before. And as they went down the list, I said, ''Whoa, whoa, whoa, wait just a minute, boys. I'm just not sure I'm qualified for this job.'' And they said, ''Well, we kind of knew that going in.'' So, right away I knew I was in good company.

I think all of us in this room know that sometimes your biggest assets can be something that works against you. They can be a blessing and a curse, and that's really how racing was for me. It was sort of a blessing and a curse. I grew up in Owensboro, Kentucky. My dad drove a Pepsi-Cola truck. My mom was a cashier at the local grocery store. I had two brothers and two sisters. We didn't have a lot of money; we worked hard to put food on the table. And so, when I went to races as a six-year-old kid with my grandmother and came home and told Mom and Dad that someday I wanted to be a race car driver, they said, ''Good luck, son.'' My dad was a believer in hard work. He said, ''You know, if you really work hard, and that's what you want to do, then maybe someday you'll be successful.'' But that was about all the encouragement my dad gave me, because racing is expensive. It costs a lot of money to go racing, so we didn't have a lot of money. So, I had to figure out a way to make that happen. I became a self-promoter—in other words, I bragged a lot. God had given me a talent; there was no question about that. I don't know where it came from. There's no reason for me to be able to do what I did other than that was my passion, that's what I cared about. I tell kids every day—and Mr. President, you know this—there's nothing any more discouraging and disheartening when you ask a kid, ''What are you going to do when you grow up?'' ''I don't know.'' ''Really? Embrace something. You've got to have a passion.'' Well, my passion was racing, and quite honestly, I went at it all the wrong ways in the early years. I was just as aggressive off the racetrack as I was on. I didn't have a lot of friends. I didn't think I needed friends. I looked over in the car, and I was the only one ever in there, so I didn't need any friends to be with me. So, my relationships early on in my life were shallow. I didn't have any really close friends. Quite honestly, I looked back, and it's the hardest thing for me to do this morning—to look back—because when I look back, I see things that are disturbing to me. I can see things and say, ''How could I have felt that way? How could I have acted that way? How could I have been that way?'' But I was.

And you're going to love this. This is what people said about me: They said I was brash, ruthless—ruthless?—pushy, cocky, conceited, aloof, boastful, arrogant, and just downright annoying. I hope you don't feel that way this morning, but if you do, I'm sorry. And I've got to tell you, those were people that liked me. You could imagine what people who didn't like me had to say about me. The fans booed me when we'd have driver introductions. It would be just like if I got up this morning to speak, and they started booing. Instead of hollering ''boogity, boogity, boogity,'' they would start booing. Fans wore ''Anybody but Waltrip'' T-shirts to the track. They hated me. The drivers despised me. Richard Petty once told me: ''I don't know how you keep a sponsor. You're so unpopular with the fans; I don't know how you keep a sponsor.'' And this is Richard Petty. He's the icon of our sport. He's the king of our sport. I wanted to be king, but I went at it all the wrong ways, for sure. I was always arguing with NASCAR. I didn't like the rules, mainly because they never worked in my favor, so I was always trying to change the rules. We know guys like that, right? Always wanting to change the rules. [Laughter, Applause.] I always like to say I fought the wall, [and] the wall won. I fought the law, and the law won. Those were the things that were going on at the track, and quite honestly, my personal life wasn't much better. I was so arrogant. I really was, and that's why I say it's the hardest thing for me to do. My kids are sitting out here for heaven's sake. But the hardest thing to do is to look back and see how you were. My personal life was a mess. I drank too much. I liked to go to the bars and hang out with the boys. I did everything to satisfy me. Whatever felt good to me, I did it; I didn't give it a second thought—that was my lifestyle, that's how I lived. Like I told you, I didn't have any great friends. I didn't have any close friends. Heck, I always figured if you wanted a friend, get a dog. I have several dogs.

But my wife, my beautiful wife, my redheaded wife whom I love dearly—we've been

married 45 years. [Applause] That in of itself is a miracle. She was married to that guy I was telling you about. She lived it. My wife once described me as this: that she had lived with two different men with the same name. And that might be a little confusing to you, and so obviously I must explain. But that first guy that I told you about, that was the guy she was married to originally. I knew God had his hand on me when I met Stevie. I didn't acknowledge it. I didn't necessarily follow through, but it's one of the few times in the early years of my life that I felt like God spoke to me. God said to me, ''I gave you this woman. I brought you this woman. Don't let her get away.'' And so, I tried to always be on my best behavior when I was around her, and certainly when I was around her mother and father, because they didn't think a whole lot about a race car driver. When her father asked me, ''How are you going to support Stevie?'' I said, ''I'm going to be a professional race car driver.'' He was the president of Texas Gas, and he didn't quite understand how a race car driver could make a living and be able to support his daughter. He wasn't sold on the idea at first but he became a big fan as time went by.

So, Stevie would always pray for me. She is a Godly woman, and she loved the Lord way before I did. And she would always pray that someday, somehow we would get involved in a Bible study or that I would, that I would get involved in a Bible study, or a church, or something. And I'd always kind of blow her off, and I'd say, ''Look honey, I race on Sundays. I don't have time to go to church. I'm busy all through the week getting ready for the next race. I just don't have time for this church stuff and this God stuff. I just don't have time, okay.'' And you know what she said? ''Well, I'll just keep on praying.'' And let me tell you, when somebody says they're praying for you, you better pay attention and don't take it lightly. People don't pray for you if they don't care about you and if they don't love you. [Applause.] Amen, amen. It used to happen to me at the track, and people would come up and say, ''I'm praying for you.'' And I'd say, ''Oh, thank you very much. I've got to go now.'' Don't ever do that. Embrace that person, because it's not a waste of time. It's them embracing you and caring about you, and that's the most important thing in the world is that we all care about each other.

I almost had us do this, and Stevie talked me out of it. At home when we pray, we hold hands. And in Bible study when we pray, we kind of lock arms or hold hands. I was going to ask everybody in the room to hold hands while we pray, but then I thought maybe you weren't that close just yet, so I kind of let that one go.

I got a great opportunity in 1983. I got a chance to drive for Junior Johnson. Junior Johnson was a childhood hero. He's the last American hero. They made a film about him. They wrote books about him. He was the last American hero. As a kid growing up in Owensboro, I listened to my little transistor radio, and Junior Johnson drove this white #3 Chevrolet with a 427 mystery engine. Junior Johnson, a moonshiner from Wilkesboro, North Carolina, car #3 with a mystery engine. I mean, that's hero material right there for a guy like me. So obviously, I thought maybe someday I'd get to meet him, but never thought that someday I'd get to drive for him. Those were the best years of my career—'81, '82 we won 24 races, 18 pole positions, 2 championships. But Junior was a no-nonsense kind of guy. He said, ''Let me tell you something, boy: When you come to drive for me, you work your hands and not your mouth.'' I said, ''Yes, sir.'' Because when Junior spoke, I listened. We had great times together. We won races together, but in 1983 I had a horrible wreck—worse than that one you saw there. I had a concussion. I went for a couple of weeks to the next couple of races, and I didn't even remember being there. And when I finally came to, or woke up, I realized that that wreck had knocked me conscious. It scared the hell out of me, and I mean that literally. I realized I could have been killed that day. What if I would have lost my life right there that day at Daytona? What would I have done? Would I have gone to heaven? Or would I have gone to hell? I thought I was a pretty good guy. But folks, let me tell you something: Good guys go to hell. If you don't know Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, if you don't have a relationship, if He's not the master of your life, if you've never gotten on your knees and asked him to forgive you of your sins, you're just a pretty good guy or a pretty good gal. You're going to go to hell. Think about that. I did. And like I said, it was a wake-up call. It literally knocked me conscious.

Stevie and I started going to church. We met Dr. Cortez Cooper, one of the Godliest men—preached from the Bible, loved sports, a lot like the President. He could play any sport, he pretty much knew a little bit about every sport there was, and he knew me personally. And because of him, and him talking to me just like I'm talking to you this morning, every time I went to hear him preach, I felt like he was talking directly to me. And so, we met in a high school in Hillsboro, just outside of Nashville there while they were building a big sanctuary. It was July; it was hot, kind of like being in a race car—no air conditioning. I got down off my high horse, I got down on my knees, and Dr. Cortez Cooper and Stevie and I prayed that the Lord would come into my life and forgive me of my sins and be my Lord and Savior. And that was the greatest day of my life. [Applause]

That changed everything. I'll never forget: We were going home from that night, and I told Stevie, ''Man, I feel like the weight of the world has been lifted off of my shoulders. I feel like I've been born again. I feel like a new man.'' I felt different, and I knew I was different. When the Lord comes into your life, you're going to be different. You have to be different. If he comes into your heart, into your life, and you're not different, you better go back and try it again, because the Lord changes you. And He changed me, and it was for the better. And we left there that night, and did it fix all? Listen, you don't make a deal with the Lord: ''Hey Lord, if you do this, I'll do that.'' It don't work that way, folks. He's there for you. He's there to walk with you. But you've got to do your part, too. So did my life, my personal life, change things on the race track? I still had wrecks. I still had problems. Things still happened, but I wasn't in it alone. Where I felt like I was always in it by myself, now I had somebody to pray with, talk with, to guide me, direct me—the wisdom of the Lord. I had it, and I needed to use it.

Stevie and I wanted to have a family. We were having trouble having kids. We had a couple of miscarriages, and we were praying, ''God, can you give us a child?'' And we'd gotten to the point where we thought we'd just adopt. We're not going to be able to have kids on our own, so we'll adopt. And then Stevie got pregnant, and we prayed, and the Lord gave us peace about it. He said, ''Hang in there this time, I've got something special for you.'' And sure enough: Jessica Lee Waltrip. September the 17th, 1987, we had our first child. I, folks, was on cloud nine. I was so excited. I couldn't wait to get to the track. I left that weekend to go to Martinsville. I get to the racetrack, I'm a proud papa, and everybody's congratulating me because they knew how badly we wanted kids. I go over to my race car on Sunday morning, and in the seat of the car is a vase with one rose in it and a note. I pulled the note out, I opened it up, and it said, ''Win this one for me, Daddy.'' That was quite a moment. I'd never been called Daddy before, and I'd never been a father before, and I was so happy. And I have to tell you: This is a fairy tale. I never led a lap of that race. I wanted so badly to win that race for Jessica—never led a dadgum lap, until the last one—and you won't believe what happened. People say, ''Can you tell me a time when God showed up?'' I don't think he was working against those other guys, but he sure was working for me—I know that. We go off the last lap, the white flag's in the air, and I thought, ''Oh man, I'm running third.'' There's nothing I can do. Dale Earnhardt and Terry Labonte, they're a little bit quicker than I am. They go down the back straightaway into third turn at Martinsville, a little paperclip racetrack, and Terry bumps into the back of Dale. And when he does, both cars get a little loose, and they slide up the racetrack, and DW goes driving by. [Applause]

Daddy won that one. Same thing—1992, Sarah was born. Sarah Kaitlin Kerns Waltrip. Same deal: Go to the racetrack. It had been kind of a tough year. I dominated that race, Bristol half-mile track, like being hung up in a salad bowl for 500 laps. Spinning around—your head's hurting, your eyes are burning. I get out of the car, and I can't remember my daughter's name. So, I'm trying really hard. I'm saying ''Sarah, Sarah, Kaitlin''—she had a lot of names—''Kerns Waltrip.'' Because when I left the hospital, we really hadn't decided on exactly what her name was going to be. So, it took a little time, but it came to me, and certainly Sarah's never let me forget that I couldn't remember her name.

One final story for you, and it's about Dale Earnhardt Sr. And I don't know how many of you people knew the old intimidator. He was one tough customer and my biggest competitor. We were 'frenemies.' We were friends off the racetrack but not so much on the racetrack. And this beautiful redhead down here—she loved Dale, and Dale loved her. And she witnessed to him just as much as she witnessed to me. In 1994, Neil Bonnett lost his life at Daytona in a practice crash. Sunday morning, Stevie had always put Scriptures in my race car on a note card. Not good luck charms, just encouragement. Whatever happened that week, the Scripture sort of fit the events of that week.

We're standing on pit road praying with some of the chaplains from MRO, and Dale walks by. Now, Dale is one of those guys that you know he's a tough guy, so for him to pray or to acknowledge that he may have a relationship with the Lord was pretty hard for him to do. But he walks by, Stevie grabs him and says, ''Come and pray with us.'' We all huddled up on pit road there, and when we finished praying, Stevie hands me the note card with the Scripture on it, and Dale grabs it, and he says, ''What's that?'' And he read it. And he looked at Stevie, and he said, ''Where's mine?'' Oh my gosh, she ran to the pit box, got a note card, wrote a Scripture, put it on the note card, and ran back to Dale's car, and Dale put it on his dash. And so from that day until 2001, when he lost his life at Daytona, he had a Scripture in his car just like I had in my car. You have to know something: Me and this guy, we were fierce competitors. He didn't like me, and I didn't like him when we were on that racetrack. That woman would make us pray together. Stevie would grab him and grab me and say, ''I want you all to pray together,'' and we'd ''[makes mumbling noises].'' And then, and

then to make it worse, she'd say, ''Tell him you love him.'' [Laughter, Applause] So, as he was walking away and I was walking away: ''I love you.'' [stated in perfunctory tone]

As I said, the hardest thing about being here this morning was, as I prepared—and I did prepare—was looking back and remembering how I was. But the good news this morning is I'm not that way anymore. I just share this: You don't have to walk alone. You don't have to carry all those burdens like it's you against the world. You have to do like I did. You've got to get off your high horse and get on your knees and ask for forgiveness. He's waiting for you. He was there all the time. I just didn't know it or acknowledge it. I told you when I got up here I wasn't running for anything, but I will tell you this: I am running to something. The Lord is a strong tower; the righteous will run to it and be safe. God bless you. God bless America. God bless our President, and thank you for letting me share with you this morning. [Applause]

Senator CASEY: Darrell, thank you for that great message. Darrell, I want to ask your permission but I'll do this as I'm pretending to ask your permission. Your birthday is today?

Mr. WALTRIP: Yes.

Senator CASEY: It's also the same birthday as my mother-in-law, Nancy Foppiano, so I've just scored big points, Darrell, thank you very much. It's my honor now to introduce the President. Mr. President, First Lady Michelle Obama, we're honored you're with us, honored by your presence. And they've been here every year. So we're grateful to have them back. [Applause]

President Obama is a person of faith who has spoken often about his faith journey. His life has been, and continues to be, a life of service, public service, in the pursuit of justice here, at home, and around the world. My mother, Ellen Casey, (that way I've got my mother-in-law and my mother in the same remarks) always told us when we were growing up over, and over again, she would say, ''Count your blessings.'' Count your blessings. And I've tried to do that; probably don't do enough of it. But I know that the President is one who follows my mother's advice, especially about the blessings of his family. So today as we gather to pray and to express gratitude for so much on a morning like today, I count as one of our blessings, Mr. President, your good work as our President and your abiding commitment to your family, to your faith, and to our country. Ladies and gentlemen, the 44th President of the United States, Barack Obama. [Applause]

The PRESIDENT: Thank you. Well, good morning. Giving all praise and honor to God. It is wonderful to be back with you here. I want to thank our co-chairs, Bob and Roger. These two don't always agree in the Senate, but in coming together and uniting us all in prayer, they embody the spirit of our gathering today.

I also want to thank everybody who helped organize this breakfast. It's wonderful to see so many friends and faith leaders and dignitaries. And Michelle and I are truly honored to be joining you here today.

I want to offer a special welcome to a good friend, His Holiness the Dalai Lama—who is a powerful example of what it means to practice compassion, who inspires us to speak up for the freedom and dignity of all human beings. I've been pleased to welcome him to the White House on many occasions, and we're grateful that he's able to join us here today. [Applause]

There aren't that many occasions that bring His Holiness under the same roof as NASCAR. This may be the first. But God works in mysterious ways. [Laughter] And so I want to thank Darrell for that wonderful presentation. Darrell knows that when you're going 200 miles an hour, a little prayer cannot hurt. I suspect that more than once, Darrell has had the same thought as many of us have in our own lives—Jesus, take the wheel. Although I hope that you kept your hands on the wheel when you were thinking that. [Laughter]

He and I obviously share something in having married up. And we are so grateful to Stevie for the incredible work that they've done together to build a ministry where the fastest drivers can slow down a little bit, and spend some time in prayer and reflection and thanks. And we certainly want to wish Darrell a happy birthday. [Applause] Happy birthday.

I will note, though, Darrell, when you were reading that list of things folks were saying about you, I was thinking, well, you're a piker. I mean, if you really want a list, come talk to me, because that ain't nothing. That's the best they can do in NASCAR? [Laughter.]

Slowing down and pausing for fellowship and prayer—that's what this breakfast is about. I think it's fair to say that Washington moves a lot slower than NASCAR. Certainly my agenda does sometimes. [Laughter.] But still, it's easier to get caught up in the rush of our lives, and in the political back-and-forth that can take over this city. We get sidetracked with distractions, large and small. We can't go 10 minutes without checking our smartphones—and for my staff, that's every 10 seconds. And so for 63 years, this prayer tradition has brought us together, giving us the opportunity to come together in humility before the Almighty and to be reminded of what it is that we share as children of God.

And certainly for me, this is always a chance to reflect on my own faith journey. Many times as President, I've been reminded of a line of prayer that Eleanor Roosevelt was fond of. She said, ''Keep us at tasks too hard for us that we may be driven to Thee for strength. '' Keep us at tasks too hard for us that we may be driven to Thee for strength. I've wondered at times if maybe God was answering that prayer a little too literally. But no matter the challenge, He has been there for all of us. He's certainly strengthened me ''with the power through His Spirit,'' as I've sought His guidance not just in my own life but in the life of our nation.

Now, over the last few months, we've seen a number of challenges—certainly over the last six years. But part of what I want to touch on today is the degree to which we've seen professions of faith used both as an instrument of great good, but also twisted and misused in the name of evil.

As we speak, around the world, we see faith inspiring people to lift up one another—to feed the hungry and care for the poor, and comfort the afflicted and make peace where there is strife. We heard the good work that Sister has done in Philadelphia, and the incredible work that Dr. Brantly and his colleagues have done. We see faith driving us to do right.

But we also see faith being twisted and distorted, used as a wedge—or, worse, sometimes used as a weapon. From a school in Pakistan to the streets of Paris, we have seen violence and terror perpetrated by those who profess to stand up for faith, their faith, professed to stand up for Islam, but, in fact, are betraying it. We see ISIL, a brutal, vicious death cult that, in the name of religion, carries out unspeakable acts of barbarism—terrorizing religious minorities like the Yazidis, subjecting women to rape as a weapon of war, and claiming the mantle of religious authority for such actions.

We see sectarian war in Syria, the murder of Muslims and Christians in Nigeria, religious war in the Central African Republic, a rising tide of anti-Semitism and hate crimes in Europe, so often perpetrated in the name of religion.

So how do we, as people of faith, reconcile these realities—the profound good, the strength, the tenacity, the compassion and love that can flow from all of our faiths, operating alongside those who seek to hijack religions for their own murderous ends?

Humanity has been grappling with these questions throughout human history. And lest we get on our high horse and think this is unique to some other place, remember that during the Crusades and the Inquisition, people committed terrible deeds in the name of Christ. In our home country, slavery and Jim Crow all too often was justified in the name of Christ. Michelle and I returned from India—an incredible, beautiful country, full of magnificent diversity—but a place where, in past years, religious faiths of all types on occasion have, on occasion, been targeted by other peoples of faith, simply due to their heritage and their beliefs—acts of intolerance that would have shocked Ghandiji, the person who helped to liberate that nation.

So, this is not unique to one group or one religion. There is a tendency in us, a sinful tendency that can pervert and distort our faith. In today's world, when hate groups have their own Twitter accounts and bigotry can fester in hidden places in cyberspace, it can be even harder to counteract such intolerance. But God compels us to try. And in this mission, I believe there are a few principles that can guide us, particularly those of us who profess to believe.

And, first, we should start with some basic humility. I believe that the starting point of faith is some doubt—not being so full of yourself and so confident that you are right and that God speaks only to us, and doesn't speak to others, that God only cares about us and doesn't care about others, that somehow we alone are in possession of the truth.

Our job is not to ask that God respond to our notion of truth—our job is to be true to Him, His word and His commandments. And we should assume humbly that we're confused and don't always know what we're doing and we're staggering and stumbling towards Him, and have some humility in that process. And that means we have to speak up against those who would misuse His name to justify oppression, or violence, or hatred with that fierce certainty. No God condones terror. No grievance justifies the taking of innocent lives, or the oppression of those who are weaker or fewer in number.

And so, as people of faith, we are summoned to push back against those who try to distort our religion—any religion—for their own nihilistic ends. And here at home and around the world, we will constantly reaffirm that fundamental freedom—freedom of religion—the right to practice our faith how we choose, to change our faith if we choose, to practice no faith at all if we choose, and to do so free of persecution and fear and discrimination.

There's wisdom in our founders writing in those documents that helped found this nation, the notion of freedom of religion, because they understood the need for humility. They also understood the need to uphold freedom of speech, that there is a connection between freedom of speech and freedom of religion. For to infringe on one right under the pretext of protecting another is a betrayal of both.

But part of humility is also recognizing in modern, complicated, diverse societies, the functioning of these rights, the concern for the protection of theses rights calls for each of us to exercise civility and restraint and

judgment. And if, in fact, we defend the legal right of a person to insult another's religion, we're equally obligated to use our free speech to condemn such insults—[Applause]—and stand shoulder-to-shoulder with religious communities, particularly religious minorities who are the targets of such attacks. Just because you have the right to say something doesn't mean the rest of us shouldn't question those who would insult others in the name of free speech. Because we know that our nations are stronger when people of all faiths feel that they are welcome, that they, too, are full and equal members of our countries.

So humility I think is needed. And the second thing we need is to uphold the distinction between our faith and our governments. Between church and between state. The United States is one of the most religious countries in the world—far more religious than most Western developed countries. And one of the reasons is that our founders wisely embraced the separation of church and state. Our government does not sponsor a religion, nor does it pressure anyone to practice a particular faith, or any faith at all. And the result is a culture where people of all backgrounds and beliefs can freely and proudly worship, without fear, or coercion—so that when your listen to Darrell talk about his faith journey, you know it's real. You know he's not saying it because it helps him advance, or because somebody told him to. It's from the heart.

That's not the case in theocracies that restrict people's choice of faith. It's not the case in authoritarian governments that elevate an individual leader or a political party above the people, or in some cases, above the concept of God Himself. So the freedom of religion is a value we will continue to protect here at home and stand up for around the world, and is one that we guard vigilantly here in the United States.

Last year, we joined together to pray for the release of Christian missionary Kenneth Bae, held in North Korea for two years. And today, we give thanks that Kenneth is finally back where he belongs—home with his family. [Applause]

Last year we prayed together for Pastor Saeed Abedini, detained in Iran since 2012. And I was recently in Boise, Idaho, and had the opportunity to meet with Pastor Abedini's beautiful wife and wonderful children and to convey to them that our country has not forgotten brother Saeed and that we're doing everything that we can to bring him home. [Applause] And then, I received an extraordinary letter from Pastor Abedini. And in it, he describes his captivity, and expressed his gratitude for my visit with his family, and thanked us all for standing in solidarity with him during his captivity.

And Pastor Abedini wrote, ''Nothing is more valuable to the Body of Christ than to see how the Lord is in control, and moves ahead of countries and leadership through united prayer.'' And he closed his letter by describing himself as ''prisoner for Christ, who is proud to be part of this great nation, the United States of America that cares for religious freedom around the world.'' [Applause]

We're going to keep up this work—for Pastor Abedini and all those around the world who are unjustly held or persecuted because of their faith. And we're grateful to our new Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom, Rabbi David Saperstein—who has hit the ground running, and is heading to Iraq in a few days to help religious communities there address some of those challenges. Where's David? I know he's here somewhere. Thank you David for the great work you're doing. [Applause]

Humility; a suspicion of government getting between us and our faith or trying to dictate our faiths, or elevate one faith over another. And, finally, let's remember that if there is one law that we can all be most certain of that seems to bind people of all faiths and people who are still finding their way towards faith but have a sense of ethics and morality in them—that one law, that Golden Rule that we should treat one another as we wish to be treated. The Torah says ''Love thy neighbor as yourself.'' In Islam, there is a Hadith that states: ''None of you truly believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself.'' The Holy Bible tells us to ''put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.'' Put on love.

Whatever our beliefs, whatever our traditions, we must seek to be instruments of peace, and bringing light where there is darkness, and sowing love where there is hatred. And this is the loving message of His Holiness Pope Francis. And like so many people around the world, I've been touched by his call to relieve suffering, and to show justice and mercy and compassion to the most vulnerable; to walk with the Lord and ask ''Who am I to judge?'' He challenges us to press on in what he calls our ''march of living hope.'' And like millions of Americans, I am very much looking forward to welcoming Pope Francis to the United States later this year. [Applause.]

His Holiness expresses that basic law: Treat thy neighbor as thyself. The Dalai Lama—anybody who's had an opportunity to be with him senses that same spirit. Kent Brantly expresses that same spirit. Kent was with Samaritan's Purse, treating Ebola patients in Liberia, when he contracted the virus himself. And with world-class medical care and a deep reliance on faith—with God's help, Kent survived. [Applause.]

And then by donating his plasma, he helped others survive as well. And he continues to advocate for a global response in West Africa, reminding us that ''our efforts need to be on loving the people there.'' And I could not have been prouder to welcome Kent and his wonderful wife Amber to the Oval Office. We are blessed to have him here today—because he reminds us of what it means to really ''love thy neighbor as thyself.'' Not just words, but deeds.

Each of us has a role in fulfilling our common, greater purpose—not merely to seek high position, but to plumb greater depth so that we may find the strength to love more fully. And this is perhaps our greatest challenge—to see our own reflection in each other; to be our brother's keepers and sister's keepers, and to keep faith with one another. As children of God, let's make that our work, together.

As children of God, let's work to end injustice—injustice of poverty and hunger. No one should ever suffer from such want amid such plenty. As children of God, let's work to eliminate the scourge of homelessness, because as Sister Mary says, ''None of us are home until all of us are home.'' None of us are home until all of us are home.

As children of God, let's stand up for the dignity and value of every woman, and man, and child, because we are all equal in His eyes, and work to end the scourge and the sin of modern-day slavery and human trafficking, and ''set the oppressed free.'' [Applause]

If we are properly humble, if we drop to our knees on occasion, we will acknowledge that we never fully know God's purpose. We can never fully fathom His amazing grace. ''We see through a glass, darkly''—grappling with the expanse of His awesome love. But even with our limits, we can heed that which is required: To do justice, and love kindness, and walk humbly with our God.

I pray that we will. And as we journey together on this ''march of living hope,'' I pray that, in His name, we will run and not be weary, and walk and not be faint, and we will heed those words and ''put on love.''

May the Lord bless you and keep you, and may He bless this precious country that we love.

Thank you all very much. [Applause]

Senator CASEY: Mr. President, thank you for your message, and we're honored by your presence here today. We close our program with one song and one prayer. Our last song this morning will be sung by a remarkable young man, and those words don't do justice to who this person is. A young man from Tennessee named Quintavious Johnson. If you're a fan of the television show, America's Got Talent, you might recognize him as one of last year's finalists. But today, singing at the National Prayer Breakfast in front of more than 3,500 at the age of 13. Just imagine that, that's going to be hard to top. And now to sing the Lord's Prayer, please welcome Quintavious Johnson. [Applause]

Quintavious Johnson [Singing]

Our Father, which art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come and thy will be done
On earth as it is in heaven.
And give us this day our daily bread,
And forgive us our debt, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil;
For thine is the kingdom, and the power,
And the glory, forever.
Amen.

[Applause]

Senator CASEY: Wow! Quintavious, thank you for your great performance, we're grateful you're with us this morning. And finally this morning, our last prayer at this breakfast will be offered by an extraordinary public servant who also happens to be a minister. He's a former Member of Congress, Ambassador to the United Nations, Mayor of Atlanta, and recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom, a well-known civil rights leader and friend of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Our next speaker was instrumental in the civil rights campaigns in Selma, and in Birmingham that ultimately led to the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. [Applause] But of all of his many titles and accomplishments, he's most proud of his role as husband, father, and grandfather. Ladies and gentlemen, the Honorable Andrew Young. [Applause]

The Honorable ANDREW J. YOUNG: This morning I woke up to the hearings of the Senate committee on your new appointment as Secretary of Defense. And as they went around talking about all of the dangers and problems that he must confront, and that you must face every day, I realized that's why we need prayer. And I wondered, has the world ever been in this bad of shape? And I remember when I was about the age of Quintavious, even a little earlier, the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, and Germans were sinking ships, and America was far weaker then. We still had the same conflicts in Congress. We still had the same differences racially, and emotionally, and religiously, but somehow we pulled together and we heard the President say, ''The only thing we have to fear is fear itself.'' And then a little while later, in fact quite a while later, the people with whom we had gone to war became our best friends and our trading partners. And this country of ours helped unite the world, and in thanks for that, President Eisenhower asked that we come together and form this prayer breakfast, to thank God—for only the spirit of Jesus can forgive as we forgave, can reconcile enemies to each other, and that same Jesus that walked with President Eisenhower and all the presidents since, therefore, with you Mr. President. And when

I look at these young people from Mississippi, Senator, we have overcome so much. [Applause] And we thank you, and we thank all of you, and we thank God. May we pray:

Be with us dear Father, as we take on the challenges of life, not just as government but as business, as private sector and nonprofit sector, as religious leaders, as community leaders, as volunteers, as fathers and mothers, as brothers and sisters, as mothers and sons, and fathers and daughters, bind us together, heal our wounds, calm our spirits and make us always mindful that you came into the world to say you would make all things new, but that you would be with us always. So as we go through many dangers, toils, and snares by your amazing grace, make us always mindful that your presence is in the midst of us. That each of us, because of you, know that we too are your children and that our Father loves us, forgives us, saves us by the mercy that we must share with each other and with the world in which we live. In the name of Jesus we pray, Amen. [Applause]

Senator WICKER: Thank you, Ambassador Young. And as we conclude this, the 63rd Annual National Prayer Breakfast—depart with these words of God from the Book of Numbers: ''The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.'' Amen.

RECOGNIZING THE FIFTH AMERICAN PRISONER OF WAR FRIENDSHIP DELEGATION TO JAPAN

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I wish to honor veterans from America's ''greatest generation'' who were held captive as prisoners of war, POWs, by Japan during World War II and to recognize seven veterans—including three from California—who recently participated in a historic trip to Japan to promote reconciliation and remembrance.

At the invitation of the Japanese Government, the veterans were joined by their family members to become the 5th delegation of American POWs to visit Japan as part of the official Japanese-American POW Friendship Program that began in 2010.

These brave men fought in the historic first battles of World War II and endured years of hardship as POWs. This year, as we commemorate the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II, I want to recognize them and honor their service and sacrifice.

Anthony Costa, 95, from Concord, CA, was a private first class in the famed 4th Marine Regiment, also known as the China Marines, which arrived in the Philippines days before the Japanese invasion. He fought to defend the island of Corregidor in the Philippines from December 1941 to May 1942 before he was captured by the Japanese. As a POW, Private Costa was force-marched through Manila and taken to the Cabanatuan prison camp, where thousands of POWs died from starvation, dehydration and abuse. He was then moved to Japan to work as a slave dockworker in the freight yards in and around Osaka before being liberated in September 1945. He was awarded the Bronze Star and the Purple Heart.

William Sanchez, 96, from Monterey Park, CA, was an Army sergeant with the 59th Coast Artillery assigned to the island of Corregidor in the Philippines where he helped defend the harbor against the Japanese invasion. In May 1942, Sergeant Sanchez and the rest of his division were captured and paraded through the streets of Manila to Bilibid Prison. He was later transported to Japan in the hold of a Japanese hell ship, where he endured a 33-day oceanic journey plagued by dysentery, malaria and malnutrition before reaching Camp Omori. At the POW camp, he was forced to work as a slave laborer and dockworker at the railway yards in Tokyo prior to his liberation in August 1945.

Jack Schwartz, 100, from Hanford, CA, was a Navy lieutenant junior grade serving on Guam when the Japanese Navy attacked the island on December 8, 1941. When Guam fell to the Japanese, Lieutenant Schwartz was taken to a POW camp in Japan where he was repeatedly beaten, starved and provided insufficient clothing to endure the harsh winters. He was sent to several POW camps before being moved to Camp Rokuroshi, which was hidden in the Japanese Alps. After being liberated on September 8, 1945, he remained in the Navy and retired after a distinguished career in 1962.

My constituents were joined on their trip by Daniel Crowley, 92, of Connecticut, an Army Air Corps infantryman who participated in the defense of Bataan and Corregidor; Oral Nichols, 93, of New Mexico, who served as a civilian medic in the historic defense of Wake Island; Warren Jorgenson, 93, of Nebraska, a marine who defended Corregidor; and Darrell Stark, 91, of Connecticut, who served as an Army infantryman on the Bataan Peninsula.

This trip was part of a reconciliation process that, while undoubtedly painful, is critical to help provide closure to POWs and their families and continue building stronger relations between the U.S. and Japan. It is important that this reconciliation program continue so that this history is remembered and the families can continue to heal.

REMEMBERING PETTY OFFICER SECOND CLASS HEIDI FRIEDMAN

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, today I have the solemn duty of memorializing U.S. Navy PO2 Heidi Jo Friedman, a New Hampshire native who was tragically killed on April 12 at the age of 33. Petty Officer Friedman was serving aboard the aircraft carrier USS *George H. W. Bush* as an engineman, having transferred from Navy Operation Support Center Manchester in January. She entered the Navy in 2002, and previously served on the guided-missile destroyer USS *Ross* and in the Navy Reserve with Amphibious Construction Battalion Two Detachment 101.

Heidi was born on June 28, 1981 to her father Robert, a retired Navy chief petty officer, and her mother Shari Murray. She graduated from Ledyard High School, in Ledyard, CT, and enjoyed volunteering as a mentor to children and with the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Foundation. Heidi was also a lifetime Girl Scout with a passion for rugby and traveling. To those who knew her, Heidi was a loving and caring friend—someone who touched people in a positive way. I know there are many who feel her absence deeply.

Petty Officer Friedman is survived by her mother Shari L. Murray, her father and stepmother Robert B. and Laurie E. Friedman, her grandmother Arlene Canin, her brother Michael L. and wife Erin Friedman, three stepsisters: Jaime and wife Rochelle, Kara and Maria and fiancée Chris; three stepbrothers, Cito and fiancée Lyne, Quique and wife Amanda and Nolan; two nephews, Alexander and Ashton; and many aunts, uncles and cousins.

On behalf of the people of New Hampshire, I ask my colleagues and all Americans to join me in honoring the life and service of PO2 Heidi Jo Friedman.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

CONGRATULATING SALLY WAGNER

• Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, too often we forget or take for granted just how important teachers are. I try not to do that because I married one. But the positive impact teachers have on our youth and on society is incalculable. Today, I would like to take a moment to acknowledge one outstanding teacher who is retiring after a distinguished 40-year career—the last 34 years of which have been spent at Eleanor Roosevelt High School, ERHS, in Greenbelt, MD—Ms. Sally S. Wagner. Ms. Wagner is the chair of the Instrumental Music Department at ERHS. In 2005, a Washington Post article took note of Ms. Wagner's extraordinary achievements as an educator noting, ''The school [ERHS] has several legendary teachers, including band director Sally Wagner . . . and a 750-student musical juggernaut with so many ensembles and bands that one can barely keep count.''

For the past several years, we have been properly involved in an effort to improve so-called STEM education in this country. That acronym stands for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Bolstering STEM education is important for economic competitiveness, national security, and keeping America at the forefront of the technological changes that will make life better for all of humanity. But too many schools, grappling with budget cuts, have scaled back or even eliminated their arts and music curricula. Fortunately, there is burgeoning awareness of the importance of these courses, too. And now people are talking about STEAM, where the ''A''

stands for arts and music. All of these subjects are interrelated and complementary. After all, it was Albert Einstein who said, ''The greatest scientists are artists as well'' and who would play the violin or piano for intuition or inspiration when he became ''stuck'' on one of his formulas or equations.

Fortunately for the students at ERHS, which is an outstanding science and technology school, by the way, the music program has always been robust, too, and Ms. Wagner has been in charge. Her career in music began when she was a child, with piano lessons. In the sixth grade, she started learning how to play the trombone. She ultimately earned her degrees from Michigan State University and the University of Delaware. Teaching and bands are her passion. In 2001, Ms. Wagner was cited in School Band and Orchestra Magazine as one of ''50 Directors Who Make a Difference'' and she received the Maryland Music Educators Association Outstanding Music Teacher Award. In 2006, Ms. Wagner received the National Honor Society Outstanding Teacher Award and the Claes Nobel Educator of Distinction Award. Claes Nobel—the grand-nephew of Alfred Nobel—established the National Society of High School Scholars, which made the award.

Ms. Wagner is a Music Educators National Conference, MENC—now known as the National Association for Music Education, or NAfME, Nationally Registered Music Educator. She received the Prince George's County Chamber of Commerce Outstanding Educator Award, Excellence in Teaching Awards from Prince George's County Public Schools, the County Council, the Maryland House of Delegates and the Governor of Maryland, and was recognized in 1994 by the University of Maryland Center for Teaching Excellence.

Ms. Wagner is a member of MENC/NAfME, the Women Band Directors International, the Maryland Music Educators Association, and the Maryland Band Directors Association. She is active as an adjudicator, clinician, and guest conductor, and she writes articles for The Woman Conductor and BandWorld Magazine.

These are numerous accolades and tremendous accomplishments, to be sure. But what is most important is the love that Ms. Wagner has for her students—at least one of whom is a second generation ERHS band musician—and the love and respect and admiration they have for her in return. She built the ERHS instrumental music program with incomparable care for every one of her students. Her love of music, teaching, and performing is evident in each and every interaction she has with her students, their parents, colleagues, and others in the community. She has touched and inspired thousands of students over her career with her talent, hard work, joy, dedication, sense of humor, intellect, leadership, kindness, and—above all—love. She has taught her students about responsibility, dedication, teamwork, and the pursuit of excellence. Of course, these lessons aren't just about music; they are important lessons about life.

Just a couple of comments posted by students on the ERHS Facebook page tell the story. One student wrote, ''She is totally awesome. I swear, she is the most amazing teacher ever. She makes my day, every day. I'm just crossing my fingers and praying that she won't retire before I graduate!'' Another student wrote, ''Ms. Wagner inspired me to do my absolute best in music and helped me discover how important music is in my life. She is my hero.'' Another wrote, ''Instrument rentals: $25. Uniform fee: $20. Being in her class: priceless.'' Another student wrote, ''She always encouraged me to excel. She pushed me and believed in me. I learned more from her than anyone. She was the greatest teacher! Her love for music shines through.'' Finally, from an alumnus, ''I had Ms. Wagner way back in 1985—she was great back then, and it is great to see that she is still well-loved.''

In 2004, the ERHS band community of students, parents, and alumni commissioned the score ''Under the Magical Wing'' as a tribute to Ms. Wagner in appreciation and recognition of her dedication to the ERHS music program. Now the ERHS community has established the ''Sally Wagner Performing Arts Space,'' a new black box theatre at ERHS.

U2's Bono has said, ''Music can change the world because it can change people.'' If that is true, and I believe it is, think of the world-changing impact Ms. Wagner has had over the course of her career. Think of the joy she has brought to so many people. I would ask my colleagues here in the Senate to join me in thanking Ms. Sally Wagner for her extraordinary contributions and congratulate her on her retirement. Strike up the band.●

REMEMBERING SANDRA WISECAVER

● Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, today I honor the life and legacy of Sandra Wisecaver, owner and operator of the Buhl Herald in Buhl, ID. Sandra leaves an enduring legacy of dedication to her community and deep personal strength.

Sandra is remembered as a remarkable journalist, who led the Buhl Herald as owner and operator since 2005 after working at the newspaper for many years. She started working at the paper as a senior at Buhl High School and worked for the paper while attending the College of Southern Idaho. After working in other fields, she became the Castleford correspondent for the paper in 1987, and returned to the Herald in 1992. She worked as reporter and editor before purchasing the newspaper 10 years ago. Sandra's commitment to providing an outlet for stories about the achievements of area youth and a sound chronicle of community events will not be forgotten. She worked hard to ensure that the stories that mattered to her community reached her readership.

A native of Buhl, Sandra's roots were firmly planted in the community she loved. She was born on August 30, 1949, to Jess and Vina Wilson of Buhl. In 1967, she graduated from Buhl High School and married Joe Wisecaver in 1969. In addition to her work at the newspaper, she also worked in Green Giant's payroll department, worked at the Corner Merc in Castleford, and Sandra and Joe maintained the contract for the mail delivery to Roseworth. She was a community leader also, dedicating considerable time as a 4–H leader, Cub Scout den mother, and baseball and softball cheer mom and driver.

Sandra's personal strength cannot be overstated. Beyond her role at the newspaper and in the community, Sandra was an example of fortitude. She overcame a stroke and persevered through stage IV kidney cancer to continue to publish the newspaper that had a central role in Buhl for more than a century. Her grit and determination was inspiring. She is an exceptional example of staying power and commitment to her community.

I extend my condolences to her husband Joe; her children, Angela and Joe Jr.; their families, including her three grandchildren; her many friends and the Buhl community. Sandra Wisecaver was an amazing woman who leaves behind a legacy of thoughtful and determined leadership.●

RECOGNIZING TANNER ARCHULETA, JACOB JAVORSKY, AND AMANDA BUXTON

● Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I wish to recognize three outstanding Montana students who exemplified true bravery and heroism last week.

Tanner Archuleta and Jacob Javorsky from Flathead High School in Kalispell, MT, rushed to help when they saw smoke billowing from a house down the street from school. Tanner raced into the house and awoke Ryan Murray, who escaped the burning house safely with his dog. Separately, Amanda Buxton took action on her way to school and alerted authorities to the fire, providing fire crews much needed timely information.

Tanner, Jacob and Amanda deserve much recognition for their ability to act quickly and selflessly in an emergency. Their quick thinking saved the life of a fellow Montanan. They are admirable young Montanans and deserve endless thanks.●

MILITARY ACADEMY APPOINTMENTS

● Mr. LEE. Mr. President, each year members of Congress are authorized, under title 10 of the U.S. Code, to nominate a number of young men and women from their district or State to

attend the U.S. Air Force Academy, the U.S. Military Academy, and the U.S. Naval Academy. But receiving a congressional nomination is no guarantee of acceptance. To be admitted, each applicant must meet—on his or her own merits—the academies' rigorous standards.

I am proud to announce the names of 20 outstanding Utahns who have met these standards and who will attend one of the academies in the summer of 2015. This is more than twice as many accepted applicants than I have ever seen in my 5 years in the Senate.

Each of these 20 students is of sound mind and body. This will serve them well in Colorado Springs, West Point, and Annapolis. But to succeed, they will need more than this.

The journey these young men and women are about to begin requires more than intellectual and physical fitness. It also demands strong moral character—leadership, courage, honesty, prudence, and self-discipline. And it calls for a commitment to service and a love of country.

Today, I would like to recognize and congratulate each of these impressive students, all of whom embody, in their own unique way, the standards of excellence on which America's service academies are built.

Cole Bennett Biedermann will be attending the U.S. Air Force Academy. Cole will be graduating from Skyline High School, where he was a member of the National Honor Society, captain of the track team, and president of the physics club. Dedicated to helping those around him and serving his community, Cole tutored his high school classmates and volunteered at the Huntsman Cancer Institute.

Jonsen Koy Crandall will be returning to the U.S. Air Force Academy after serving for two years in Taichung, Taiwan on a mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. A graduate of South Summit High School, where he was a two-time State champion wrestler, Jonsen is currently attending Dixie State University, where he served as an outstanding intern in my St. George office.

Thomas Abram Davenport will be attending the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. Thomas will be coming to West Point from Brigham Young University-Hawaii, where he participated in the ROTC. Originally from Draper, UT, Thomas earned his Eagle Scout, attended Boys State, was a member of the National Honor Society, and toured with the service, singing, and performing group Clayton Productions.

McKenna Elise Fox will be returning to the U.S. Air Force Academy, where she played on the women's soccer team, after serving in the Guayaquil North Mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. McKenna graduated from Lone Peak High School, where she was recognized as an outstanding student and served as captain of the soccer team.

Stephen William Kelly, from Juan Diego Catholic High School, will be attending the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. Excelling in music, athletics, and academics, Stephen played in the drum line and steel band, was an award-winning pitcher for the baseball team, and never missed an honor role while in high school. Stephen also participated in the FIRST Robotics Competition and served as a volunteer for the Knights of Columbus.

Paul Michael Lee will be attending the U.S. Air Force Academy. A graduate of Northridge High School, and currently enrolled in Northwestern Preparatory School, Paul participated in the Air Force JROTC and was a member of the National Honor Society. Having spent a portion of his childhood with his family on the Yongsan Garrison Army Base in South Korea, Paul would later become involved in Model United Nations. He is also an accomplished table tennis player.

Brandon Arthur Lloyd will be returning to the U.S. Air Force Academy after serving for 2 years in Berlin, Germany on a mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. A graduate from Highland High School and the Air Force Academy Prep School, Brandon earned his Eagle Scout, attended Boys State, and was named Wrestler of the Year while serving as team captain.

Jace Aukela Miller, from American Fork High School, will be attending the U.S. Air Force Academy. A model student athlete, Jace was a member of the National Honor Society and captain, as well as most valuable player of the lacrosse team. In addition to working as a lifeguard at the American Fork Recreation Center, Jace volunteered his time teaching outdoor adventure skills to at-risk youth.

Tanner Scott Munson will be attending the U.S. Naval Academy. Tanner will be graduating from Lehi High School, where he was a member of the National Honor Society and captain of the soccer team. An exemplar of community service and civic participation, Tanner served as a member of the Lehi City Youth Council, an intern with Lehi Fire and Rescue, and a volunteer with special-needs children.

Julia ''Genna'' Genevieve Murray will be attending the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. A Utah State champion sprinter and captain of the track and field team, Genna will be graduating from Springville High School. In addition to serving as a volunteer with at-risk youth, Genna is an outstanding student and a member of the National Honor Society.

Taylor Mize Porges, from Park City High School, will be attending the U.S. Naval Academy. Excelling in academics and athletics, Taylor was a member of the National Honor Society, captain of the soccer team, and president of Park City Climbing Club. In addition to serving as a volunteer with Youthlinc in South America, he participated in the Park City Center for Advanced Professional Studies, where he helped create a 3–D model of the Heber Airport for flight simulation programs.

Joshua Dalton Proulx will be attending the U.S. Air Force Academy. A graduate of Bonneville High School, Joshua is currently attending Greystone Preparatory School at Schreiner University. In addition to being an Eagle Scout, Joshua was a member of the National Honor Society and captain of the cross country and track and field teams. He also served as president of the Parent Teacher Student Association and participated in the Civil Air Patrol.

Mormon Joseph Ephraim Redd will be returning to the U.S. Air Force Academy after spending the past 2 years serving in the Japan Fukuoka mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Originally from Farmington, UT, Mormon is the seventh brother in his family to serve in the Armed Forces. He graduated from Viewmont High School, where he was captain of the wrestling team and an honor student. He has also volunteered with the Youthlinc humanitarian programs.

Corben David Ruf, from North Summit High School, will be attending the U.S. Air Force Academy. At North Summit, Corben distinguished himself in student government, as student body president; in academics, as a General Sterling Scholar and member of the National Honor Society; and in athletics, as captain of the football and wrestling teams. He also attended the Utah National Guard Freedom and Leadership Academy and won best supporting actor in the Utah Festival Opera.

Matthew Walker Schvaneveldt will be attending the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. Currently attending the Northern Utah Academy for Math, Engineering and Science, as well as Weber State University, Matthew is an Eagle Scout, attended Boys State, and was captain of the wrestling team. He also received the volunteer of the year award from McKay-Dee Hospital, and served as president of his school's National Honor Society.

Parker Dawson Sharp, a graduate of both Wasatch High School and Northwestern Preparatory School, will be attending the U.S. Naval Academy. In addition to earning his Eagle Scout, Parker has excelled in music, as an accomplished cellist, pianist, and vocalist. He also participated in Model United Nations, and is a Krav Maga enthusiast. Parker is currently attending the University of Utah.

Dean Quentin Smith, from Timpanogos High School, will be attending the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. As an Eagle Scout, captain of the wrestling and baseball teams, and president of the Chinese Club, Dean has been a leader in all of his pursuits. He was also a member of the National Honor Society, and he volunteered with special-needs children.

Dietrich Gregory Streuber will be attending the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. Dietrich will be graduating from Morgan High School, where he was a member of the debate team and the National Honor Society, as well as captain of the football team. Dietrich also earned his Eagle Scout, attended Boys State, and participated in the Weber-Morgan Governing Youth Council.

Christopher Mark Vincent, from Skyline High School, will be attending the U.S. Naval Academy. A recipient of the Kiwanis Hope of American Leadership Award, Christopher is an Eagle Scout and captain of the Skyline High School debate team. He also attended Boys State and the Utah National Guard Freedom and Leadership Academy.

Jacob Henry Witt, currently a lance corporal in the U.S. Marine Corps, will be attending the U.S. Naval Academy. A graduate of Wasatch High School, Jacob was the captain of the tennis team and a member of the National Honor Society. He was a member of the Future Business Leaders of America, FBLA, State championship team, and he received first place in the Marine Corps essay contest for his writing on the U.S. Constitution and The Federalist Papers.

It has been an honor and an inspiration to meet and to nominate each of these young men and women. Doing so has given me an unshakeable confidence in the future of this great Nation and the future of our armed services.

But to these 20 students, and to all their future classmates from around the country, do not forget: this is but the beginning of your journey.

You would not have arrived at this point were it not for your hard work and sacrifice. But what matters most now is not your accomplishments of the past, but what you have yet to achieve in the future.●

RECOGNIZING THE WASHINGTON STATE MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS

● Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, today I express my deep gratitude and appreciation for the National Association of Letter Carriers, especially its members in my home State of Washington.

On Saturday, May 9, letter carriers throughout Washington State will join their colleagues from around the country for their Stamp Out Hunger food drive, an annual event that has provided needed meals to so many. In more than 10,000 cities and towns across our country, letter carriers use our mail delivery network to collect donated food.

The food drive, now in its 23rd year, is a shining example of their commitment to our communities. In addition to the excellent service they provide as part of their daily work, these dedicated men and women will be picking up donated food on a Saturday to deliver to food banks and pantries in their communities. In 2010, the food drive reached an amazing milestone as it surpassed the 1-billion-pound mark for collections.

I thank the men and women of the National Association of Letter Carriers for their hard work and commitment to their communities, and I wish them the best with this year's Stamp Out Hunger food drive.●

RECOGNIZING JOHN JAY COLLEGE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

● Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate John Jay College of Criminal Justice on the occasion of their 50th anniversary.

Located in the cultural heart of New York City, John Jay College is one of the Nation's leading liberal arts institutions of higher education with a mission of ''educating for justice.'' For 50 years, John Jay College has produced leaders, scholars, and heroes in policing, including forensic science, law, fire and emergency management, social work, teaching, private security, forensic psychology, and corrections. As an international leader in educating for justice, John Jay offers a rich liberal arts and professional studies curriculum to upwards of 15,000 undergraduate and graduate students from more than 135 nations, including over 47 percent first-generation students and more than 500 veterans. John Jay College is ranked No. 3 in the Nation as a ''Best for Vet'' institution by Military Times in their 2015 national college rankings of 600 universities and colleges.

In the 1960s, a small and dedicated group of academic visionaries came together to develop a plan for a new college named the College of Police Science within the City University of New York. Within a year, the college was renamed the John Jay College of Criminal Justice to reflect broader aspirations and achievements in criminal justice, leadership, and public service. John Jay was the first Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court and served as Governor of our great State of New York. The college opened in 1965 with 1,000 students and one major.

The challenges and hard work envisioned when John Jay College was created continue today. John Jay College is a critical part of New York. The spirit of John Jay College of Criminal Justice can be found in its students, Pulitzer Prize-winning faculty, and enthusiastic administrators who form a, civic-minded community of motivated and intellectually curious individuals committed to public service and global citizenship.

For example, earlier this year, the National Ethnic Coalition of Organizations, NECO, established a scholarship at John Jay College in memory of New York City Police Department Detectives Rafael Ramos and Wenjian Liu, who lost their lives in December 2014 while serving the citizens of New York. The scholarship was announced on March 11 during the college's NYPD alumni reception held in celebration of the longstanding partnership and collaboration with the NYPD. Of course, September 11, 2001 had a profound impact on the campus and served as a catalyst to honor the 67 students, faculty, and alumni who lost their lives that day. John Jay established a variety of initiatives, programs, research centers, scholarships, including the creation of the Center on Terrorism to study global terrorism and the Christian Regenhard Center for Emergency Response Studies, named after a probationary firefighter killed at the World Trade Center. As one of the leading institutions in the country in the field of criminal justice and public safety, John Jay College is one of the few institutions to offer M.A. students a certificate in the critical study of terrorism.

John Jay College's commitment to diversity is shown by the fact that it has the highest Hispanic enrollment of any 4-year college in the Northeastern United States, and it has ranked No. 1 in the Nation in awarding bachelor's degree in protective services, No. 3 in psychology degrees, and No. 7 in public administration. John Jay's undergraduate, graduate and doctoral forensic degree programs are top ranking. The College's Master of Public Administration programs recently received the Diversity and Social Equity Awards by the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs and Administration. The nationally recognized Program for Research Initiatives in Science and Math, PRISM, at John Jay College engages underrepresented students in careers in science and math by providing an opportunity for them to participate in faculty-mentored scientific research in areas like molecular biology, toxicology, criminalistics and computer science, and partake in professional research conferences while completing their degree. Since its inception, graduation numbers from the College's science majors have tripled, and the number of students, and especially underrepresented minority students, moving on to doctoral and medical degrees has grown five-fold.

John Jay's faculty personify excellence—they include Pulitzer Prize winners, Presidential scholars, recipients of prestigious book awards, presidents of leading professional organizations, and editors of prominent scholarly journals. They have been recognized by their peers and even by the White House for their dedication to teaching, research, and mentoring. The college's students regularly win prestigious scholarships, including the Marshal Scholarship, internships, including the White House Internship, and fellowships, including Fulbright, JK Watson and the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship. They are also accepted to high-profile graduate and professional schools. Their alumni number more than 54,000, many

of whom hold leadership roles in public sector agencies, including the United States Marshals Service, the FBI, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the National Parks Service, the State Department, Peace Corps, the United Nations, and private companies in the United States and worldwide.

Affordability is an essential component of the college's core mission. At a time when over 37 million Americans are saddled with over $1 trillion in student debt, John Jay College was recently named one of the top 10 colleges where students graduate with the least debt. Only 20 percent of John Jay students were compelled to borrow money to finance their college education, less than one-third of the national average. And the vast majority of John Jay students graduate debt-free—enabling them to become successful in service for others without having to spend years paying off their student loans. In fact John Jay College was recently ranked No. 4 in the ''Best Bang for the Buck'' in the Northeast rankings in Washington Monthly's College guide.

John Jay develops fierce advocates for justice—each committed every day to building a better democracy. I am proud to represent John Jay College of Criminal Justice and the values that it stands for and works for every day. Congratulations to John Jay College on this very important day and its 50-year record of fighting for justice.●

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 12:43 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. 172. An act to designate the United States courthouse located at 501 East Court Street in Jackson, Mississippi, as the ''R. Jess Brown United States Courthouse''.

H.R. 373. An act to direct the Secretary of the Interior and Secretary of Agriculture to expedite access to certain Federal land under the administrative jurisdiction of each Secretary for good Samaritan search-and-recovery missions, and for other purposes.

H.R. 984. An act to amend the National Trails System Act to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study on the feasibility of designating the Chief Standing Bear National Historic Trail, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1075. An act to designate the United States Customs and Border Protection Port of Entry located at First Street and Pan American Avenue in Douglas, Arizona, as the ''Raul Hector Castro Port of Entry''.

H.R. 1324. An act to adjust the boundary of the Arapaho National Forest, Colorado, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1690. An act to designate the United States courthouse located at 700 Grant Street in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, as the ''Joseph F. Weis Jr. United States Courthouse''.

The message also announced that pursuant to 44 U.S.C. 2702 and the order of the House of January 6, 2015, the Speaker appoints the following individual on the part of the House of Representatives to the Advisory Committee on the Records of Congress: Mr. Jeffrey W. Thomas of Columbus, Ohio.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 172. An act to designate the United States courthouse located at 501 East Court Street in Jackson, Mississippi, as the ''R. Jess Brown United States Courthouse''; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

H.R. 373. An act to direct the Secretary of the Interior and Secretary of Agriculture to expedite access to certain Federal land under the administrative jurisdiction of each Secretary for good Samaritan search-and-recovery missions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 984. An act to amend the National Trails System Act to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study on the feasibility of designating the Chief Standing Bear National Historic Trail, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 1075. An act to designate the United States Customs and Border Protection Port of Entry located at First Street and Pan American Avenue in Douglas, Arizona, as the ''Raul Hector Castro Port of Entry''; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

H.R. 1324. An act to adjust the boundary of the Arapaho National Forest, Colorado, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 1690. An act to designate the United States courthouse located at 700 Grant Street in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, as the ''Joseph F. Weis Jr. United States Courthouse''; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

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–1384. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safludenacil; Pesticide Tolerances'' (FRL No. 9923–57) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 22, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–1385. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Bicyclopyrone; Pesticide Tolerances'' (FRL No. 9926–66) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 22, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–1386. A communication from the Congressional Review Coordinator , Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Importation of Apples From China'' ((RIN0579–AD89) (Docket No. APHIS–2014–0003)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 24, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–1387. A communication from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Importation of Papayas From Peru'' ((RIN0579–AD68) (Docket No. APHIS–2012–0014)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 24, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–1388. A communication from the Assistant Director, Executive and Political Personnel, Department of Defense, transmitting, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Under Secretary of the Air Force, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 22, 2015; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–1389. A communication from the Assistant Director, Senior Executive Management Office, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs), Department of the Navy, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 22, 2015; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–1390. A communication from the Assistant Director, Senior Executive Management Office, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), Department of Defense, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 22, 2015; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–1391. A communication from the Assistant Director, Senior Executive Management Office, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), Department of Defense, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 22, 2015; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–1392. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''2015 Report to Congress on Sustainable Ranges''; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–1393. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Suspension of Community Eligibility'' ((44 CFR Part 64) (Docket No. FEMA–2015–0001)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 23, 2015; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1394. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Suspension of Community Eligibility'' ((44 CFR Part 64) (Docket No. FEMA–2015–0001)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 22, 2015; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1395. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency declared in Executive Order 12978 of October 21, 1995, with respect to significant narcotics traffickers centered in Colombia; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1396. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to the situation in or in relation to the Democratic Republic of the Congo that was declared in Executive Order 13413 of October 27, 2006; to

the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1397. 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 Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1398. A communication from the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Special Regulations, Areas of the National Park System, Bryce Canyon National Park, Bicycling'' (RIN1024–AE23) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 27, 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–1399. 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–2015–0468); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–1400. 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–2015–0467); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–1401. 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–2015–0466); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–1402. 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–2015–0465); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–1403. 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–2015–0470); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–1404. 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–2015–0469); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–1405. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a strategy for Support for Russia Democracy and Civil Society Organizations; a strategy for Assistance to Civil Society in Ukraine; and a strategy for Anticipated Defense Articles, Defense Services, and Training to Ukraine (OSS–2015–0471); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–1406. 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 14–129); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–1407. A communication from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to the Case-Zablocki Act, 1 U.S.C. 112b, as amended, the report of the texts and background statements of international agreements, other than treaties (List 2015–0032—2015–0035); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–1408. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the activities of the Millennium Challenge Corporation during fiscal year 2014; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–1409. A communication from the Acting Director, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska: Sablefish Managed Under the Individual Fishing Quota Program'' (RIN0648–XD818) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 22, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1410. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Pacific Halibut Fisheries; Catch Sharing Plan'' (RIN0648–BE69) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 22, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1411. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''International Fisheries; Western and Central Pacific Fisheries for Highly Migratory Species; Fishing Restrictions Regarding the Oceanic Whitetip Shark, the Whale Shark, and the Silky Shark'' (RIN0648–BD44) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 22, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1412. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries Off West Coast States; Highly Migratory Fisheries; California Swordfish Drift Gillnet Fishery; Vessel Monitoring System and Pre-Trip Notification Requirements'' (RIN0648–BE25) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 22, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1413. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Crab Rationalization Program'' (RIN0648–BA61) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 22, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1414. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, 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; Black Sea Bass Fishery; Framework Adjustment 8'' (RIN0648–BE60) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 23, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1415. A communication from the Acting Director, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; 2015 Commercial Accountability Measure and Closure for South Atlantic Vermilion Snapper'' (RIN0648–XD734) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 23, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1416. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Snapper-Grouper Fishery Off the Southern Atlantic States; Amendment 32'' (RIN0648–BE20) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 23, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1417. A communication from the Acting Director, National Marine Fisheries Service, 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 Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area'' (RIN0648–XD844) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 23, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1418. A communication from the Acting Director, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Summer Flounder Fishery; Quota Transfer'' (RIN0648–XD874) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 23, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1419. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zone; Xterra Swim, Myrtle Beach, SC'' ((RIN1625–AA00) (Docket No. USCG–2015–0019)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 23, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1420. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zone; Sabine River, Orange, TX'' ((RIN1625–AA00) (Docket No. USCG–2015–0236)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 23, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1421. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zone; Eastern Branch Elizabeth River; Norfolk, VA'' ((RIN1625–AA00) (Docket No. USCG–2015–0202)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 23, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1422. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zone; Barge-based Fireworks, Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin'' ((RIN1625–AA00) (Docket No. USCG–2015–0213)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 23, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1423. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zone; Naval Helicopter Association (NHA) Red Bull Helicopter Demonstration;

San Diego Bay, San Diego, CA'' ((RIN1625–AA00) (Docket No. USCG–2015–0137)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 23, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1424. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zone; Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum Fireworks Display; Lake Erie, Cleveland, OH'' ((RIN1625–AA00) (Docket No. USCG–2015–0186)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 23, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1425. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zone; Marina del Rey Fireworks Show, Santa Monica Bay; Marina del Rey, California'' ((RIN1625–AA00) (Docket No. USCG–2015–0155)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 23, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1426. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zone; Sellwood Bridge Construction, Willamette River, Portland, OR'' ((RIN1625–AA00) (Docket No. USCG–2015–0187)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 23, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1427. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zone; Naval Helicopter Association (NHA) Red Bull Helicopter Demonstration; San Diego Bay, San Diego, CA'' ((RIN1625–AA00) (Docket No. USCG–2015–0137)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 23, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1428. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zone; Vessel Fire and Escort, Port of New York, NJ, NY'' ((RIN1625–AA00) (Docket No. USCG–2015–0189)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 23, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1429. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zone; Delaware River; Marcus Hook, PA'' ((RIN1625–AA00) (Docket No. USCG–2015–0129)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 23, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1430. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safety Zone; Tesoro Terminal Protest: Port of Long Beach Harbor; Pacific Ocean, California'' ((RIN1625–AA00) (Docket No. USCG–2015–0163)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 23, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1431. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Mantua Creek, Paulsboro, NJ'' ((RIN1625–AA09) (Docket No. USCG–2014–0807)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 23, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1432. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Coquille River, Bandon, OR'' ((RIN1625–AA09) (Docket No. USCG–2014–0213)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 23, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1433. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Hoquiam River, Hoquiam, WA'' ((RIN1625–AA09) (Docket No. USCG–2014–1029)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 23, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1434. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Ontonagon River, Ontonagon, MI'' ((RIN1625–AA09) (Docket No. USCG–2015–0082)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 23, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1435. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Taylor Bayou Outfall Canal (Joint Outfall Canal), TX'' ((RIN1625–AA09) (Docket No. USCG–2014–0386)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 23, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1436. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Special Local Regulation; Hebda Cup Rowing Regatta; Detroit River, Wyandotte, MI'' ((RIN1625–AA08) (Docket No. USCG–2015–0190)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 23, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1437. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Special Local Regulation; Glass City Scrimmage; Maumee River, Toldeo, OH'' ((RIN1625–AA08) (Docket No. USCG–2015–0185)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 23, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1438. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Special Local Regulations and Safety Zones; Recurring Marine Events and Fireworks Displays within the Fifth Coast Guard District '' ((RIN1625–AA08) (Docket No. USCG–2014–1011)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 23, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1439. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Special Local Regulation; Charleston Race Week, Charleston Harbor; Charleston, SC'' ((RIN1625–AA08) (Docket No. USCG–2015–0018)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 23, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1440. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Special Local Regulation; San Salvador Launch and Procession; San Diego Bay, San Diego, CA'' ((RIN1625–AA08) (Docket No. USCG–2015–0138)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 23, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1441. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Consolidation of Officer in Charge, Marine Inspection for Outer Continental Shelf Activities; Eighth Coast Guard District; Technical, Organizational, and Conforming Amendments'' ((RIN1625–AB88) (Docket No. USCG–2013–0491)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 23, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1442. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Electrical Equipment in Hazardous Locations'' ((RIN1625–AC00) (Docket No. USCG–2012–0850)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 23, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1443. A communication from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Section 73.202(b), FM Table of Allotments, FM Broadcast Stations (Sagaponack, New York)'' ((MB Docket No. 14–253) (DA 15–441)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 22, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1444. A communication from the Secretary of the Commission, Bureau of Consumer Protection, Federal Trade Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Energy and Water Use Labeling for Consumer Products Under the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (Energy Labeling Rule)'' (RIN3084–AB15) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 22, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1445. A communication from the Secretary of the Commission, Bureau of Consumer Protection, Federal Trade Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Energy Labeling Rule'' (RIN3084–AB03) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 22, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1446. A communication from the Secretary of the Commission, Bureau of Consumer Protection, Federal Trade Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Trade Regulation Rule Concerning Cooling-Off Period for Sales Made at Homes or at Certain Other Locations'' (RIN3084–AB10) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 22, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1447. A communication from the Secretary of the Commission, Bureau of Consumer Protection, Federal Trade Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Energy Labeling Rule'' (RIN3084–AB03) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 27, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation .

EC–1448. A communication from the Secretary of the Commission, Bureau of Consumer Protection, Federal Trade Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revisions to Rules of

Practice'' (16 CFR Part 4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 27, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1449. A communication from the Secretary of the Commission, Bureau of Consumer Protection, Federal Trade Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revisions to Rules of Practice'' (16 CFR Parts 2, 3, and 4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 27, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1450. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Restricted Area Boundary Descriptions; Joint Base Lewis-McChord, WA'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2015–0618)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 24, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1451. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (81); Amdt. No. 3635'' (RIN2120–AA65) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 24, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1452. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (119); Amdt. No. 3638'' (RIN2120–AA65) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 24, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1453. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (62); Amdt. No. 3637'' (RIN2120–AA65) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 24, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1454. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (84); Amdt. No. 3636'' (RIN2120–AA65) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 24, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1455. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No . FAA–2014–0123)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 24, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1456. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Agusta S.p.A. Helicopters'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–0908)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 24, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1457. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Lockheed Martin Corporation/Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2014–0627)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 24, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1458. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; BAE Systems (Operations) Limited Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2014–0621)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 24, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1459. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Dassault Aviation Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–0825)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 24, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1460. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; PILATUS Aircraft Limited Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–0132)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 24, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1461. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2014–0920)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 24, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1462. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Rolls-Royce plc Turbofan Engines'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2014–0904)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 24, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1463. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Cessna Aircraft Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–0839)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 24, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1464. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''IFR Altitudes; Miscellaneous Amendments'' (RIN2120–AA63) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 24, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1465. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, Office of the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Administrator, Federal Highway Administration, Department of Transportation, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 24, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1466. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, Office of the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Administrator, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 24, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1467. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revisions to the California State Implementation Plan, Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District'' (FRL No. 9926–19–Region 9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 22, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1468. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revisions to the California State Implementation Plan, Feather River Air Quality Management District'' (FRL No. 9924–77–Region 9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 22, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1469. 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; Washington: Prevention of Significant Deterioration and Visibility Protection'' (FRL No. 9926–95–Region 10) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 22, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1470. 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; Pennsylvania; Redesignation of the Harrisburg-Lebanon-Carlisle-York Nonattainment Areas to Attainment for the 1997 Annual and the 2006 24-Hour Fine Particulate Matter Standard; Correction'' (FRL No. 9926–79–Region 3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 22, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1471. 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; Montana; Revised Format for Materials Being Incorporated by Reference for Montana'' (FRL No. 9924–80–Region 8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 22, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1472. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Managing the Safety/Security Interface'' (Regulatory Guide 5.74, Revision 1) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 23, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1473. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Finalizing Medicare Rules under Section 902 of the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003 (MMA) for Calendar Year (CY) 2014''; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1474. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Open Payments Program Report to Congress''; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1475. 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 ''IRC Section 5000C—Qualified Income Tax Treaty Countries'' (Notice 2015–35) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 24, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1476. 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—May 2015'' (Rev. Rul. 2015–8) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 24, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1477. 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 ''Application of the General Welfare Exclusion to Indian Tribal Government Programs That Provide Benefits to Tribal Members'' (Notice 2015–34) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 24, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1478. A communication from the Secretary of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Assistance to States for the Education of Children with Disabilities'' ((RIN1820–AB65) (Docket ID ED–2012–OSERS–0020)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 22, 2015; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–1479. A communication from the General Counsel, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Allocation of Assets in Single-Employer Plans; Benefits Payable in Terminated Single-Employer Plans; Interest Assumptions for Valuing and Paying Benefits'' (29 CFR Part 4022 and 29 CFR Part 4044) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 24, 2015; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–1480. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a financial report relative to the Medical Device User Fee Amendments of 2012 for fiscal year 2014; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–1481. A communication from the Director of Regulations Policy and Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Administrative Detention of Drugs Intended for Human or Animal Use; Correction'' (Docket No. FDA–2013–N–0365) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 27, 2015; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–1482. A communication from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Section 73.202(b), FM Table of Allotments, FM Broadcast Stations (Shelter Island, New York)'' ((MB Docket No. 14–255) (DA 15–442)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 22, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1483. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20–596, ''Limitations on the Use of Restraints Amendment Act of 2014'' ; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1484. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–48, ''Reproductive Health Non-Discrimination Clarification Temporary Amendment Act of 2015'' ; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1485. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–49, ''Marijuana Possession Decriminalization Clarification Temporary Amendment Act of 2015'' ; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1486. A communication from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, three (3) reports relative to vacancies in the Department of Justice, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 23, 2015; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–1487. A communication from the Chief Impact Analyst, Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Updating Certain Delegations of Authority in VA Medical Regulations'' (RIN2900–AP17) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 23, 2015; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC–1488. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20–492, ''Student Nutrition on Winter Weather Days Act of 2014'' ; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1489. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–37, ''H Street, N.E., Retail Priority Area Clarification Temporary Amendment Act of 2015'' ; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1490. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–38, ''Wage Theft Prevention Clarification Temporary Amendment Act of 2015'' ; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1491. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–39, ''Public Charter School Priority Enrollment Temporary Amendment Act of 2015'' ; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1492. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–40, ''Chancellor of the District of Columbia Public Schools Salary Adjustment Temporary Amendment Act of 2015'' ; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1493. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–41, ''Health Benefit Exchange Authority Financial Sustainability Temporary Amendment Act of 2015'' ; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1494. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–42, ''Educator Evaluation Data Protection Temporary Amendment Act of 2015'' ; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1495. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–43, ''At-Risk Funding Temporary Amendment Act of 2015'' ; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1496. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–44, ''Vending Regulations Temporary Amendment Act of 2015'' ; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1497. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–47, ''Testing Integrity Temporary Amendment Act of 2015'' ; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

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. COONS (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mrs. ERNST, Mrs. CAPITO, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. PETERS, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 1126. A bill to modify and extend the National Guard State Partnership Program; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. REED (for himself and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 1127. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand the denial of deduction for certain excessive employee remuneration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. STABENOW:

S. 1128. A bill to establish an Early Federal Pell Grant Commitment Program; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. REED, and Mrs. BOXER):

S. 1129. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reform and enforce taxation of tobacco products; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. BOXER (for herself, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. MARKEY):

S. 1130. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to improve procedures for legal justice for members of the Armed Forces, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. FRANKEN (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. BROWN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. SCHUMER, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. COONS, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. 1131. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to reduce the incidence of diabetes among Medicare beneficiaries, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MERKLEY:

S. 1132. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for patient protection by establishing safe nurse staffing levels at certain Medicare providers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. FRANKEN (for himself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. UDALL, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 1133. A bill to amend title 9 of the United States Code with respect to arbitration; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. AYOTTE (for herself and Mr. DONNELLY):

S. 1134. A bill to address prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. MCCASKILL (for herself and Mr. BURR):

S. 1135. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for fairness in hospital payments under the Medicare program; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. TESTER (for himself, Mr. ENZI, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. SCHUMER, and Mr. DAINES):

S. 1136. A bill relating to the modernization of C–130 aircraft to meet applicable regulations of the Federal Aviation Administration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. LEE, Mr. HATCH, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. 1137. A bill to amend title 35, United States Code, and the Leahy-Smith America Invents Act to make improvements and technical corrections, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. PAUL (for himself and Mr. SCHATZ):

S. 1138. A bill to reclassify certain low-level felonies as misdemeanors, to eliminate the increased penalties for cocaine offenses where the cocaine involved is cocaine base, to reinvest in our communities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. HIRONO, and Mr. HEINRICH):

S. Res. 154. A resolution designating May 16, 2015, as ''Kids to Parks Day''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. INHOFE (for himself and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. Res. 155. A resolution establishing May 2, 2015, as a Day of Recognition for Ebola Orphans to express support for the children and families affected by the 2014 Ebola outbreak in West Africa by promoting awareness of the children of West Africa who have been orphaned by the 2014 Ebola epidemic, celebrating those who have recognized and are working to fulfill the needs of children, and encouraging the people of the United States to continue to support the people of West Africa; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 185

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 185, a bill to create a limited population pathway for approval of certain antibacterial drugs.

S. 192

At the request of Mr. ALEXANDER, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) were added as cosponsors of S. 192, a bill to reauthorize the Older Americans Act of 1965, and for other purposes.

S. 271

At the request of Mr. REID, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 271, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to permit certain retired members of the uniformed services who have a service-connected disability to receive both disability compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs for their disability and either retired pay by reason of their years of military service or Combat-Related Special Compensation, and for other purposes.

S. 373

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) was added as a cosponsor of S. 373, a bill to provide for the establishment of nationally uniform and environmentally sound standards governing discharges incidental to the normal operation of a vessel.

S. 423

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the names of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) were added as cosponsors of S. 423, a bill to amend the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act to provide an exception to the annual written privacy notice requirement.

S. 433

At the request of Mr. SESSIONS, the names of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED), the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) and the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 433, a bill to establish a benefit calculation methodology with respect to currency undervaluation for purposes of countervailing duty investigations and reviews, and for other purposes.

S. 450

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 450, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide tax rate parity among all tobacco products, and for other purposes.

S. 471

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 471, a bill to improve the provision of health care for women veterans by the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 536

At the request of Mr. UDALL, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 536, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude from gross income payments under the Indian Health Service Loan Repayment Program and certain amounts received under the Indian Health Professions Scholarship Program.

S. 578

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 578, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure more timely access to home health services for Medicare beneficiaries under the Medicare program.

S. 611

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 611, a bill to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act to reauthorize technical assistance to small public water systems, and for other purposes.

S. 654

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 654, a bill to exempt certain class A CDL drivers from the requirement to obtain a hazardous material endorsement while operating a service vehicle with a fuel tank containing 3,785 liters (1,000 gallons) or less of diesel fuel.

S. 713

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 713, a bill to prevent international violence against women, and for other purposes.

S. 730

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 730, a bill to permanently extend the Protecting Tenants at Foreclosure Act of 2009.

S. 766

At the request of Mr. HOEVEN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 766, a bill to limit the retrieval of data from vehicle event data recorders, and for other purposes.

S. 774

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 774, a bill to amend the

Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council Act of 1978 to improve the examination of depository institutions, and for other purposes.

S. 776

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 776, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve access to medication therapy management under part D of the Medicare program.

S. 801

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) was added as a cosponsor of S. 801, a bill to amend the National Labor Relations Act to provide for appropriate designation of collective bargaining units.

S. 812

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the names of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) and the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) were added as cosponsors of S. 812, a bill to enhance the ability of community financial institutions to foster economic growth and serve their communities, boost small businesses, increase individual savings, and for other purposes.

S. 824

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 824, a bill to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank of the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 862

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the names of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) and the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) were added as cosponsors of S. 862, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide more effective remedies to victims of discrimination in the payment of wages on the basis of sex, and for other purposes.

S. 871

At the request of Mr. MCCONNELL, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 871, a bill to provide for an application process for interested parties to apply for an area to be designated as a rural area, and for other purposes.

S. 893

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 893, a bill to establish an Energy Productivity Innovation Challenge (EPIC) to assist energy policy innovation in the States to promote the goal of doubling electric and thermal energy productivity by January 1, 2030.

S. 898

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 898, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for the participation of optometrists in the National Health Service Corps scholarship and loan repayment programs, and for other purposes.

S. 933

At the request of Mr. ALEXANDER, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 933, a bill to amend the National Labor Relations Act with respect to the timing of elections and pre-election hearings and the identification of pre-election issues, and to require that lists of employees eligible to vote in organizing elections be provided to the National Labor Relations Board.

S. 957

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 957, a bill to increase access to capital for veteran entrepreneurs to help create jobs.

S. 974

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 974, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to prohibit employment of children in tobacco-related agriculture by deeming such employment as oppressive child labor.

S. 993

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 993, a bill to increase public safety by facilitating collaboration among the criminal justice, juvenile justice, veterans treatment services, mental health treatment, and substance abuse systems.

S. 998

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) was added as a cosponsor of S. 998, a bill to establish a process for the consideration of temporary duty suspensions and reductions, and for other purposes.

S. 1032

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1032, a bill to expand the use of E–Verify, to hold employers accountable, and for other purposes.

S. 1117

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1117, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to expand the authority of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to remove senior executives of the Department of Veterans Affairs for performance or misconduct to include removal of certain other employees of the Department, and for other purposes.

S. CON. RES. 4

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the names of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) and the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) were added as cosponsors of S. Con. Res. 4, a concurrent resolution supporting the Local Radio Freedom Act.

AMENDMENT NO. 1138

At the request of Mr. RISCH, the names of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 1138 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1191, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

AMENDMENT NO. 1141

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the names of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER), the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) and the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 1141 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1191, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

AMENDMENT NO. 1145

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1145 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1191, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

AMENDMENT NO. 1146

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1146 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1191, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

AMENDMENT NO. 1147

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. SASSE) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1147 proposed to H.R. 1191, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

AMENDMENT NO. 1151

At the request of Mr. GARDNER, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr.

PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1151 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1191, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

AMENDMENT NO. 1189

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1189 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1191, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

AMENDMENT NO. 1190

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the names of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 1190 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1191, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. REED (for himself and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 1127. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand the denial of deduction for certain excessive employee remuneration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, today I am reintroducing the Stop Subsidizing Multimillion Dollar Corporate Bonuses Act with my colleague, Senator BLUMENTHAL. This bill closes a loophole that allows publicly traded corporations to deduct an executive's pay that exceeds $1 million from their tax bill.

Under current tax law, when a public corporation calculates its taxable income, it is generally permitted to deduct the cost of compensation from its revenues, with limits up to $1 million for some of the firm's most senior executives. However, a loophole relating to performance-based compensation has allowed many public corporations to avoid such limits and freely deduct excessive executive compensation. To illustrate how this loophole works, if a CEO receives $15 million in performance-based compensation in a given year, the public corporation's taxable income would decline by $15 million. With the current corporate tax rate at 35 percent, the corporation in this case would receive a tax cut of $5.25 million.

The Stop Subsidizing Multimillion Dollar Corporate Bonuses Act would instead allow a public corporation to deduct all forms of compensation up to only $1 million per employee. Using the same example above, a profitable public corporation, after deducting only $1 million from the $15 million in CEO compensation, would then pay $4.9 million in taxes. In short, instead of costing the government $5.25 million, this public corporation will be paying $4.9 million in taxes, reducing the burden on middle-class families and our national debt.

Indeed, over a 10-year window, the Joint Committee on Taxation, in their most recent assessment, estimated that closing this loophole would save U.S. taxpayers over $50 billion.

First, our legislation extends section 162(m) of the Tax Code to apply to all employees of publicly traded corporations so that all compensation is subject to a deductibility cap of $1 million. Publicly traded corporations would still be permitted to pay their executives as much as they desire, but compensation above and beyond $1 million would no longer be subsidized through our Tax Code.

Second, our bill removes the exemption for performance-based compensation, which currently permits compensation deductions above and beyond $1 million when executives have met performance benchmarks set by the corporation's board of directors. As a result, publicly traded corporations would still be able to incentivize their executives, but all such incentives would be subject to a corporate deductibility cap of $1 million.

Finally, our legislation makes a technical correction to ensure that all publicly traded corporations that are required to provide quarterly and annual reports to their investors under Securities and Exchange Commission rules and regulations are subject to section 162(m). Currently, this section of the Tax Code only covers some publicly traded corporations that are required to provide these periodic reports to their shareholders. Discouraging unrestrained compensation packages shouldn't hinge on whether a publicly traded corporation falls into one SEC reporting requirement or another, and our bill closes this technical loophole.

With this legislation, we aim to put an end to some of the extravagant tax breaks that exclusively benefit public corporations. This is simply a matter of fairness, ensuring that corporations—and not taxpayers who face their own challenges in this economy—are paying for the multimillion dollar bonuses they have decided to dole out.

I want to thank Senator BLUMENTHAL for working with me on this issue, and I urge our colleagues to join us in cosponsoring this legislation.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. LEE, Mr. HATCH, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. 1137. A bill to amend title 35, United States Code, and the Leahy-Smith America Invents Act to make improvements and technical corrections, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, the U.S. is the world's leader in innovation. Yet today, our patent system—which has allowed generations of inventors, innovators, and entrepreneurs to thrive—is under attack from bad actors, also known as ''patent trolls''.

Abusive patent litigation is stifling the innovation and entrepreneurship that our patent system has been designed to protect. Over the last decade, there has been an explosion in the growth of this type of harmful litigation as those who exploit abusive patent litigation tactics for financial gain have taken aim at businesses operating in every sector of our economy.

From Main Street to Wall Street to Silicon Valley, from start-ups to neighborhood restaurants to major retailers—businesses and consumers across the country are being harmed. Because of this abuse, innovative companies spend less time and resources on research and innovation, and often must have their talented workforce devote many man-hours to defending against baseless claims. This comes at the expense of discovering that next medical breakthrough or rolling out new technologies that will create jobs.

Patent trolls prey on businesses by filing frivolous lawsuits and employing an array of heavy-handed and deceptive tactics to scare plaintiffs into settlements. These bad actors send vague and overly broad demand letters, exploit loose pleading standards that provide little substance of the alleged infringement claims, hide their identity behind shell companies, and use the threat of high cost patent litigation discovery as a weapon. This is a drag on our economy, costing an estimated $80 billion annually in direct and indirect costs. This means fewer jobs created, less innovation, and higher costs for consumers.

To restore integrity to our patent system, today, along with Judiciary Committee Ranking Member LEAHY, and Senators CORNYN, SCHUMER, LEE, HATCH and KLOBUCHAR, I am introducing the Protecting American Talent and Entrepreneurship Act, PATENT Act.

This builds upon the reforms made by the America Invents Act and will promote the intellectual property rights that our Founding Fathers recognized are key to American innovation. The provisions of the PATENT Act will promote more transparency in patent ownership, establish a clear, uniform standard for pleading in patent cases, and deter abusive litigation. I would like to note some of the key provisions in the bill.

The PATENT Act will require plaintiffs in a patent suit to identify each patent and each claim that is allegedly infringed, which products are infringing, and include a description of the alleged infringement. The current requirements for pleading in a patent

litigation have been subject to scrutiny by the courts and amount to little more than notice pleading. By providing these congressionally enacted bright line rules across judicial jurisdictions, defendants will be able to better respond to claims and courts will be able to resolve litigation more efficiently.

This legislation will place reasonable limitations on discovery by requiring courts to stay discovery pending the resolution of specific preliminary motions, including motions to dismiss and transfer venue. It also calls on the Judicial Conference to develop rules and procedures to promote efficient and effective discovery, including examining to what extent each party is entitled to ''core documentary evidence''.

While current law allows for fee shifting in patent cases, the reality is that bad actors are almost never subject to fee shifting, leading to an explosion in abusive litigation. The PATENT Act provides that reasonable attorney fees will be awarded if the prevailing party in litigation makes a showing, and the court finds, that the non-prevailing party's conduct was not ''objectively reasonable,'' unless special circumstances make an award unjust. This measure will help to deter the filing of frivolous claims. The bill also provides a process for the recovery of fees from an abusive litigant.

Further, the bill will help stop the widespread sending of fraudulent or materially misleading demand letters by building on existing Federal Trade Commission authority to go after those who violate Section 5 of the FTC Act in connection with patent assertion by engaging in widespread demand letter abuse. This provision has been carefully constructed so that it will not impinge upon legitimate licensing activity or expand FTC authority. We worked on the language contained in this provision with Chairman THUNE and his staff, as the Commerce Committee also has jurisdiction over the FTC, and it was important to us to get their input.

The bill also will help to protect small businesses, who are being targeted for doing nothing more than using products which they bought off-the-shelf, by allowing a suit against an end-user to be stayed while the manufacturer litigates the alleged infringement.

This bipartisan legislation is the result of a careful and deliberative process in which we worked with many stakeholders representing almost every area of the economy, the judiciary, and the administration. Since the process started in the last Congress, we've listened and tried to be responsive to all the concerns raised from the different industries and constituencies. As a result, we have made great strides in addressing issues that have been raised along the way and getting stakeholders comfortable with the bill. So I believe the PATENT Act strikes a good balance. Our intent is to protect the rights of patent holders while addressing the problem of abusive litigation. The PATENT Act does that.

As we move forward, we also intend to try to address other concerns that have been raised more recently by patent holders about the Patent and Trademark Office's IPR process. We want to make sure that the PTO processes are not being abused, and instead are being utilized as envisioned by the America Invents Act.

I would like to especially thank Ranking Member LEAHY for being an outstanding partner on the Judiciary Committee on all things intellectual property, Senators CORNYN and SCHUMER for their sustained leadership on the patent troll issue, Senator LEE for his hard work on the demand letter provision, Senator HATCH for his valuable work on the recovery provision, and Senator KLOBUCHAR for her constructive involvement in moving the bill forward. Because of these efforts, we have a stronger bill and are closer to restoring the integrity of the patent system. I am hopeful that we can move in a deliberative and productive way through Committee so we can get to the floor in a timely manner.

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. 1137

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Protecting American Talent and Entrepreneurship Act of 2015'' or the ''PATENT Act''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
Sec. 2. Definitions.
Sec. 3. Pleading requirements for patent infringement actions.
Sec. 4. Customer-suit exception.
Sec. 5. Discovery limits.
Sec. 6. Procedures and practices to implement recommendations of the Judicial Conference.
Sec. 7. Fees and other expenses.
Sec. 8. Requirement of clarity and specificity in demand letters.
Sec. 9. Abusive demand letters.
Sec. 10. Transparency of patent transfer.
Sec. 11. Protection of intellectual property licenses in bankruptcy.
Sec. 12. Small business education, outreach, and information access.
Sec. 13. Studies on patent transactions, quality, and examination.
Sec. 14. Technical corrections to the Leahy-Smith America Invents Act and other improvements.
Sec. 15. Effective date.
Sec. 16. Severability.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

(1) DIRECTOR.—The term ''Director'' means the Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office.

(2) OFFICE.—The term ''Office'' means the United States Patent and Trademark Office.

SEC. 3. PLEADING REQUIREMENTS FOR PATENT INFRINGEMENT ACTIONS.

(a) ELIMINATION OF FORM 18.—Not later than 1 month after the date of enactment of this Act, the Supreme Court, using existing resources, shall eliminate Form 18 in the Appendix to the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure (Complaint for Patent Infringement).

(b) PLEADING REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) AMENDMENT.—Chapter 29 of title 35, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 281 the following:

''§ 281A. Pleading requirements for patent infringement actions

''(a) PLEADING REQUIREMENTS.—In a civil action in which a party asserts a claim for relief arising under any Act of Congress relating to patents, a party alleging infringement shall include in a complaint, counterclaim, or cross-claim for patent infringement, except as provided in subsection (c), the following:

''(1) An identification of each patent allegedly infringed.

''(2) An identification of each claim of each patent identified under paragraph (1) that is allegedly infringed.

''(3) For each claim identified under paragraph (2), an identification of each accused process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter (referred to in this section as an 'accused instrumentality') alleged to infringe the claim.

''(4) For each accused instrumentality identified under paragraph (3), an identification with particularity, if known, of—

''(A) the name or model number (or a representative model number) of each accused instrumentality; or

''(B) if there is no name or model number, a description of each accused instrumentality.

''(5) For each claim identified under paragraph (2), a description of the elements thereof that are alleged to be infringed by the accused instrumentality and how the accused instrumentality is alleged to infringe those elements.

''(6) For each claim of indirect infringement, a description of the acts of the alleged infringer that are alleged to contribute to or induce the direct infringement.

''(b) DISMISSAL FOR FAILURE TO MEET PLEADING REQUIREMENTS.—The court shall, on the motion of any party, dismiss any count or counts of the complaint, counterclaim, or cross-claim for patent infringement if the requirements of paragraphs (1) through (6) of subsection (a) are not met with respect to such count or counts. The fact that a party pleads in accordance with subsection (c) shall not be a basis for dismissal if the party nonetheless states a plausible claim for relief sufficient under the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.

''(c) INFORMATION NOT ACCESSIBLE.—If some subset of information required to comply with subsection (a) is not accessible to a party after an inquiry reasonable under the circumstances, consistent with rule 11 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, an allegation requiring that information may be based upon a general description of that information, along with a statement as to why the information is not accessible.

''(d) AMENDMENT OF PLEADINGS.—Nothing in this provision shall be construed to affect a party's leave to amend pleadings as specified in the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. Amendments permitted by the court are subject to the pleading requirements set forth in this section.

''(e) CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION.—A party required to disclose information described under subsection (a) may file information believed to be confidential under seal, with a motion setting forth good cause for such sealing. If such motion is denied by the court, the party may seek to file an amended pleading.

''(f) EXEMPTION.—Subsection (a) shall not apply to a civil action that includes a claim for relief arising under section 271(e)(2).

"§ 281B. Early disclosure requirements for patent infringement actions

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

''(1) the term 'financial interest'—

''(A) means—

''(i) with regard to a patent or patents, the right of a person to receive proceeds from the assertion of the patent or patents, including a fixed or variable portion of such proceeds; and

''(ii) with regard to the patentee, direct or indirect ownership or control by a person of more than 20 percent of the patentee; and

''(B) does not mean—

''(i) ownership of shares or other interests in a mutual or common investment fund, unless the owner of such interest participates in the management of such fund; or

''(ii) the proprietary interest of a policyholder in a mutual insurance company or a depositor in a mutual savings association, or a similar proprietary interest, unless the outcome of the proceeding could substantially affect the value of such interest;

''(2) the term 'patentee' means a party in a civil action that files a pleading subject to the requirements of section 281A;

''(3) the term 'proceeding' means all stages of a civil action, including pretrial and trial proceedings and appellate review; and

''(4) the term 'ultimate parent entity' has the meaning given the term in section 261A.

''(b) EARLY DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS.—Notwithstanding the requirements of section 299B, a patentee shall disclose to the court and each adverse party, not later than 14 days after the date on which the patentee serves or files the pleading subject to the requirements of section 281A—

''(1) the identity of each—

''(A) assignee of the patent or patents at issue, and any ultimate parent entity thereof;

''(B) entity with a right to sublicense to unaffiliated entities or to enforce the patent or patents at issue, and any ultimate parent entity thereof; and

''(C) entity, other than an entity the ultimate parent of which is disclosed under subparagraph (A) or (B), that the patentee knows to have a financial interest in—

''(i) the patent or patents at issue; or

''(ii) the patentee, and any ultimate parent entity thereof; and

''(2) for each patent that the patentee alleges to be infringed—

''(A) a list of each complaint, counterclaim, or cross-claim filed by the patentee or an affiliate thereof in the United States during the 3-year period preceding the date of the filing of the action, and any other complaint, counterclaim, or cross-claim filed in the United States during that period of which the patentee has knowledge, that asserts or asserted such patent, including—

''(i) the caption;

''(ii) civil action number;

''(iii) the court where the action was filed; and

''(iv) if applicable, any court to which the action was transferred;

''(B) a statement as to whether the patent is subject to an assurance made by the party to a standards development organization to license others under such patent if—

''(i) the assurance specifically identifies such patent or claims therein; and

''(ii) the allegation of infringement relates to such standard; and

''(C) a statement as to whether the Federal Government has imposed specific licensing requirements with respect to such patent.

''(c) DISCLOSURE OF FINANCIAL INTEREST.—

''(1) PUBLICLY TRADED.—For purposes of subsection (b)(1)(C), if the financial interest is held by a corporation traded on a public stock exchange, an identification of the name of the corporation and the public exchange listing shall satisfy the disclosure requirement.

''(2) NOT PUBLICLY TRADED.—For purposes of subsection (b)(1)(C), if the financial interest is not held by a publicly traded corporation, the disclosure shall satisfy the disclosure requirement if the information identifies—

''(A) in the case of a partnership, the name of the partnership, the address of the principal place of business, and the name and correspondence address of the registered agent;

''(B) in the case of a corporation, the name of the corporation, the location of incorporation, and the address of the principal place of business; and

''(C) for each individual, the name and correspondence address of that individual.

''(d) PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE.—Not later than 1 month after the date on which the disclosures required under subsection (b) are made, the patentee shall provide to the United States Patent and Trademark Office a filing containing the information disclosed pursuant to subsection (b)(1).

''(e) CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—A patentee required to disclose information under subsection (b) may file, under seal, information believed to be confidential, with a motion setting forth good cause for such sealing.

''(2) HOME ADDRESS INFORMATION.—For purposes of this section, the home address of an individual shall be considered to be confidential information.''.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 29 of title 35, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 281 the following new items:

''281A. Pleading requirements for patent infringement actions.

''281B. Early disclosure requirements for patent infringement actions.''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date of enactment of this Act and shall apply to any action for which a complaint is filed on or after that date.

SEC. 4. CUSTOMER-SUIT EXCEPTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 29 of title 35, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"§ 299A. Customer stay

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

''(1) the term 'covered customer' means a retailer or end user that is accused of infringing a patent or patents in dispute based on—

''(A) the sale, or offer for sale, of a covered product or covered process without material modification of the product or process in a manner that is alleged to infringe a patent or patents in dispute; or

''(B) the use by such retailer, the retailer's end user customer, or an end user of a covered product or covered process without material modification of the product or process in a manner that is alleged to infringe a patent or patents in dispute;

''(2) the term 'covered manufacturer' means a person who manufactures or supplies, or causes the manufacture or supply of, a covered product or covered process, or a relevant part thereof;

''(3) the term 'covered process' means a process, method, or a relevant part thereof, that is alleged to infringe the patent or patents in dispute where such process, method, or relevant part thereof is implemented by an apparatus, material, system, software or other instrumentality that is provided by the covered manufacturer;

''(4) the term 'covered product' means a component, product, system, service, or a relevant part thereof, that—

''(A) is alleged to infringe the patent or patents in dispute; or

''(B) implements a process alleged to infringe the patent or patents in dispute;

''(5) for purposes of this section, the term 'end user' shall include an affiliate of such an end user, but shall not include an entity that manufactures or causes the manufacture of a covered product or covered process or a relevant part thereof;

''(6) the term 'retailer' means an entity that generates its revenues predominately through the sale to the public of consumer goods or services, or an affiliate of such entity, but shall not include an entity that manufactures or causes the manufacture of a covered product or covered process or a relevant part thereof; and

''(7) for purposes of the definitions in subparagraphs (5) and (6), the terms 'use' and 'sale' mean the use and the sale, respectively, within the meanings given those terms under section 271.

''(b) MOTION FOR STAY.—In a civil action in which a party asserts a claim for relief arising under any Act of Congress relating to patents (other than an action that includes a cause of action described in section 271(e)), the court shall grant a motion to stay at least the portion of the action against a covered customer that relates to infringement of a patent involving a covered product or covered process if—

''(1) the covered manufacturer is a party to the action or a separate action in a Federal court of the United States involving the same patent or patents relating to the same covered product or covered process;

''(2) the covered customer agrees to be bound as to issues determined in an action described in paragraph (1) without a full and fair opportunity to separately litigate any such issue, but only as to those issues for which all other elements of the common law doctrine of issue preclusion are met; and

''(3) the motion is filed after the first pleading in the action but not later than the later of—

''(A) 120 days after service of the first pleading or paper in the action that specifically identifies the covered product or covered process as a basis for the alleged infringement of the patent by the covered customer, and specifically identifies how the covered product or covered process is alleged to infringe the patent; or

''(B) the date on which the first scheduling order in the case is entered.

''(c) MANUFACTURER CONSENT IN CERTAIN CASES.—If the covered manufacturer has been made a party to the action on motion by the covered customer, then a motion under subsection (b) may only be granted if the covered manufacturer and the covered customer agree in writing to the stay.

''(d) LIFT OF STAY.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—A stay entered under this section may be lifted upon grant of a motion based on a showing that—

''(A) the action involving the covered manufacturer will not resolve major issues in the suit against the covered customer, such as that a covered product or covered process identified in the motion to lift the stay is not a material part of the claimed invention or inventions in the patent or patents in dispute; or

''(B) the stay unreasonably prejudices or would be manifestly unjust to the party seeking to lift the stay.

''(2) SEPARATE ACTIONS.—In the case of a stay entered under this section based on the participation of the covered manufacturer in a separate action described in subsection (b)(1), a motion under paragraph (1) may

only be granted if the court in such separate action determines that the showing required under paragraph (1) has been made.

''(e) WAIVER OF ESTOPPEL EFFECT.—If, following the grant of a motion to stay under this section, the covered manufacturer in an action described in subsection (b)(1)—

''(1) obtains or consents to entry of a consent judgment involving one or more of the issues that gave rise to the stay; or

''(2) fails to prosecute to a final, non-appealable judgment a final decision as to one or more of the issues that gave rise to the stay,

the court may, upon motion, determine that such consent judgment or unappealed final decision shall not be binding on the covered customer with respect to one or more of the issues that gave rise to the stay based on a showing that such an outcome would unreasonably prejudice or be manifestly unjust to the covered customer in light of the circumstances of the case.

''(f) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit the ability of a court to grant any stay, expand any stay granted pursuant to this section, or grant any motion to intervene, if otherwise permitted by law.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 29 of title 35, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''299A. Customer stay.''.

SEC. 5. DISCOVERY LIMITS.

(a) AMENDMENT.—Chapter 29 of title 35, United States Code, as amended by section 4, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 299B. Discovery in patent infringement action

''(a) DISCOVERY IN PATENT INFRINGEMENT ACTION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsections (b) and (c), in a civil action arising under any Act of Congress relating to patents, discovery shall be stayed during the pendency of 1 or more motions described in paragraph (2) if the motion or motions were filed prior to the first responsive pleading.

''(2) MOTIONS DESCRIBED.—The motions described in this paragraph are—

''(A) a motion to dismiss;

''(B) a motion to transfer venue; and

''(C) a motion to sever accused infringers.

''(b) DISCRETION TO EXPAND SCOPE OF DISCOVERY.—

''(1) RESOLUTION OF MOTIONS.—A court may allow limited discovery necessary to resolve a motion described in subsection (a) or a motion for preliminary relief properly raised by a party before or during the pendency of a motion described in subsection (a).

''(2) ADDITIONAL DISCOVERY.—On motion, a court may allow additional discovery if the court finds that such discovery is necessary to preserve evidence or otherwise prevent specific prejudice to a party.

''(c) EXCLUSION FROM DISCOVERY LIMITATION.—

''(1) VOLUNTARY EXCLUSION.—The parties to an action described in subsection (a) may voluntarily consent to be excluded, in whole or in part, from the limitation on discovery under subsection (a).

''(2) CLAIMS UNDER SECTION 271(e).—This section shall not apply to a civil action that includes a claim for relief arising under section 271(e).

''(d) RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.—

''(1) TIMELINE FOR RESPONSIVE PLEADINGS.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to alter the time provided by the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure for the filing of responsive pleadings.

''(2) EXCHANGE OF CONTENTIONS.—Nothing in this section shall prohibit a court from ordering or local rules from requiring the exchange of contentions regarding infringement, non-infringement, invalidity or other issues, by interrogatories or other written initial disclosures, at an appropriate time determined by the court.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 29 of title 35, United States Code, as amended by section 4, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 299A the following:

''299B. Discovery in patent infringement action.''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date of enactment of this Act and shall apply to any action for which a complaint is filed on or after that date.

SEC. 6. PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES TO IMPLEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE JUDICIAL CONFERENCE.

(a) JUDICIAL CONFERENCE RULES AND PROCEDURES ON DISCOVERY BURDENS AND COSTS.—

(1) RULES AND PROCEDURES.—The Judicial Conference of the United States, using existing resources, should develop rules and procedures to implement the discovery proposals described in paragraph (2) to address concerns regarding the asymmetries in discovery burdens and costs that may arise in a civil action arising under any Act of Congress relating to patents.

(2) RULES AND PROCEDURES TO BE CONSIDERED.—The rules and procedures to be developed under paragraph (1) should address each of the following:

(A) DISCOVERY OF CORE DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE.—To what extent each party to the action is entitled to receive core documentary evidence and should be responsible for the costs of producing core documentary evidence within the possession or control of each such party, and to what extent each party to the action may seek noncore documentary discovery as otherwise provided in the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.

(B) ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION.—If the parties request discovery of electronic communication, how such discovery should be phased to occur relative to the exchange of initial disclosures and core documentary evidence, and appropriate limitations to apply to such discovery.

(C) ADDITIONAL DOCUMENT DISCOVERY.—The manner and extent to which the following should apply:

(i) IN GENERAL.—Each party to the action may seek any additional document discovery beyond core documentary evidence as permitted under the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, if such party bears the reasonable costs, including reasonable attorney's fees, of the additional document discovery.

(ii) REQUIREMENTS FOR ADDITIONAL DOCUMENT DISCOVERY.—Unless the parties mutually agree otherwise, no party may be permitted additional document discovery unless such a party posts a bond, or provides other security, in an amount sufficient to cover the expected costs of such additional document discovery, or makes a showing to the court that such party has the financial capacity to pay the costs of such additional document discovery.

(iii) GOOD CAUSE MODIFICATION.—A court, upon motion and for good cause shown, may modify the requirements of subparagraphs (A) and (B) and any definition under paragraph (3). Not later than 30 days after the pretrial conference under rule 16 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, the parties shall jointly submit any proposed modifications of the requirements of subparagraphs (A) and (B) and any definition under paragraph (3), unless the parties do not agree, in which case each party shall submit any proposed modification of such party and a summary of the disagreement over the modification.

(iv) COMPUTER CODE.—A court, upon motion and for good cause shown, may determine that computer code should be included in the discovery of core documentary evidence. The discovery of computer code shall occur after the parties have exchanged initial disclosures and other core documentary evidence.

(D) DISCOVERY SEQUENCE AND SCOPE.—The manner and extent to which the parties shall discuss and address in the written report filed pursuant to rule 26(f) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure the views and proposals of each party on the following:

(i) When the discovery of core documentary evidence should be completed.

(ii) Whether additional document discovery will be sought under subparagraph (C).

(iii) Any issues about infringement, invalidity, or damages that, if resolved before the additional discovery described in subparagraph (C) commences, might simplify or streamline the case.

(3) SCOPE OF DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE.—In developing rules or procedures under this section, the Judicial Conference should consider which kinds of evidence constitute ''core documentary evidence''.

(4) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection the term ''electronic communication'' means any form of electronic communication, including email, text message, or instant message.

(b) JUDICIAL CONFERENCE PATENT CASE MANAGEMENT.—The Judicial Conference of the United States, using existing resources, should develop case management procedures to be implemented by the United States district courts and the United States Court of Federal Claims for any civil action arising under any Act of Congress relating to patents, including initial disclosure and early case management conference practices that—

(1) will identify any potential dispositive issues of the case; and

(2) focus on early summary judgment motions when resolution of issues may lead to expedited disposition of the case.

SEC. 7. FEES AND OTHER EXPENSES.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that, in patent cases, reasonable attorney fees should be paid by a non-prevailing party whose litigation position or conduct is not objectively reasonable. As the Supreme Court wrote in adopting this legal standard in the context of fee shifting under section 1447 of title 28, United States Code, this standard is intended to strike a balance; in patent cases, a more appropriate balance between protecting the right of a patent holder to enforce its patent on the one hand, and deterring abuses in patent litigation and threats thereof on the other.

(b) AMENDMENT.—Section 285 of title 35, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''§ 285. Fees and other expenses

''(a) AWARD.—In connection with a civil action in which any party asserts a claim for relief arising under any Act of Congress relating to patents, upon motion by a prevailing party, the court shall determine whether the position of the non-prevailing party was objectively reasonable in law and fact, and whether the conduct of the non-prevailing party was objectively reasonable. If the court finds that the position of the non-prevailing party was not objectively reasonable in law or fact or that the conduct of the non-prevailing party was not objectively reasonable, the court shall award reasonable attorney fees to the prevailing party unless

special circumstances would make an award unjust.

''(b) COVENANT NOT TO SUE.—A party to a civil action who asserts a claim for relief arising under any Act of Congress relating to patents against another party, and who subsequently unilaterally (i) seeks dismissal of the action without consent of the other party and (ii) extends to such other party a covenant not to sue for infringement with respect to the patent or patents at issue, may be the subject of a motion for attorney fees under subsection (a) as if it were a nonprevailing party, unless the party asserting such claim would have been entitled, at the time that such covenant was extended, to dismiss voluntarily the action without a court order under rule 41 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, or the interests of justice require otherwise.

''(c) RECOVERY OF AWARD.—

''(1) CERTIFICATION; DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTED PARTIES.—

''(A) INITIAL STATEMENT.—A party defending against a claim of infringement may file, not later than 14 days before a scheduling conference is to be held or a scheduling order is due under rule 16(b) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, a statement that such party holds a good faith belief, based on publicly-available information and any other information known to such party, that the primary business of the party alleging infringement is the assertion and enforcement of patents or the licensing resulting therefrom.

''(B) CERTIFICATION.—Not later than 45 days after being served with an initial statement under subparagraph (A), a party alleging infringement shall file a certification that—

''(i) establishes and certifies to the court, under oath, that it will have sufficient funds available to satisfy any award of reasonable attorney fees under this section if an award is assessed;

''(ii) demonstrates that its primary business is not the assertion and enforcement of patents or the licensing resulting therefrom;

''(iii) identifies interested parties, if any, as defined in paragraph (2) of this subsection; or

''(iv) states that it has no such interested parties.

A party alleging infringement shall have an ongoing obligation to supplement its certification under this subparagraph within 30 days after a material change to the information provided in its certification.

''(C) NOTICE TO INTERESTED PARTY.—A party that files a certification under subparagraph (B)(iii) shall, prior to filing the certification, provide each identified interested party actual notice in writing by service of notice in any district where the interested party may be found, such that jurisdiction shall be established over each interested party to the action for purposes of enforcing an award of attorney fees under this section, consistent with the Constitution of the United States. The notice shall identify the action, the parties, the patents at issue, and the interest qualifying the party to be an interested party. The notice shall inform the recipient that the recipient may be held accountable under this subsection for any award of attorney fees, or a portion thereof, resulting from the action in the event the party alleging infringement cannot satisfy the full amount of such an award, unless the recipient renounces its interest pursuant to subparagraph (E) or is otherwise exempt from the applicability of this subsection.

''(D) ACCOUNTABILITY FOR INTERESTED PARTIES.—Any interested parties who are timely served with actual notice pursuant to subparagraph (C) and do not renounce their interests pursuant to subparagraph (E) or are not otherwise exempt from the applicability of this subsection may be held accountable for any fees, or a portion thereof, awarded under this section in the event that the party alleging infringement cannot satisfy the full amount of the award. If a true and correct certification under clause (i) or (ii) of subparagraph (B) is timely filed with the court, interested parties shall not be subject to this subparagraph.

''(E) RENUNCIATION OF INTEREST.—Any recipient of a notice under subparagraph (C) may submit a statement of renunciation of interest in a binding document with notice to the court and parties in the action not later than 120 days after receipt of the notice under subparagraph (C). The statement shall be required to renounce only such interest as would qualify the recipient as an interested party.

''(F) INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION EXCEPTION.—Any institution of higher education (as defined in section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001(a)) or under equivalent laws in foreign jurisdictions), or a non-profit technology transfer organization whose primary purpose is to facilitate the commercialization of technologies developed by 1 or more institutions of higher education, may exempt itself from the applicability of this subsection by filing a certification that it qualifies for the exception provided for in this subparagraph with the court and providing notice to the parties.

''(G) INTEREST OF JUSTICE EXCEPTION.—Any recipient of a notice under subparagraph (C) may intervene in the action for purposes of contesting its identification as an interested party or its liability under this subsection, and a court may exempt any party identified as an interested party from the applicability of this subsection as the interest of justice requires.

''(2) INTERESTED PARTY.—In this section, the term 'interested party'—

''(A) means a person who has a substantial financial interest related to the proceeds from any settlement, license, or damages award resulting from the enforcement of the patent in the action by the party alleging infringement;

''(B) does not include an attorney or law firm providing legal representation in the action if the sole basis for the financial interest of the attorney or law firm in the outcome of the action arises from the attorney or law firm's receipt of compensation reasonably related to the provision of the legal representation;

''(C) does not include a person who has assigned all right, title, and interest in a patent, except for passive receipt of income, to an entity described in paragraph (1)(F), or who has a right to receive any portion of such passive income; and

''(D) does not include a person who would be an interested party under subparagraph (A) but whose financial interest is based solely on an equity or security interest established when the party alleging infringement's primary business was not the assertion and enforcement of patents or the licensing resulting therefrom.

''(d) CLAIMS UNDER SECTION 271(e).—

''(1) APPLICABILITY.—Subsections (a), (b), and (c) shall not apply to a civil action that includes a claim for relief arising under section 271(e).

''(2) AWARD IN CERTAIN CLAIMS UNDER SECTION 271(E).—In a civil action that includes a claim for relief arising under section 271(e), the court may in exceptional cases award reasonable attorney fees to the prevailing party.''.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENT AND AMENDMENT.—

(1) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The item relating to section 285 of the table of sections for chapter 29 of title 35, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''285. Fees and other expenses.''.

(2) AMENDMENT.—Section 273 of title 35, United States Code, is amended by striking subsections (f) and (g).

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date of enactment of this Act and shall apply to any action filed on or after such date.

SEC. 8. REQUIREMENT OF CLARITY AND SPECIFICITY IN DEMAND LETTERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 29 of title 35, United States Code, as amended by section 5, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 299C. Pre-suit written notice

''(a) APPLICABILITY.—Subsection (b) shall not apply—

''(1) to written communication between parties—

''(A) regarding existing licensing agreements;

''(B) as part of an ongoing licensing negotiation, provided that the initial written notice complied with the requirements of subsection (b) of this section; or

''(C) sent after the initial written notice, provided that the initial written notice complied with the requirements of subsection (b) of this section; or

''(2) if the court determines it is in the interest of justice to waive the requirements of subsection (b).

''(b) WRITTEN NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In a civil action alleging infringement of a patent in which the plaintiff has provided written notice of the accusation of infringement to the party accused of infringement prior to filing the action, the initial written notice shall contain the information required under paragraph (2) or be subject to paragraph (3).

''(2) REQUIRED INFORMATION PROVIDED IN INITIAL WRITTEN NOTICE.—The initial written notice described in paragraph (1) shall contain, at a minimum—

''(A) an identification of—

''(i) each patent believed to be infringed, including the patent number; and

''(ii) at least one claim of each patent that is believed to be infringed;

''(B) an identification of each product, process, apparatus, or chemical composition, including any manufacturer thereof, that is believed to infringe one or more claims of each patent under subparagraph (A);

''(C) a clear and detailed description of the reasons why the plaintiff believes each patent identified under subparagraph (A) is infringed;

''(D) notice to the intended recipient that the intended recipient may have the right to a stay of any suit in accordance with section 299A;

''(E) the identity of any person with the right to enforce each patent under subparagraph (A); and

''(F) if compensation is proposed, a short and plain statement as to how that proposed compensation was determined.

''(3) ADDITIONAL TIME TO RESPOND.—If the initial written notice provided to the defendant prior to the filing of the civil action did not contain the information required by paragraph (2), the defendant's time to respond to the complaint shall be extended by an additional 30 days.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 29 of title 35, United States Code, as amended by section 5, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''299C. Pre-suit written notice.''.

(c) WILLFUL INFRINGEMENT.—Section 284 of title 35, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in the first undesignated paragraph, by striking ''Upon finding'' and inserting ''(a) IN GENERAL.—Upon finding'';

(2) in the second undesignated paragraph, by striking ''When the damages'' and inserting ''(b) ASSESSMENT BY COURT; TREBLE DAMAGES.—When the damages'';

(3) by inserting after subsection (b), as designated by subparagraph (B), the following:

''(c) WILLFUL INFRINGEMENT.—A claimant seeking to establish willful infringement may not rely on evidence of pre-suit notification of infringement unless that notification complies with the standards set out in section 299C(b)(2).''; and

(4) in the last undesignated paragraph, by striking ''The court'' and inserting ''(d) EXPERT TESTIMONY.—The court''.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date that is 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act and shall apply to any action for which a complaint is filed on or after that date.

SEC. 9. ABUSIVE DEMAND LETTERS.

(a) BAD-FAITH DEMAND LETTERS.—Chapter 29 of title 35, United States Code, as amended by section 8, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 299D. Bad-faith demand letters

''(a) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term 'affiliated person' means a person affiliated with the intended recipient of a written communication.

''(b) CIVIL PENALTIES FOR CERTAIN UNFAIR OR DECEPTIVE ACTS OR PRACTICES IN CONNECTION WITH ABUSIVE DEMAND LETTERS.—A person who commits an unfair or deceptive act or practice within the meaning of section 5(a)(1) of the Federal Trade Commission Act (15 U.S.C. 45(a)(1)), in connection with the assertion of a United States patent, and who engages in the widespread sending of written communications representing that the intended recipients, or any persons affiliated with those recipients, are or may be infringing, or have or may have infringed, the patent and may bear liability or owe compensation to another, shall be deemed to have violated a rule defining an unfair or deceptive act or practice described under section 18(a)(1)(B) of the Federal Trade Commission Act (15 U.S.C. 57a(a)(1)(B)) if—

''(1)(A) the communications falsely—

''(i) represent that administrative or judicial relief has been sought against the recipient or others; or

''(ii) threaten litigation if compensation is not paid, the infringement issue is not otherwise resolved, or the communication is not responded to; and

''(B) there is a pattern of false statements or threats described in subparagraph (A) having been made without litigation or other relief then having been pursued;

''(2) the assertions contained in the communications lack a reasonable basis in fact or law, because—

''(A) the person asserting the patent is not a person, or does not represent a person, with the current right to license the patent to, or to enforce the patent against, the intended recipients or any affiliated persons;

''(B) the communications seek compensation on account of activities undertaken after the patent has expired;

''(C) the communications seek compensation for a patent that has been held to be invalid or unenforceable in a final judicial or administrative proceeding that is unappealable or for which any opportunity for appeal is no longer available;

''(D) the communications seek compensation for activities by the recipient that the sender knows do not infringe the patent because such activities are authorized by the patentee;

''(E) the communications falsely represent that an investigation of the recipient's alleged infringement has occurred; or

''(F) the communications falsely state that litigation has been filed against, or a license has been paid by persons similarly situated to the recipient; or

''(3) the content of the written communications is likely to materially mislead a reasonable recipient because the content fails to include facts reasonably necessary to inform the recipient—

''(A) of the identity of the person asserting a right to license the patent to, or enforce the patent against, the intended recipient or any affiliated person;

''(B) of the patent issued by the United States Patent and Trademark Office alleged to have been infringed; and

''(C) if infringement or the need to pay compensation for a license is alleged, of an identification of at least one product, service, or other activity of the recipient that is alleged to infringe the identified patent or patents and, unless the information is not readily accessible, an explanation of the basis for such allegation.

''(c) ENFORCEMENT BY FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION.—

''(1) POWERS OF COMMISSION.—The Federal Trade Commission shall enforce this section in the same manner, by the same means, and with the same jurisdiction, powers, and duties as though all applicable terms and provisions of the Federal Trade Commission Act (15 U.S.C. 41 et seq.) were incorporated into and made a part of this section.

''(2) PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES.—Any person who engages in an act or practice described in subsection (b) shall be subject to the penalties and entitled to the privileges and immunities provided in the Federal Trade Commission Act (15 U.S.C. 41 et seq.).''.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 29 of title 35, United States Code, as amended by section 8, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 299C the following:

''299D. Bad-faith demand letters.''.

SEC. 10. TRANSPARENCY OF PATENT TRANSFER.

(a) PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE PROCEEDINGS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 26 of title 35, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 261 the following:

''§ 261A. Disclosure of information relating to patent ownership

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) PERIOD OF NONCOMPLIANCE.—The term 'period of noncompliance' refers to a period of time during which the assignee or the ultimate parent entity of an assignee of a patent has not been disclosed to the United States Patent and Trademark Office in accordance with this section.

''(2) ULTIMATE PATENT ENTITY.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the term 'ultimate parent entity' has the meaning given such term in section 801.1(a)(3) of title 16, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor regulation.

''(B) MODIFICATION OF DEFINITION.—The Director may by regulation modify the definition of the term 'ultimate parent entity'.

''(b) REQUIREMENT TO DISCLOSE ASSIGNMENT.—An assignment of all substantial rights in an issued patent shall be recorded in the Patent and Trademark Office—

''(1) not later than the date on which the patent is issued; and

''(2) when any subsequent assignment is made that results in a change to the ultimate parent entity—

''(A) not later than 3 months after the date on which such assignment is made; or

''(B) in the case of an assignment made as part of a corporate acquisition that meets the reporting thresholds under section 7A(a)(2) of the Clayton Act (15 U.S.C. 18a(a)(2)), not later than 6 months after the closing date of such acquisition.

''(c) DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS.—A disclosure under subsection (b) shall include the name of the assignee and the ultimate parent entity of the assignee.

''(d) FAILURE TO COMPLY.—In a civil action in which a party asserts a claim for infringement of a patent, if there was a failure to comply with subsection (b) for the patent—

''(1) the party asserting infringement of the patent may not recover increased damages under section 284 or attorney fees under section 285 with respect to infringing activities taking place during any period of noncompliance, unless the denial of such damages or fees would be manifestly unjust; and

''(2) the court shall award to a prevailing accused infringer reasonable attorney fees and expenses incurred in discovering the identity of any undisclosed entity required to be disclosed under subsection (b), unless such sanctions would be manifestly unjust.''.

(2) APPLICABILITY.—The amendment made by paragraph (1) shall apply to any patent for which a notice of allowance is issued on or after the date of enactment of this Act.

(3) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 26 of title 35, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

''261A. Disclosure of information relating to patent ownership.''.

(b) REGULATIONS.—The Director may promulgate such regulations as are necessary to establish a registration fee in an amount sufficient to recover the estimated costs of administering section 261A of title 35, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), to facilitate the collection and maintenance of the information required by the amendments made by this section and section 3(b) of this Act, and to ensure the timely disclosure of such information to the public.

SEC. 11. PROTECTION OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LICENSES IN BANKRUPTCY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1522 of title 11, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(e) Section 365(n) shall apply to cases under this chapter. If the foreign representative rejects or repudiates a contract under which the debtor is a licensor of intellectual property, the licensee under such contract shall be entitled to make the election and exercise the rights described in section 365(n).''.

(b) TRADEMARKS.—

(1) AMENDMENT.—Section 101(35A) of title 11, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in subparagraph (E), by striking ''or'';

(B) in subparagraph (F), by adding ''or'' at the end; and

(C) by adding after subparagraph (F) the following new subparagraph:

''(G) a trademark, service mark, or trade name, as those terms are defined in section 45 of the Act of July 5, 1946 (commonly referred to as the 'Trademark Act of 1946' (15 U.S.C. 1127);''.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 365(n)(2) of title 11, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in subparagraph (B)—

(i) by striking ''royalty payments'' and inserting ''royalty or other payments''; and

(ii) by striking ''and'' after the semicolon;

(B) in subparagraph (C), by striking the period at the end of clause (ii) and inserting ''; and''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(D) in the case of a trademark, service mark, or trade name, the licensee shall not be relieved of any of its obligations to maintain the quality of the products and services

offered under or in connection with the licensed trademark, service mark or trade name, and the trustee shall retain the right to oversee and enforce quality control for said products and/or services.''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date of enactment of this Act and shall apply to any case that is pending on, or for which a petition or complaint is filed on or after, such date of enactment.

SEC. 12. SMALL BUSINESS EDUCATION, OUTREACH, AND INFORMATION ACCESS.

(a) SMALL BUSINESS EDUCATION AND OUTREACH.—

(1) RESOURCES FOR SMALL BUSINESS.—Using existing resources, the Director shall develop educational resources for small businesses to address concerns arising from patent infringement.

(2) SMALL BUSINESS PATENT OMBUDSMAN.—The existing small business patent outreach programs of the Office, in consultation with the relevant offices at the Small Business Administration and the Minority Business Development Agency, shall provide education and awareness regarding resources available for those persons responding to allegations of patent infringement.

(b) IMPROVING INFORMATION TRANSPARENCY FOR SMALL BUSINESS AND THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE USERS.—

(1) WEB SITE.—Using existing resources, the Director shall create a user-friendly section on the official Web site of the Office to notify the public when a patent case is brought in Federal court and, with respect to each patent at issue in such case, the Director shall include—

(A) information disclosed under section 261A of title 35, United States Code, as added by section 10, and section 281B(b) of title 35, United States Code, as added by section 3; and

(B) any other information the Director determines to be relevant.

(2) FORMAT.—In order to promote accessibility for the public, the information described in paragraph (1) shall be searchable by patent number, patent art area, and entity.

SEC. 13. STUDIES ON PATENT TRANSACTIONS, QUALITY, AND EXAMINATION.

(a) STUDY ON SECONDARY MARKET OVERSIGHT FOR PATENT TRANSACTIONS TO PROMOTE TRANSPARENCY AND ETHICAL BUSINESS PRACTICES.—

(1) STUDY REQUIRED.—The Director, in consultation with the Secretary of Commerce, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission, the heads of other relevant agencies, and interested parties, shall, using existing resources of the Office, conduct a study—

(A) to develop legislative recommendations to ensure greater transparency and accountability in patent transactions occurring on the secondary market;

(B) to examine the economic impact that the patent secondary market has on the United States;

(C) to examine licensing and other oversight requirements that may be placed on the patent secondary market, including on the participants in such markets, to ensure that the market is a level playing field and that brokers in the market have the requisite expertise and adhere to ethical business practices; and

(D) to examine the requirements placed on other markets.

(2) REPORT ON STUDY.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director shall submit a report to the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives and the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate on the findings and recommendations of the Director from the study required under paragraph (1).

(b) STUDY ON PATENT SMALL CLAIMS PROCEDURES.—

(1) STUDY REQUIRED.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts, in consultation with the Director of the Federal Judicial Center and the United States Patent and Trademark Office, shall, using existing resources, conduct a study to examine the idea of developing a pilot program for patent small claims procedures in certain judicial districts within the existing patent pilot program mandated by Public Law 111–349.

(B) CONTENTS OF STUDY.—The study under subparagraph (A) shall examine—

(i) the necessary criteria for using small claims procedures;

(ii) the costs that would be incurred for establishing, maintaining, and operating such a pilot program; and

(iii) the steps that would be taken to ensure that the procedures used in the pilot program are not misused for abusive patent litigation.

(2) REPORT ON STUDY.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts shall submit a report to the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives and the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate on the findings and recommendations of the Director of the Administrative Office from the study required under paragraph (1).

(c) STUDY ON BUSINESS METHOD PATENT QUALITY.—

(1) GAO STUDY.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall, using existing resources, conduct a study on the volume and nature of litigation involving business method patents.

(2) CONTENTS OF STUDY.—The study required under paragraph (1) shall focus on examining the quality of business method patents asserted in suits alleging patent infringement, and may include an examination of any other areas that the Comptroller General determines to be relevant.

(3) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives and the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate a report on the findings and recommendations from the study required by this subsection, including recommendations for any changes to laws or regulations that the Comptroller General considers appropriate on the basis of the study.

SEC. 14. TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS TO THE LEAHY-SMITH AMERICA INVENTS ACT AND OTHER IMPROVEMENTS.

(a) Section 325(e)(2) of title 35, United States Code, is amended by striking ''or reasonably could have raised''.

(b) PTO PATENT REVIEWS.—

(1) CLARIFICATION.—

(A) SCOPE OF PRIOR ART.—Section 18(a)(1)(C)(i) of the Leahy-Smith America Invents Act (35 U.S.C. 321 note) is amended by striking ''section 102(a)'' and inserting ''subsection (a) or (e) of section 102''.

(B) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subparagraph (A) shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act and shall apply to any proceeding pending on, or filed on or after, such date of enactment.

(2) AUTHORITY TO WAIVE FEE.—Subject to available resources, the Director may waive payment of a filing fee for a transitional proceeding described under section 18(a) of the Leahy-Smith America Invents Act (35 U.S.C. 321 note).

(c) TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS.—

(1) NOVELTY.—

(A) AMENDMENT.—Section 102(b)(1)(A) of title 35, United States Code, is amended by striking ''the inventor or joint inventor or by another'' and inserting ''the inventor or a joint inventor or another''.

(B) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subparagraph (A) shall be effective as if included in the amendment made by section 3(b)(1) of the Leahy-Smith America Invents Act (Public Law 112–29).

(2) INVENTOR'S OATH OR DECLARATION.—

(A) REQUIREMENT TO EXECUTE.—Section 115(a) of title 35, United States Code, is amended in the second sentence by striking ''shall execute'' and inserting ''may be required by the Director to execute''.

(B) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subparagraph (A) shall be effective as if included in the amendment made by section 4(a)(1) of the Leahy-Smith America Invents Act (Public Law 112–29).

(3) ASSIGNEE FILERS.—

(A) BENEFIT OF EARLIER FILING DATE; RIGHT OF PRIORITY.—Section 119(e)(1) of title 35, United States Code, is amended, in the first sentence, by striking ''by an inventor or inventors named'' and inserting ''that names the inventor or a joint inventor''.

(B) BENEFIT OF EARLIER FILING DATE IN THE UNITED STATES.—Section 120 of title 35, United States Code, is amended, in the first sentence, by striking ''names an inventor or joint inventor'' and inserting ''names the inventor or a joint inventor''.

(C) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this paragraph shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act and shall apply to any patent application, and any patent issuing from such application, that is filed on or after September 16, 2012.

(4) DERIVED PATENTS.—

(A) AMENDMENT.—Section 291(b) of title 35, United States Code, is amended by striking ''or joint inventor'' and inserting ''or a joint inventor''.

(B) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subparagraph (A) shall be effective as if included in the amendment made by section 3(h)(1) of the Leahy-Smith America Invents Act (Public Law 112–29).

(5) SPECIFICATION.—Notwithstanding section 4(e) of the Leahy-Smith America Invents Act (Public Law 112–29; 125 Stat. 297), the amendments made by subsections (c) and (d) of section 4 of such Act shall apply to any proceeding or matter that is pending on, or filed on or after, the date of the enactment of this Act.

(6) TIME LIMIT FOR COMMENCING MISCONDUCT PROCEEDINGS.—

(A) AMENDMENT.—The fourth sentence of section 32 of title 35, United States Code, is amended by striking ''1 year'' and inserting ''18 months''.

(B) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this paragraph shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act and shall apply to any action in which the Office files a complaint on or after such date of enactment.

(7) PATENT OWNER RESPONSE.—

(A) CONDUCT OF INTER PARTES REVIEW.—Paragraph (8) of section 316(a) of title 35, United States Code, is amended by striking ''the petition under section 313'' and inserting ''the petition under section 311''.

(B) CONDUCT OF POST-GRANT REVIEW.—Paragraph (8) of section 326(a) of title 35, United States Code, is amended by striking ''the petition under section 323'' and inserting ''the petition under section 321''.

(C) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this paragraph shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

(d) MANAGEMENT OF THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 3(b)(1) of title 35, United States Code, is amended in the first sentence—

(A) by striking ''be vested with the authority to act in the capacity of the'' and inserting ''serve as Acting,''; and

(B) by inserting before the period ''or in the event of a vacancy in the office of the Director.''.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by paragraph (1) shall take effect on the date of enactment of this Act and shall apply with respect to appointments and vacancies occurring before, on, or after the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 15. EFFECTIVE DATE.

Except as otherwise provided in this Act, the provisions of this Act shall take effect on the date of enactment of this Act, and shall apply to any patent issued, or any action filed, on or after that date.

SEC. 16. SEVERABILITY.

If any provision of this Act, or an amendment made by this Act, or the application of such provision or amendment to any person or circumstance, is held to be invalid, the remainder of this Act, or an amendment made by this Act, or the application of such provision to other persons or circumstances, shall not be affected.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I am proud to introduce legislation with Senators GRASSLEY, CORNYN, SCHUMER, LEE, HATCH and KLOBUCHAR. As members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, we have been working for almost 2 years to address abusive conduct in our patent system. Our legislation will deter abusive practices while preserving the strength of America's patent system. After months of negotiations, we have achieved a strong and fair balance that I strongly support.

America's patent system has fueled our Nation's greatest technological advances, creating jobs and spurring innovation. By promoting investment in new products and designs, our patent system drives developments that benefit us all. In recent years, however, bad actors have abused the patent system to extract money from unsuspecting companies through broad threats of patent litigation. Coffee shops have been threatened with patent suits simply for using a Wi-Fi router they purchased off the shelf, and website owners have faced costly litigation for using basic software in e-commerce. Instead of using patents to drive new creations, some entities are holding up main street businesses and innovative companies simply to extort financial settlements.

The PATENT Act addresses this behavior through several important reforms. It will promote transparency to hold bad actors accountable; curb misleading demand letters; and empower customers who have been improperly targeted for simply using a product when the product's manufacturer should defend the suit instead. I have heard about the urgent need for these measures from businesses in Vermont and across the country, which is why I included them in the bipartisan legislation on patent abuses that Senator LEE and I introduced last Congress. This provision has earned widespread support and I am glad it is part of the bill we introduce today.

The legislation also addresses imbalances in patent litigation that make it unusually difficult and expensive to defend against frivolous lawsuits. These measures would require detailed allegations in legal complaints for patent infringement, establish reasonable parameters for document discovery to save costs, and ensure that litigants can be held accountable for the other side's attorneys' fees if their conduct or position is found by a court to be objectively unreasonable.

Drafting legislation that involves the enforcement of patent rights is a complex problem that requires time and balance. Congress spent multiple years developing what ultimately became the Leahy-Smith America Invents Act of 2011, and we were able to come together to find common ground and enact that major piece of legislation into law. Throughout our negotiations on this bill, I have emphasized the need to address concerns from major manufacturers, inventors, universities, and patent law practitioners who warned that, if taken too far, patent litigation reform proposals would harm legitimate patent holders' ability to protect their rights in court. The legislation we have introduced today is greatly improved as a result of their input.

It is worth highlighting some of the changes that have been made to the bill to respond to those concerns, changes which were personally important to me as we negotiated this legislation. The language in the PATENT Act provides for fee shifting only in cases where the court finds that the losing party was not ''objectively reasonable.'' This is an important change from the approach of ''presumptive loser pays'' contained in the House's patent reform bill, the Innovation Act. It promotes judicial discretion and ensures the burden is on the party seeking fees to show that fees should be awarded. An additional exception allows the court to refrain from awarding fees if such an award would be unjust—for example, because it would cause undue financial harm to an individual inventor or a public institution of higher education.

The PATENT Act simplifies the pleading requirements that are contained in the Innovation Act, and ensures that a plaintiff is not required to plead information if it is not accessible to them. I am grateful that the other authors of this bill worked with me to ensure that the standard of what a plaintiff is required to plead about infringement of their patent claims tracks Rule 8 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, without creating a higher standard for plaintiffs to prove a plausible claim for relief.

I am also grateful for the significant work that was done to streamline the discovery provisions of the bill, to protect litigants from costly discovery while ensuring that legitimate plaintiffs are not prejudiced by unreasonable limitations on their ability to access information. Under the PATENT Act, discovery is stayed while the court resolves early, pre-answer motions about whether the case has been brought in the correct venue, against the correct defendants, and whether the complaint states a plausible claim for relief. Discovery is permitted if necessary to resolve those motions, to resolve a motion for preliminary relief, or if failure to allow discovery would cause specific prejudice to a party.

Taken together, these provisions will help promote efficiency in patent suits while ensuring that patent holders can fairly protect their rights in court. While the provisions are not perfect, they strike a meaningful balance that I am happy to support given the unusual complexities of patent litigation.

As this legislation proceeds to markup in the Senate Judiciary Committee next month, I look forward to considering additional amendments that will improve this bill. For example, in recent months, some companies and inventors have raised concerns about unfair practices that are taking place in the post-grant review proceedings through which patents can be challenged at the Patent and Trademark Office. Those proceedings were created by the Leahy-Smith America Invents Act as an important tool to improve patent quality, but if they are being misused or creating inaccurate perceptions in the marketplace, we should address those concerns. I look forward to working with the stakeholders who have already contributed meaningfully to this bill.

Abusive practices by bad actors are a discredit to our strong patent system, and it is in no one's interest that they continue. Businesses, innovators and customers that are victims of abusive conduct need us to come together to enact reform. I look forward to this bill's swift consideration in the Judiciary Committee.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 154—DESIGNATING MAY 16, 2015, AS ''KIDS TO PARKS DAY''

Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. HIRONO, and Mr. HEINRICH) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 154

Whereas the 5th annual Kids to Parks Day will be celebrated on May 16, 2015;

Whereas the goal of Kids to Parks Day is to promote healthy outdoor recreation and environmental stewardship, empower young people, and encourage families to get outdoors and visit the parks and public land of the United States;

Whereas on Kids to Parks Day, individuals from rural and urban areas of the United States can be reintroduced to the splendid national, State, and neighborhood parks located in their communities;

Whereas communities across the United States offer a variety of natural resources and public land, often with free access, to individuals seeking outdoor recreation;

Whereas the people of the United States, young and old, should be encouraged to lead more healthy and active lifestyles;

Whereas Kids to Parks Day is an opportunity for families to take a break from their busy lives and come together for a day of active, wholesome fun; and

Whereas Kids to Parks Day will broaden an appreciation for nature and the outdoors in young people: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates May 16, 2015, as ''Kids to Parks Day;''

(2) recognizes the importance of outdoor recreation and the preservation of open spaces to the health and education of the young people of the United States;

(3) encourages the people of the United States to observe the day with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities; and

(4) encourages the President to issue a proclamation for Kids to Parks Day, calling on the people of the United States to observe Kids to Parks Day with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

SENATE RESOLUTION 155—ESTABLISHING MAY 2, 2015, AS A DAY OF RECOGNITION FOR EBOLA ORPHANS TO EXPRESS SUPPORT FOR THE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES AFFECTED BY THE 2014 EBOLA OUTBREAK IN WEST AFRICA BY PROMOTING AWARENESS OF THE CHILDREN OF WEST AFRICA WHO HAVE BEEN ORPHANED BY THE 2014 EBOLA EPIDEMIC, CELEBRATING THOSE WHO HAVE RECOGNIZED AND ARE WORKING TO FULFILL THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN, AND ENCOURAGING THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES TO CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE PEOPLE OF WEST AFRICA

Mr. INHOFE (for himself and Ms. KLOBUCHAR) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 155

Whereas the 2014 Ebola outbreak in West Africa reached epidemic proportions;

Whereas the World Health Organization reports that there have been over 14,800 laboratory-confirmed cases of Ebola in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone as of April 19, 2015;

Whereas the World Health Organization reports that there have been over 10,800 deaths from Ebola in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone as of April 19, 2015;

Whereas the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) estimates that as of February 2015, nearly 11,000 children in West Africa have lost 1 or both parents due to the 2014 Ebola outbreak;

Whereas some families reject Ebola orphans out of fear of the disease;

Whereas the United States authorized $750,000,000 to support up to 3,000 United States troops in Monrovia, Liberia to respond to the Ebola crisis; and

Whereas United States citizens have given time and resources to assist the people of West Africa, including Ebola orphans: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes May 2, 2015, as a Day of Recognition for Ebola Orphans, to promote awareness of the children of West Africa orphaned by the 2014 Ebola outbreak;

(2) supports the goals and work of those who are addressing the developing Ebola orphan crisis in West Africa; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to consider the needs of the children of West Africa who were orphaned by the 2014 Ebola epidemic.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 1194. Mr. RISCH (for himself and Mr. RUBIO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1179 proposed by Mr. CORKER (for himself and Mr. CARDIN) to the amendment SA 1140 proposed by Mr. CORKER (for himself and Mr. CARDIN) to the bill H.R. 1191, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1195. Ms. AYOTTE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 1191, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 1194. Mr. RISCH (for himself and Mr. RUBIO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1179 proposed by Mr. CORKER (for himself and Mr. CARDIN) to the amendment SA 1140 proposed by Mr. CORKER (for himself and Mr. CARDIN) to the bill H.R. 1191, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 1, line 3, of the amendment, insert after '', and annexes'' the following: '', and a certification that the Government of Iran has released to the United States—

(i) Saeed Abedini of Idaho, who has been detained in Iran on charges related to his religious beliefs since September 2012;

(ii) Amir Hekmati of Michigan, who has been imprisoned in Iran on false espionage charges since August 2011;

(iii) Jason Rezaian of California, who, as an Iranian government credentialed reporter for the Washington Post, has been unjustly held in Iran on vague charges since July 2014; and

(iv) Robert Levinson of Florida, who was abducted on Kish Island in March 2007;

SA 1195. Ms. AYOTTE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 1191, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 28, strike line 1 and insert the following:

''(h) SENSE OF CONGRESS ON INTERCONTINENTAL BALLISTIC MISSILE PROGRAM.—

''(1) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

''(A) The Islamic Republic of Iran continues to advance its intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) program.

''(B) On February 2, 2015, the Islamic Republic of Iran successfully launched its Safir long-range missile system to send a satellite into orbit.

''(C) In 2013, the National Air and Space Intelligence Center concluded that Iran could use space launch technology as a 'test bed' for ICBM technology development, stating, 'Iran could develop and test an ICBM capable of reaching the United States by 2015. Since 2008, Iran has conducted multiple successful launches of the two-stage Safir space launch vehicle (SLV) and has also revealed the larger two-stage Simorgh SLV, which could serve as a test bed for developing ICBM technologies.'.

''(D) On January 29, 2014, the Director of National Intelligence, James Clapper, testified, 'We judge that Iran would choose a ballistic missile as its preferred method of delivering nuclear weapons. . .'.

''(E) Iran continues to violate United Nations Security Council resolution 1929 (2010) by developing ICBM capabilities that could deliver a nuclear weapon.

''(2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—Congress—

''(A) remains concerned about the threat posed by Iran's ballistic missile development program to the security of the United States and its allies; and

''(B) calls on the President to urge the Government of Iran to comply with United Nations Security Council resolution 1929 regarding their intercontinental ballistic missile program.

''(i) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. BARRASSO. 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 April 29, 2015, at 9:30 a.m., in room SR–253 of the Russell Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled ''Five Years After Deepwater Horizon: Improvements and Challenges in Prevention and Response.''

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

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. BARRASSO. 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 April 29, 2015.

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

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 29, 2015, at 9:35 a.m., in room SD–215 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. BARRASSO. 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 April 29, 2015, at 9 a.m. to conduct a

hearing entitled ''The Homeland Security Department's Budget Submission for Fiscal Year 2016.''

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

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Indian Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 29, 2015, in room SD–628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, at 2:30 p.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 29, 2015 at 9:30 a.m., in room 428A of the Russell Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''King vs. Burwell Supreme Court Case and Congressional Action that can be taken to Protect Small Businesses and their Employees.''

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

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 29, 2015, at 2:30 p.m., in room SR–418 of the Russell Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''GAO's High Risk List and the Veterans Health Administration.''

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HOUSING, TRANSPORTATION, AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Mr. BARRASSO. 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 April 29, 2015, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''Exploring Opportunities for Private Investment in Public Infrastructure.''

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC FORCES

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Strategic Forces of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 29, 2015, at 2:30 p.m.

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

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, on behalf of Senator LEAHY, I ask unanimous consent that Aaron Locke, an intern on his personal office staff, be granted Senate floor privileges for Thursday, April 30, 2015.

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

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, APRIL 30, 2015

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m., Thursday, April 30; 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; and that following leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of H.R. 1191.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senator BROWN.

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

The Senator from Ohio.

FDA TOBACCO DEEMING REGULATIONS

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, it has been more than a year since the Food and Drug Administration issued its proposed tobacco deeming regulations. These regulations would give the Agency the same regulatory authority it currently has over traditional tobacco cigarettes to other unrelated tobacco products such as e-cigarettes and hookahs.

These regulations are critical for public health, especially for children. Yet, they have languished within the administration for more than a year. A year is too long to wait because we know what has been happening.

According to a report from the Centers for Disease Control—the FDA's own Center for Tobacco Products—in the past year, e-cigarette use has tripled among teens. Absent any regulation, more and more of these potentially dangerous products have found a way into the hands of our children.

After just a few years on the market, children's use of e-cigarettes has now surpassed the use of traditional cigarettes. Think back to the first time we heard about e-cigarettes. I didn't know what people were talking about. Now we see there are more children using e-cigarettes than traditional cigarettes. This is in large part because we have failed to regulate these addictive products.

Until these regulations are finalized, e-cigarette companies will be able to freely advertise their products to our children in Juneau and to our children in Cleveland.

What many people fail to realize is that often e-cigarette companies and big tobacco companies are now one and the same. Marlboro-maker Altria Group, the Nation's largest tobacco company, is making up for its loss in revenue as cigarette smoking has declined—and it is doing so among children too—making up its loss of revenue from combustible tobacco products by marketing its MarkTen electronic cigarette. Lorillard has acquired Blu e-cigarettes. Reynolds American, the maker of Camel and Pall Mall cigarettes, has a new e-cigarette called VUSE.

Much of Big Tobacco's behavior is driven by one giant and irrefutable fact: Tobacco in the United States kills 400,000 people a year. Think about that—400,000 Americans die prematurely from tobacco use every year. What does that mean? That means tobacco companies need to find 400,000 new customers a year. They are not going to market to people such as the Presiding Officer or me or the people staffing the Senate floor. They are going to people like the pages. They are going to people 16 and 17 years old to addict them to cigarettes. People my age rarely start smoking; people their age so often do.

Big Tobacco has to find these new customers. It used to be that they preyed on children with highly paid, sophisticated tobacco executives who spend their days figuring out how to entice teens to start smoking with characters such as Joe Camel. We think of Camel No. 5, some of the things they did. Now that they are no longer allowed to advertise traditional tobacco products to kids—and parenthetically, that is one of the great public health victories in this country, what this body did, what the House of Representatives did, what Presidents did to alert public health and to change young people's behavior so young people did not start smoking in larger numbers. That was an effort by government and consumer groups and children's groups.

These tobacco companies now, though, are taking advantage of the new, unregulated world of e-cigarettes to advertise their products directly to children because they can. Joe Camel has been replaced by celebrities smoking e-cigarettes. These companies sponsor youth-oriented events and air ads on TV and radio aimed at teenagers. They are using new advertising platforms on social media to get to kids where parents typically are not looking.

The shameful e-cigarette marketing tactics employed by tobacco companies are encouraging this next new generation to use tobacco, and, as the CDC's study shows, their tactics are working—triple the use, triple the number of young people smoking these e-cigarettes.

Another recent study revealed that teens were able to purchase e-cigarettes online in 94 percent of the attempts they made. None of them were required to show proof of their age when the cigarettes were delivered.

A study published in the New England Journal of Medicine that examined the use of candy flavors in tobacco products found that—no surprise here—flavors drive increases in tobacco use among kids. E-cigarettes and their refill liquids come in thousands of different flavors, such as Gummi Bears, Sweet Tarts, and Fruit Loops. Just look at this photo of Gummi Bear-flavored e-liquid. The bottle is about this big.

As the president of the American Academy of Pediatrics, Dr. James Perrin, said, ''Because liquid nicotine comes in a variety of bright colors and in flavors appealing to children such as cotton candy and gummy bear, it is no surprise that these products have found their way into the hands of children.''

I don't think they are making gummy bears to encourage people the age of the Presiding Officer, to get them to start smoking, or my age; they are getting young children to start smoking. Gummi Bears, Fruit Loops, and Sweet Tarts—those are candies young children receive at Halloween. They are also flavors of highly toxic products.

The bottle in this photo contains two teaspoons of liquid nicotine. A single teaspoon of this e-liquid, even if it is highly diluted, can kill a small child if ingested. It is totally legal. People will see this sold at drugstores and at all kinds of places. Children are likely to pick it up if they see it around the house. There is a chance—there always is in a country of 300 million people—that some child will—attracted by this, looking at this, the cute little bottle—will drink it, and that child could die.

It is past time for the FDA to regulate these dangerous products before more children and more teenagers get hooked on e-cigarettes.

My colleagues and I, led by Senator MERKLEY, Senator BLUMENTHAL, Senator DURBIN, and others, have called on the FDA over and over again to finalize these proposed rules and reject efforts to weaken these proposed regulations. Every day the FDA waits is thousands more children getting addicted to nicotine, thousands more children getting exposed potentially to drinking this very toxic liquid, and thousands more children smoking these e-cigarettes.

Tobacco companies are pushing to allow more products to be grandfathered out of the new rules. They want to exempt a huge range of e-cigarettes from any review to determine whether they are a threat to public health. That would mean these products would never be subject to review by the FDA. How stupid of a nation can we be? We have been so successful in the last 40 years as public health officials, as Members of Congress, as responsible adults, as consumer groups and advocates for children. We have been so successful in reducing the incidence of smoking, especially among young people. It has changed the whole next generation. Yet, now we are letting this happen.

E-cigarettes are still tobacco products. They are used by the tobacco industry—I haven't talked about this yet—as a gateway cigarette for kids, and that doesn't stop. They see this, and they start smoking these e-cigarettes. Then a year or 2 years, 5 years, 10 years down the road, they will be smoking traditional tobacco and they will be addicted, and we know what addiction to cigarettes is for so many of our fellow Americans.

My colleagues and I urge the Food and Drug Administration to strengthen and finalize these regulations before any more of our children get hooked on potentially dangerous and addictive tobacco products.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, April 30, 2015.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:23 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, April 30, 2015, at 9:30 a.m.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

CONGRATULATING ARTHREX, INC. ON BEING NAMED A FORTUNE TOP 100 COMPANY TO WORK FOR

HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Arthrex, Inc. on being named a Fortune Top 100 company to work for, and to commend its exemplary service to the Naples community.

Arthrex is a global medical device company in Naples, FL. Their mission is to help surgeons treat their patients as best as possible, and they have more than surpassed that goal. The company is a leader in new product development and medical education in orthopedics. More than that, Arthrex is a pioneer in the field of arthroscopy and has developed more than 8,500 innovative products and surgical procedures to advance minimally invasive orthopedics worldwide.

Fortune uses an expert firm that has developed a methodology to evaluate workplace cultures, and a 58-question employee survey to measure trust. Two-thirds of a company's score is based on the employee survey, while one-third is based on a culture audit. Hundreds of companies apply to be on the list, making Arthrex's accomplishment that much more special. However, by looking at their company, it is clear to see why they made the list.

Under the leadership of Mr. Reinhold Schmieding, Arthrex continues to grow and thrive in the community. Having visited their facility in Naples, I saw firsthand the important work they are doing and the impact the company has in the area. Not only does Arthrex provide countless jobs, it also fosters a culture of personal and professional growth, with excellent benefits and services. These services include tuition reimbursement, internships, apprenticeships, and a comprehensive benefits package.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to congratulate Arthrex, Inc. on their accomplishment, and I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing their outstanding achievement.

ANGELEE DAVIS

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Angelee Davis on her honorable mention in the C–SPAN StudentCam competition.

This nationwide competition is an opportunity to encourage students to learn more about the three branches of government by telling a story or demonstrating a policy or law that affected them or their community. Angelee and her project, 'Should Space Exploration and Travel be Publicly Funded?', was picked out of 2,280 entries nationwide and 5,000 participants.

Congratulations to Angelee on this tremendous accomplishment and well-deserved prize. Thank you for your interest and participation in our community, and I wish you all the best in your future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, last week, on April 21–23, I missed Roll Call votes. Had I been present, I would have voted "YEA" on #162, 163, 164, 167, 170, 171, and 173. I would have voted "NAY" on #165, 166, 168, 169, and 172.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, April 21; Wednesday, April 22; and Thursday, April 23, 2015, I was out on medical leave while recovering from surgery and unable to be present for recorded votes. Had I been present, I would have voted:

"Yes" on roll call vote No. 162 (on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to H. Con. Res. 25),

"No" on roll call vote No. 163 (on ordering the previous question on H. Res. 212),

"No" on roll call vote No. 164 (on agreeing to the resolution H. Res. 212),

"Yes" on roll call vote No. 165 (on agreeing to the Kuster Amendment to H.R. 1195),

"Yes" on roll call vote No. 166 (on the motion to recommit H.R. 1195, with instructions),

"No" on roll call vote No. 167 (on passage of H.R. 1195),

"Yes" on roll call vote No. 168 (on agreeing to the Mulvaney Amendment to H.R. 1560),

"Yes" on roll call vote No. 169 (on the motion to recommit H.R. 1560, with instructions),

"Yes" on roll call vote No. 170 (on passage of H.R. 1560),

"Yes" on roll call vote No. 171 (on agreeing to the Jackson Lee Amendment to H.R. 1731),

"Yes" on roll call vote No. 172 (on the motion to recommit H.R. 1731, with instructions), and

"Yes" on roll call vote No. 173 (on passage of H.R. 1731).

KASANDRA PETERS

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Kasandra Peters for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Kasandra Peters is a 10th grader at Pomona High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Kasandra Peters is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Kasandra Peters for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

IN RECOGNITION OF WILLIAM A. NACK

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor William A. Nack for a life and career dedicated to hard work, justice and integrity. Bill Nack recently retired as the head of the Building and Construction Trades Council of San Mateo County, AFL-CIO after a long and successful career in union construction.

Bill left his mark all over the San Francisco Peninsula. Even people who don't know him see the results of his work every day. Some of the most prominent buildings in the county were developed during his tenure, including SFO, Mills Peninsula Hospital, Sequoia Hospital, Palo Alto Medical Center, Bay Meadows, San Mateo Public Library, San Mateo Union High School District, San Mateo Community College District, Millbrae BART Transit Village, Crossings in San Bruno, Redwood City Redevelopment, Brisbane Baylands Development, Genentech, Gilead and Facebook.

Even this breathtaking list is not complete. Bill negotiated a total of 45 Project Labor Agreements and Letters of Commitment representing more than $16 billion of construction projects. For the last 16 years, he worked with developers, environmentalists, contractors and neighborhood groups advocating for environmentally responsible projects, good union wages and safe working conditions.

Bill was born in St. Louis, raised in San Francisco, and has lived on the Peninsula for the last 50 years. In 1966, he was hired by

United Airlines as an Aircraft Jet Engine Mechanic in Journeyman status. The following year he started his service in the U.S. Naval Reserve which he continued for six years, ably serving his country. While working for United, he earned an Associate Degree in Aeronautics and began his remarkable union career with Machinist Local Lodge 1781. He was the Union Shop Steward for 15 years fighting for the rights of his coworkers. He was elected to the Local's Executive Board, IAM Legislative Committee, and the Building Corporation. Bill was one of the people who founded a highly effective coalition between the machinists, flight attendants and pilots.

In 1987, Bill became the Assistant Business Manager for the Santa Clara and San Benito counties Central Labor Council. He developed and implemented a public policy program for 100 affiliated unions.

In 1989, he became Deputy Executive Officer for the Santa Clara and San Benito Building and Construction Trades Council where he was responsible for public policy, corporate research, and the monitoring of construction contractors and projects. Within a year, he was tapped for the top position at the Building and Construction Trades Council of San Mateo County and became Business Manager/Executive Officer. He was ideally qualified to advocate for environmentally and socially responsible projects utilizing top-quality labor, materials and construction methods. He led a vibrant council of 26 unions and 14,000 justifiably proud, middle-class workers.

In addition to his impressive achievements at the council, Bill is a man of enormous compassion and empathy, a fact demonstrated by his extensive community engagement. He serves on a long list of boards, including the Boy Scouts of America, United Way, Rebuilding Together, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District Advisory Council, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission Advisory Council, and the San Mateo County Housing Leadership Council. Bill is passionate about housing people, recognizing that the dignity of a person is nurtured by housing. It is sometimes said of a generous person that he would give someone the shirt off his back. Bill Nack has likely done that many times, and in addition he's directly and indirectly helped to place a roof over the heads of tens of thousands of people.

Bill was also appointed by the Governor to the Bay Conservation and Development Commission and to the Board of Directors of the Cow Palace.

As you may surmise from the diversity of issues that Bill is engaged in, he cares deeply about helping others and improving the quality of life for everyone. I can say without hesitation that his heart is in the right place and he gives of himself generously and freely. He is a devoted husband to Rayna Lehman, another great labor leader in San Mateo County. They raised two wonderful sons, Patrick and Benjamin, their most important life achievements.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to rise with me to honor my friend and colleague of over 30 years William A. Nack on the occasion of his retirement as the leader of the Building and Construction Trades Council of San Mateo County. He leaves behind an impressive legacy of construction projects, compassion, and a ready smile that welcomes every honest man or woman to work with him in pursuit of a better America.

FBISD SECONDARY TEACHER OF THE YEAR

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Stacy Vinson of Baines Middle School on being named Fort Bend Independent School District's 2015 Secondary Teacher of the Year.

Ms. Vinson has been a teacher for the past eight years. She is committed to helping her students find their passion and believes a keen interest in a subject leads to success in the classroom. Beyond the classroom, she takes interest in her students' lives and teaches them that no matter their circumstances, they have the power to create a fruitful future for themselves. I wish Ms. Vinson the best of luck in her teaching career and am thankful for teachers like her that truly have a passion for her students and profession. Great teachers help develop future leaders.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, I congratulate Stacy Vinson for her commitment to teaching and for earning the Fort Bend ISD 2015 Secondary Teacher of the Year.

PAUL PROUTY

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Paul Prouty for his accomplishments and distinguished career with the General Services Administration (GSA).

Paul began his 42-year career with the GSA in 1971 as a real estate intern and has since risen through the organization to become one of the most respected leaders. Paul's accomplishments include providing key strategic direction regarding design, construction, management and maintenance of federal and leased properties, including 18 million square feet of office, laboratory and warehouse space.

A key property in his portfolio is the Denver Federal Center located in Lakewood, Colorado—one of the largest concentrations of federal real estate property outside Washington D.C. Paul's vision for a more inclusive federal community led to major changes at the Denver Federal Center. Through Paul's leadership, the Denver Federal Center evolved into one of the most exciting campuses in the Denver metro area. The campus hosts the new St. Anthony's hospital, intermodal transportation hub and a focus on the campus becoming a sustainable federal and community center.

I extend my deepest congratulations on your retirement from federal service. Thank you for your dedication to our community.

IN HONOR OF RONALD HERBERT PORTER

HON. NORMA J. TORRES

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mrs. TORRES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ronald H. Porter of Pomona, California, who passed away peacefully on April 18, 2015, at the age of 82.

Ron served in the United States Army from 1955 to 1957. He graduated from Claremont Men's College with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Business Administration, and was a successful businessman with real estate offices in Upland, Rancho Cucamonga, Ontario, and Pomona.

An active member of St. Joseph's Church in Pomona, he served as the President of the Legion of Mary. As a devout Catholic, Ron could always be depended upon to help those in need and assist the Church in its efforts to serve the community.

A former lifeguard, long distance cyclist, and golfer, Ron would regularly visit nursing homes to take residents out for lunch in Pomona. He could often be spotted at the deli spending time with those in need of companionship and a friend.

Ron had a great sense of humor, and was always positive. He will be deeply missed by his beloved wife Barbara, daughter Marie Royce and son-in-law Edward, son David Porter and daughter-in-law Samantha, daughter Sheila Taylor and son-in-law Daniel, and son Sean Porter. He will also be deeply missed by his grandchildren, Laurel, Charlie, and Sean.

HONORING MAKENNA SCHWAB

HON. DAVID G. REICHERT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor a young girl, only 12 years old, who went above and beyond the call of duty for public service. Makenna Schwab, from East Wenatchee, Washington, set out to make a difference in her community by collecting toys and donations for kids at Seattle Children's Hospital. Last October, with the help of her friends at Wenatchee Pediatric Dentistry, she collected enough donations for 33 Radio Flyer wagons, 36 portable DVD players, and more than 1,300 toys and other goods for young boys and girls courageously battling disease at Seattle Children's.

Even more remarkable, Makenna was born with Larsen syndrome, a rare connective tissue disorder, and is a frequent patient herself at Seattle Children's Hospital. It was this experience that inspired her to want to give back to other kids going through similar experiences, and she did not let her disease stand in her way. This is Makenna's third Make a Difference Day campaign, and she is proving that one 12 year-old girl can make a lasting impact on the lives of her friends, family, and community members. On May 6th, Makenna will be recognized in Washington, D.C., as a National Make a Difference Day award recipient. She will receive a $10,000 grant to further enable her passion for public service and

charitable work. Makenna's selfless actions and commitment to public service is an inspiration to all of us, and for that we honor her.

ETHAN CRANSTON

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Ethan Cranston for earning third place in the C–SPAN StudentCam competition.

This nationwide competition is an opportunity to encourage students to learn more about the three branches of government by telling a story or demonstrating a policy or law that affected them or their community. Ethan and his project, 'Marijuana in Colorado—The Road to Ruin or Reward', was picked out of 2,280 entries nationwide and 5,000 participants.

Congratulations to Ethan on this tremendous accomplishment and well-deserved prize. Thank you for your interest and participation in our community, and I wish you all the best in your future endeavors.

HONORING THE LIFE OF ERWIN GAINES

HON. TED LIEU

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. TED LIEU of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate the life of Erwin Gaines—father, husband, grandfather, businessman and inventor—who passed away on April 12, 2015, at the age of 79.

Born in Chicago, Illinois, Erwin was a graduate of Von Steuben High School where he was a star soccer player. He went on to serve in the United States Army in Europe and after receiving an Honorable Discharge, he moved to Los Angeles, California. He was a businessman and inventor who received numerous patents for medical supply products. During his business career he worked internationally in Mexico, China and throughout Europe. Erwin volunteered in the community serving as a coach and as President of the Victory National Little League.

Erwin was an avid fisherman and a Los Angeles Rod & Reel Club Knot Tying Champion. He was a devoted fan of the Los Angeles Dodgers and longtime season ticket holder. He is survived by his wife of 58 years, Arlene, his sons, Calabasas City Councilmember Fred Gaines and Jeffrey Gaines, his daughters-in-law, Las Virgenes Unified School District Board Member Jill Gaines and Vivian Gaines, and his five granddaughters.

I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life of Erwin Gaines.

OUTSTANDING LEADER

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Julie Diaz for being named the new principal of Travis High School in Richmond, TX by the Fort Bend Independent School District (FBISD).

After completing her education at the University of Houston and the University of Iowa, Principal Diaz began her 30 year career as an elementary school teacher. She has worked with FBISD for the past 23 years. Her exemplary efforts have led to her two nominations as a campus Teacher of the Year, and also as a District Elementary Teacher of the year finalist. Our community is lucky to have outstanding educators like Principal Diaz.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Julie Diaz on being named the new principal of Travis High School. We know that you will continue to be an outstanding leader, and we wish you the best of luck at Travis High School.

ALEXA VANSCHAARDENBURG

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Alexa VanSchaardenburg for earning third place in the C–SPAN StudentCam competition.

This nationwide competition is an opportunity to encourage students to learn more about the three branches of government by telling a story or demonstrating a policy or law that affected them or their community. Alexa and her project, 'Marijuana in Colorado—The Road to Ruin or Reward', was picked out of 2,280 entries nationwide and 5,000 participants.

Congratulations to Alexa on this tremendous accomplishment and well-deserved prize. Thank you for your interest and participation in our community, and I wish you all the best in your future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I was absent for the vote on H.R. 373 but had I been present, I would have voted "yes." The Good Samaritan Search and Recovery Act would allow volunteer search groups faster access to public lands to conduct searches for missing persons. This legislation will help first responders as well as victims and families in difficult situations and I support its enactment.

I was absent for the vote on H.R. 1324 but had I been present, I would have voted "yes." The Arapaho National Forest Boundary Adjustment Act of 2015 will adjust the boundary of the Arapaho National Forest in Colorado to incorporate additional land.

HONORING EL DÍA DE LOS NIÑOS

HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Aurora Hispanic Heritage Advisory Board's el Día de los Niños festival.

Since 1925, Día del niño, or the Day of the Child, has been celebrated throughout Latin America. In 2001, the City of Aurora's Hispanic Heritage Advisory Board started the annual tradition of celebrating el Día de los Niños, a festival recognizing children and their importance in society.

The Aurora Hispanic Heritage Advisory Board, along with local school districts, uses the festival to promote learning among children through literacy programs, educational activities, and live entertainment. El Día de los Niños is a celebration of our community's diverse heritage, as well as a celebration of the bright future that lies ahead for these children.

I would like to thank the Aurora Hispanic Heritage Advisory Board for their commitment to promoting literacy for children and diversity in our community through el Día de los Niños.

JAKE FETTIG

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Jake Fettig on his honorable mention in the C–SPAN StudentCam competition.

This nationwide competition is an opportunity to encourage students to learn more about the three branches of government by telling a story or demonstrating a policy or law that affected them or their community. Jake and his project, 'Should Space Exploration and Travel be Publicly Funded?', was picked out of 2,280 entries nationwide and 5,000 participants.

Congratulations to Jake on this tremendous accomplishment and well-deserved prize. Thank you for your interest and participation in our community, and I wish you all the best in your future endeavors.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 90TH ANNIVERSARY OF SAN MATEO PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the 90th anniversary of San Mateo Park Elementary School, the oldest continuing elementary school in the San Mateo-Foster City School District.

Park School has educated over 20,000 students and serves a diverse student body. The school community can only be characterized as open, enriching and striving for excellence. The comprehensive curriculum aims at supporting each student to reach his or her fullest potential.

All students, those with exceptional abilities to those with exceptional needs, are prepared to become responsible, ethical citizens and leaders of the future. They are taught to develop critical and creative thinking, problem solving and good communication in a safe environment that encourages risk taking and self-reliance.

To create such an environment, Park School relies on very talented and dedicated teachers and staff. Teachers are fully credentialed and many of them bring more than 10 years of experience to the classroom. Some of them hold advanced degrees in music, special education, administration or counseling. They speak multiple languages and have interests ranging from scuba diving to gardening. Staff members are trained in CELDT, Early Literacy Training, NOYCE training, Math Lesson Study and Art. Put succinctly, the staff is as diverse and interesting as the student body, a perfect dynamic to build an environment that fosters a love of lifelong learning and a deep sense of community.

Park School has led the school district in initiatives that support literary skills for below-level readers through its Panther Reading program. The program was created by teachers and parents in 2013. It was so successful that the district quickly embraced it and rolled it out to other schools.

Park School had modest beginnings. It started out as a firehouse on the corner of Clark Drive and Crescent Avenue that was remodeled into a two-room school in 1925. The small school soon couldn't meet demands and a new school with five classrooms and an auditorium was built and opened for 150 students in April 1929. Within a year, a cafeteria was added, a playground installed, a library organized and more land was purchased for additional expansion. In 1966, plans were made for a new school to be built on Clark and Crescent, the location where Park School remains to this day. The new school had a pod arrangement with the library in the center and rooms for individual, group and total class instruction around it. It opened in 1969. Everyone at Park School will tell you that change is constant. Over the years, a computer lab, a speech therapy room and a school child care were added. A large group instruction building opened in 1999 offering students a place for performing arts, physical education and leadership skills. The physical landscape of Park School continues to change and adapt, always keeping a focus on providing the most excellent education opportunities for the students.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that the House of Representatives rise with me to recognize the great and lasting contributions that a small elementary school in San Mateo, California has made to the community. Park School has given thousands of children the foundation for successful careers and lives as responsible and productive citizens. Park School is a shining example of what a school can be.

IMPRESSIVE LIST OF VICTORIES

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the outstanding members of the CRyptonite Robotics Team 624 of Cinco Ranch High School on their victory at the highly-competitive Utah Regional Robotics Tournament.

The students worked together with faculty and other local mentors to design and construct a robot prototype. The machine was then tailored to accomplish specific tasks in a game during the competition. CRyptonite's robot performed flawlessly, and also won the Dallas Regional's Imagery Award, which honors outstanding visual aesthetic integration of the robot's overall engineering and the team's appearance. This exceptional team is adding yet another banner to an already impressive list of victories.

On behalf of the residents of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to the CRyptonite Robotics Team 624 of Cinco Ranch High School on their victory at the Utah Regional Robotics Tournament. We know that you will continue to amaze us at the world championship, and we wish you the best of luck in the future.

OLIVIA BOHL

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Olivia Bohl on her honorable mention in the C–SPAN StudentCam competition.

This nationwide competition is an opportunity to encourage students to learn more about the three branches of government by telling a story or demonstrating a policy or law that affected them or their community. Olivia and her project, 'Should Space Exploration and Travel be Publicly Funded?', was picked out of 2,280 entries nationwide and 5,000 participants.

Congratulations to Olivia on this tremendous accomplishment and well-deserved prize. Thank you for your interest and participation in our community, and I wish you all the best in your future endeavors.

IN RECOGNITION OF JACOB MILLER'S TRUMAN SCHOLARSHIP

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and offer my personal congratulations to Jacob Miller, the first UMass Dartmouth student to be named as a Truman Scholar.

Founded by Congress in 1975, the Harry S. Truman Scholarship Foundation provides scholarships to college juniors who demonstrate outstanding potential and who plan to pursue a career in public service.

A Fairhaven resident and a dual political science and English major, he will receive $30,000 towards graduate school and the opportunity to prepare for a career in public service.

It comes as no surprise that Jacob has earned this distinction considering he has chosen to spend his time giving back—from helping create a cultural district in downtown New Bedford to effectively advocating for lower health care costs for students.

Known for his civic engagement and service at UMass Dartmouth, he has worked on small business creation, workforce development programs, and registering hundreds to vote. He also serves as a student representative to the UMass Board of Trustees.

As someone who got his start in the Massachusetts State House at a young age, Jacob embodies what our country needs in its future leaders.

On behalf of Massachusetts' 9th Congressional District, I congratulate Jacob Miller. I look forward to seeing all that he accomplishes and I wish him all the very best in his future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. YVETTE D. CLARKE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, on April 28, 2015, I was unavoidably detained in my district and missed recorded votes #174–175. Had I been present, on Roll Call #174, H.R. 373—Good Samaritan Search and Recovery Act, I would have voted YEA, and on Roll Call #175, H.R. 1324—Arapaho National Forest Boundary Adjustment Act of 2015, I would have voted YEA.

RECOGNIZING AMBASSADOR WILLIAM GREEN MILLER

HON. MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a loyal patriot and statesman, Ambassador William Green Miller, for his longtime work and commitment to building a strong and resilient US-Ukraine relationship. This week, Ambassador Miller will be receiving the Alexander B. Chernyk Medal for outstanding leadership and deep commitment to US-Ukraine affairs, presented by my constituents in the Greater Philadelphia Area. As the Co-Chair of the Congressional Ukrainian Caucus, I would like to thank Ambassador Miller for his many years of service and dedication to this cause.

With an education from Williams College, Oxford and Harvard, Ambassador Miller entered the Foreign Service in 1959, serving five years in Iran before transitioning back to Washington as a line officer and in the office of Secretary of State Dean Rusk. In the years to follow, he served as a foreign policy and defense adviser to Senator John Sherman Cooper, and held the position of Associate Dean and Professor of International Politics of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University. In 1986, Ambassador Miller returned to Washington as President of the American Committee on United States-Soviet Relations, where his position admitted him to travel frequently throughout the Soviet Union, obtaining direct knowledge of the monumental changes taking place in the region.

Between 1993 and 1998, Mr. Miller served as United States Ambassador to Ukraine under President Bill Clinton. As Ambassador, he was a supporter and witness to some of the most fundamental transformations of the Ukrainian State, including the ratification of Ukraine's Constitution. To this day, Ambassador Miller still promotes peace and stability in Ukraine through his work as a Senior Public Policy Scholar at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

On behalf of my colleagues on the Caucus, I want to thank Ambassador William Green Miller for his lifetime of international diplomatic accomplishments, and his help in forging the steadfast US-Ukraine relationship that has lasted and will continue to last for decades to come.

DENVER REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Denver's Regional Transportation District (RTD) and the many cities around the country that participated in Stand Up 4 Transportation Day this past April 9th.

In Denver, nearly 400 people came out to support the many forms of public transportation around Colorado, ranging from buses, shuttles, vans, bicycles, cabs, car services, pedicabs, light rail and rail. More than 350 organizations in U.S. cities and towns participated in the event. Stand Up 4 Transportation Day succeeded in raising awareness about the importance of public transportation and a long-term, sustainable transportation authorization bill.

Stand up 4 Transportation Day was a brainchild of former General Manager and CEO of RTD, Phil Washington. During his time with RTD, he always pushed for surface transportation reauthorization for the future. In Phil's own words, ''It's time to do some nation building. But the funding is key to more access to transit, new buses and trains, more reliable service, less gridlock. We can't meet the demands of our growing population and economy without a long-term commitment from Washington.''

I applaud Phil and Denver's RTD for their efforts in the Denver metro area. Our communities are more connected and our quality of life is better for it.

THE EARTHQUAKE OF APRIL 25, 2015, THAT DEVASTATED NEPAL

HON. RICK LARSEN

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my heartfelt condolences and full support for assistance to the people of Nepal and all of those affected by the devastating earthquake of April 25, 2015, and its aftermath. The massive magnitude-7.8 earthquake, which struck about 77 kilometers northwest of Nepal's capital city, Kathmandu, was the most powerful to hit Nepal in more than 80 years. Almost 5,000 deaths have been accounted for and, as I read this line, it is possible that this number has gone up.

The United Nations estimates that the tragedy has affected more than 8 million people and left more than 1.4 million people in need of food assistance. This earthquake has also destroyed many historical and architectural structures important to the culture of Nepal.

So I ask my fellow members to join me in mourning with the people of Nepal and all communities in other countries affected by the tragic loss of life. I also want to commend the efforts of first responders, relief agencies, private citizens, Nepal's neighboring countries, and the international community.

I want to thank our administration for its quick response to help our friends in Nepal. I urge Congress and our administration to continue our efforts in helping Nepal during this tragic time.

HONORING JUSTICE LIVELY

HON. SUZAN K. DelBENE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Justice Lively, who on March 25, 2015, received the Washington Boys & Girls Club Youth of the Year Award. Justice was honored for his achievements in overcoming a tumultuous childhood and serving as a leader in his community.

The Youth of the Year Award has been the highest award attainable by the national Boys & Girls Club since 1947. Justice previously received the Skagit County Boys & Girls Club Youth of the Year Award.

Justice's upbringing was filled with far greater challenges than any child should face. As a young boy, with his father deployed in the U.S. Army and his mother frequently absent, Justice was cared for by his oldest brother. When his father returned, Justice was brought into a new home with an abusive stepmother. Just as his mother began to get her life back together, she was killed in a car accident when Justice was only seven years old.

When he was 10, Justice's life finally took a turn for the better. He was adopted by his aunt and uncle and was brought to Mt. Vernon, where he later joined the local Boys & Girls Club. Today, Justice is a leader at the club, focused on helping children. He frequently reads books to the club's younger children as part of a class on early childhood development.

As he prepares to graduate from high school, Justice intends to attend the Cascade Job Corps, Skagit Valley College and Western Washington University in pursuit of his goal of becoming a pediatric nurse at Seattle Children's hospital.

I want to congratulate Justice Lively on this achievement, as well as his work with the Skagit County Boys & Girls Club. I wish him the best as he pursues his dream of helping children.

HONORING EATONVILLE, WASHINGTON TOWN MARSHAL DOLAR LAPLANT

HON. DAVID G. REICHERT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Eatonville, Washington Town Marshal Dolar LaPlant who was killed in 1925 and his daughter and great-granddaughter who fought to see him recognized for his heroic sacrifice. In 1925, Mr. LaPlant was 53 years old and a Spanish-American War veteran. While on duty as Town Marshal, just four days after stepping into that position, he confronted a drunken gunman who was firing shots and narrowly missing small children at a playground. Mr. LaPlant did not stop to think about his own life or the fact that he was unarmed. He simply did everything in his power to ensure that his town was kept safe. The gunman shot Mr. LaPlant just below his right ear before he was knocked unconscious. Mr. LaPlant achieved his mission but would later die from the wound he received.

For many years, his heroic actions went unremembered except by his family, particularly his daughter Rosa and his great-granddaughter Ronda. In 1999, Ronda succeeded in having Dolar LaPlant added to the National Law Enforcement Memorial Wall and now her great-grandfather and his legacy will be honored posthumously with the Washington Medal of Honor on May 9th. I applaud Ronda's hard work and join with her in honoring the memory of Town Marshal Dolar LaPlant whose service ensured the safety of the residents of Eatonville, Washington.

POLICE OFFICER OF THE YEAR

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Officer Osiel De La Cruz for being recognized as the Pearland Officer of the Year by both the Texas Louisiana Gulf District and the Exchange Club of Pearland.

Officer De La Cruz was a natural choice for this award thanks to his hard work in the community, service to the public and heroic actions. Officer De La Cruz is a veteran of the department and a nightshift patrol officer. His commitment to our community is evident through his work both on and off duty. Officer De La Cruz made over 53 DWI and drug-related arrests this year, found a shooting victim and apprehended five offenders, and even managed to apprehend a robbery suspect while he was off-duty. His list of accomplishments speaks for itself. We can all sleep better at night knowing that police officers like Officer De La Cruz are on patrol.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Officer Osiel De La Cruz on being honored as the Pearland Officer of the Year. Thank you for your dedication to keeping our communities safe.

HONORING THE LUMMI NATION SCHOOL BOYS' BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. SUZAN K. DelBENE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 2014–2015 Lummi Nation School boys' basketball team. This year, Lummi put together a perfect 27–0 season, beating rival Neah Bay 54–33 in the Class 1B state championship game. I congratulate them on this exemplary achievement.

The title game was the first time two Native American teams faced off for a state championship in Washington, and the Blackhawks' victory was the first time a Native team has won the boys' 1B championship.

Along with the team's historic victory, four Lummi players also earned individual honors. Sophomore forward Trazil Lane was selected as the Associated Press (AP) Class 1B State Player of the Year after averaging 18.2 points per game. He was also selected as the Northwest League's (NWL's) Most Valuable Player.

Senior guard Austin Brockie averaged 14.2 points per game and was an AP all-state honorable mention and a first-team all-NWL selection. Senior Dino Williams was a first-team all-NWL selection, and senior Kavarez Lane was a second-team all-NWL selection. Lane was also chosen to play in the Washington Interscholastic Basketball Coaches Association's (WIBCA's) all-state game. Finally, Coach Jerome Toby was selected as the WIBCA Coach of the Year.

The Blackhawks displayed a great deal of character and determination this season. Their success resulted from their hard work and ability to play unselfishly for their teammates.

Again, I congratulate the Lummi boys' basketball team on all of their success. Their accomplishments on the court this season are hard-earned and well-deserved.

IN MEMORY OF JOHN PIERCE CALHOUN

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, the following obituary was published April 5, 2015, in The Charlotte Observer.

JOHN PIERCE CALHOUN

CHARLOTTE.—John Pierce Calhoun (Jack) of Charlotte, North Carolina, died peacefully surrounded by his children on Wednesday, April 1, 2015. He was born in Ninety-Six, South Carolina, on November 18, 1926, the son of Alleyne Griffin Calhoun and John Nathaniel Calhoun. Mr. Calhoun spent his childhood years in Greenwood and Batesburg, South Carolina, before moving to Sumter, South Carolina, where he graduated from Edmonds High School in 1944. After a year at Clemson University, he served in the US Army for 26 months, during which time he attended Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey, in the US Army specialized training program. He was discharged from the Army in June 1946, returning to Clemson University where he received a BS degree in Civil Engineering in 1948. During his business career, he graduated from the Advanced Management Program at Harvard University. Mr. Calhoun married Paula Frederick Whitaker of Kinston, North Carolina, on June 26, 1954. Employed by Rexnord Inc. of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, he held company positions in various locations throughout the United States. He moved to Milwaukee in 1974, serving in management, and became Chairman and CEO of Rexnord Inc. After 35 years with the company, he retired in 1990. Over his career, Mr. Calhoun served on church, bank, and civic boards and industry associations. Upon moving to Charlotte after retirement, Mr. Calhoun became a member of Myers Park United Methodist Church and an associate member of Blowing Rock Methodist Church in Blowing Rock, North Carolina. He was a member of Charlotte Country Club, Piedmont Club of Charlotte, The Alotian Club, and Blowing Rock Country Club. Mr. Calhoun enjoyed golf, fishing, travel, and was an avid reader. Mr. Calhoun cherished every opportunity to be with his family and eight grandchildren who adored their ''Poppy.'' He was a devoted and loving husband, father, father-in-law, and grandfather. His strong work ethic, integrity and faith in God were his guiding principles. He had a wonderful ability to connect with people through his contagious sense of humor, wit, and kindness. He was a consummate gentleman with a perpetual twinkle in his eye. Mr. Calhoun brought happiness to all who knew and loved him, and he will remain an example in living for his family. His greatest legacy is the love and bond his family shares with one another. He is survived by daughter Paula Calhoun Ruffin and husband Dalton Dillard Ruffin, Jr. of Charlotte; Harriet Calhoun Stephens and husband Warren Amerine Stephens of Little Rock, Arkansas; and son John Nathaniel Calhoun II and wife Ansley Bost Calhoun of Charlotte. His grandchildren are Sarah Dickson Bourgeois and husband John Rion Bourgeois, Rebecca Stuart Dickson, Lydia Dillard Ruffin, Warren Miles Amerine Stephens, John Calhoun Stephens, Laura Whitaker Stephens, William Coulter Calhoun, and John Pierce Calhoun II. He is also survived by many beloved nieces and nephews. Mr. Calhoun was predeceased by his parents, his wife and the love of his life for fifty-nine years, Paula Whitaker Calhoun, sister Miriam Cook McCrae of Rock Hill, South Carolina, and brother Charles Cooper Calhoun of Seabrook Island, South Carolina. A memorial service will be held at Myers Park United Methodist Church at 11:00 am on Wednesday, April 8, 2015. Interment will be private. A visitation will also be held at the home of John and Ansley Calhoun, 531 Colville Road, from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm on Tuesday, April 7, 2015. The family would like to thank Steffeny Harris for her care of and devotion to Mr. Calhoun and his family. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Myers Park United Methodist Church, designated for The St. Luke's Fund, 1501 Queens Road, Charlotte, North Carolina 28207; Blowing Rock Methodist Church, P.O. Box 352, Blowing Rock, North Carolina 28605; The Salvation Army Center of Hope, 534 Spratt Street, Charlotte, North Carolina 28206; and Crises Assistance Ministries, 500 Spratt Street, Charlotte, North Carolina 28206. Robertson Funeral & Cremation Service is serving the family.

IN RECOGNITION OF MRS. JACKI LOWE

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor and pleasure to extend my personal congratulations and best wishes to an exceptional business leader and outstanding citizen, Mrs. Jacki Lowe, on the occasion of her retirement from Georgia Power on April 1, 2015.

Mrs. Lowe has served as West Region Vice President of Georgia Power since 2005 but her career with Southern Company, which owns and operates Georgia Power, began more than forty years ago in 1974. A familiar face and name at Southern Company, she excelled in her many roles, which included Compensation Manager at Georgia Power as well as Benefits Manager, Compensation and Benefits Manager, Land Manager, and Assistant to the President at Alabama Power. She also served as Vice President and Regional Chief Information Officer for Alabama Power, Southern Company Services and Southern Nuclear in Birmingham. Before being appointed West Region Vice President, she served as Vice President of Supply Chain Management for Southern Company and Georgia Power.

As a female executive in the fourth largest utility company in the United States, Mrs. Lowe has in many ways broken through the glass ceiling in this male-dominated industry. Not only has her leadership set an example for other women, but she has also reached out and mentored many employees in order to help them reach their goals and objectives.

Mrs. Lowe holds a bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Georgia State University and a Master of Business Administration degree from Samford University in Birmingham. In addition to going above and beyond in her career, Mrs. Lowe has proven to be an exceptional member of her community. She serves on the boards of the Columbus Technical College Foundation, Columbus Regional Medical Foundation, Goodwill Industries of the Southern Rivers, Inc., Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia, and the National Infantry Museum. She also serves on the Executive Committee of the Greater Columbus Chamber of Commerce and presided as the Board Chair in 2013. In 2011, she chaired the Intercity Leadership Conference and the Diversity Conference and was honored with the Volunteer of the Year Award. She also is a past chair of the Valley Partnership Joint Development Authority and the Columbus Economic Development Committee, as well as a past board member of the United Way of Chattahoochee Valley and the Muscogee Educational Excellence Foundation.

Dr. Benjamin E. Mays often said: ''You make your living by what you get; you make your life by what you give.'' Not only has Mrs. Lowe established a legacy for women in the workplace at Southern Company, but she has also done a tremendous job of giving back to the great city of Columbus, and I am very grateful for her tireless advocacy to make the community stronger. A woman of great integrity, her efforts, her dedication, and her expertise in her field are unparalleled, but her heart for helping others is what makes these qualities truly worthy.

Mrs. Lowe has accomplished much in her life but none of it would be possible without the love and support of her two sons, Matt and Jeremy, and her grandchildren, Gaines, Libby, Samuel, Carter, and Hudson.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in extending our sincerest appreciation and best wishes to Mrs. Jacki Lowe upon the occasion of her retirement from an outstanding career spanning over four decades with Southern Company.

HONORING DEAN JOHN CHARLES (JACK) BOGER

HON. DAVID E. PRICE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dean Jack Boger, the 13th Dean of the University of North Carolina School of Law, who will step down in June after nine years as Dean.

Dean Boger is a native of Concord, North Carolina and a graduate of Duke University, Yale University, and the UNC School of Law. After completing law school at UNC in 1974, he clerked with the Honorable Samuel Silverman of the New York Supreme Court Appellate Division and practiced for three years in the litigation department of Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison in New York City.

In 1978, Boger joined the staff of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, where he litigated capital punishment cases for a decade, becoming the director of the Fund's Capital Punishment Project in 1983 and a new poverty and justice program in 1987.

Boger became a member of the UNC School of Law faculty in 1990, going on to teach courses in constitutional law, education law, racial discrimination, and poverty law. In 2002, he became Deputy Director of the UNC Center for Civil Rights, working with Director Julius L. Chambers to encourage innovative civil rights research, train a new generation of civil rights attorneys, and address pressing civil rights issues in North Carolina and throughout the Southeast. In addition to his service at UNC, he has taught as a lecturer or adjunct professor at Harvard, New York Law School, and Florida State University.

In 2006, Boger became the UNC School of Law's 13th dean. His deanship has provided a steady hand and a strategic vision for the school during one of the more trying times in the history of legal education.

Dean Boger recently wrote that he has always understood the real meaning of the ''Carolina Way'' to be the unfaltering faith that light and truth, set free without fear or favor in a university setting, will eventually provide keys to meeting the deepest human needs. During his time as Dean, he has exemplified this understanding of the ''Carolina Way'' as well as the motto of the University of North Carolina: Esse Quam Videri, to be rather than to seem.

Thank you, Dean Boger, for your service as Dean of the University of North Carolina School of Law. On behalf of my colleagues in North Carolina's congressional delegation, I wish you good luck and Godspeed in all your future endeavors.

HONORING ADAM S.J. BATTLES

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Adam S.J. Battles. Adam is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 360, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Adam has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Adam has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Adam has earned the rank of Tom-Tom Beater in the Tribe of Mic-O-Say and became a Member of the Order of the Arrow. Adam has also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Adam built eight wooden benches for parents and spectators to sit on while watching events at the Northland Therapeutic Riding Center in Holt, Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Adam S.J. Battles for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

EXEMPLARY SPORTSMANSHIP

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the outstanding members of the TIRR Memorial Hermann Hotwheels team on their victory at the National Wheelchair Basketball junior championship.

The team worked together with their dedicated coach to represent Texas and the Memorial Hermann Hotwheels competitively. The hard-working members of Hotwheels have demonstrated immense dedication to their team and each other, and exemplary sportsmanship and skill in wheelchair basketball.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to the Hotwheels on their hard-won victory at the National Wheelchair Basketball junior championship. Your dedication and commitment are a continued inspiration to us all. Best of luck in the future.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF THOMAS L. ROTELLA, JR.

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the career and retirement of Thomas L. Rotella, Jr. for his outstanding years of service in the Central Valley. Tom's 43 years of dedication and achievements deserves to be commended.

Tom's contributions to Fresno County began in his high school years while attending Roosevelt High School. During this time, Tom was elected into Youth Council of the Fresno City Economic Opportunities Commission. After a year, Mayor Ted Wills appointed him as Chairperson for the Fresno City Youth Commission; which he served as for two years from 1973 to 1975. Tom also sat on the Fresno Community Development Commission for three years from 1973 to 1976.

Tom graduated from Roosevelt High School in 1974 and began attending evening classes at Fresno City College and throughout his educational lifetime, received 900 Hours of Labor Training at the William W. Winipisinger Educations and Technology Center. In 1976, he set foot on the path of his career by becoming a lot boy for Mid-Cal Ford Truck. Shortly afterward, he was given the opportunity of the Apprenticeship Program. In 1984, Tom completed the program as a Journeyman Mechanic and obtained three Masters in National Automotive Service of Excellence for Heavy Duty, Light Duty, and Automotive. He earned the position of Union Shop Steward, and was titled Assistant Service Manager for his last three years at Mid-Cal Ford Truck. He also held a California Smog License, as well as Brake, Lamp, and Air Conditioning Licenses.

In 1976, he joined the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW). During his years with IAMAW, Tom's accomplishments included becoming the Recording Secretary for IAMAW Local 1309 and Vice-President of IAMAW District 87. Since 1990, Tom has served for twenty-five years as a Business Representative and President/Directing Business Representative for IAMAW Local 653 and Business Representative for IAMAW District 190, and has been the President of the California Conference of Machinists for the past fifteen years. TOM also participated as the Lead Negotiator in coordinating bargaining for the Building Trades with Fresno Unified School District as well as coordinating bargaining with Sun-Maid Growers for the International Association of Machinists, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, and the International Union of Operating Engineers.

In addition to his already lengthy resume, Tom has partook with the Machinists Non-Partisan Political League Planning Committee and was the past Vice President and current delegate to the Fresno, Madera, Tulare and Kings Counties Central Labor Council. He served on the Civil Service Commission for Fresno County for nine years as a Business Representative, and the Automotive and Machinists Joint Apprenticeship Committee for thirty years since completing his apprenticeship in 1984, serving as Chairman of the committee for the last twenty-five years. As a part of the Apprenticeship Committee, Tom was a participant and an asset to the Trade Advisory Council for Chowchilla Women's Facility, Corcoran's Men Facility and Tehachapi Prison.

Tom has been happily married for thirty-six years to his wife, Barbara, and has been the proud father of three daughters and grandfather of five grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect that I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the exemplary career of Thomas Rotella Jr., and to wish him the best of luck and satisfaction in his retirement and future endeavors.

HONORING ALEX ARGYLE

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Alex Argyle. Alex is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 125, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Alex has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Alex has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Alex has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Alex Argyle for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

IN RECOGNITION OF WILLIAM G. DRESSEL, JR.

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the accomplishments of William G. Dressel, Jr. as he prepares to retire as Executive Director of the New Jersey State League of Municipalities this year. Mr. Dressel has dedicated 41 years to the League and his achievements are to be celebrated.

Joining the New Jersey State League of Municipalities staff in 1974, Mr. Dressel held various positions in the organization until being selected to serve as Executive Director in 1995. As Executive Director, Mr. Dressel has overseen a twenty member staff, an operating budget of over $3 million and five full-time lobbyists. In addition to his tenure at the New Jersey State League of Municipalities, Mr. Dressel served on the National League of Cities Executive Board for two years.

Mr. Dressel has been an effective voice for New Jersey's municipalities and his commitment to government is evident. He has fought on behalf of local government and helped advance their goals and meet their needs. Under his leadership, the League has grown, with all 565 New Jersey municipalities participating in the volunteer association for the past five years. Additionally, the League's Annual Conference is the largest of its kind, with nearly 20,000 attendees each year.

Mr. Dressel holds a Masters Degree in Public Administration from West Virginia University and a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Political Science and Social Science from Elon College. He has been recognized over the years for his outstanding service, receiving the John G. Stutz Award for 25 Years of State League Service by the National League of Cities, the Rutgers Award for Public Service to New Jersey for Excellence in promoting and supporting municipal government and Preservation New Jersey's Sarah P. Fiske Award for his efforts to rehabilitate the Ferdinand W. Roebling Sr. Mansion as the League of Municipality's headquarters.

Mr. Speaker, I sincerely hope that my colleagues will join me in congratulating William Dressel, Jr. on his retirement and thanking him for his service to New Jersey. Mr. Dressel's commitment to the betterment of our communities is truly deserving of this body's recognition.

CELEBRATING THE 67TH ANNIVERSARY OF ISRAELI INDEPENDENCE

HON. TED LIEU

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. TED LIEU of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in celebration of the 67th anniversary of Israeli Independence, Yom Ha'atzmaut. The story of Israel is one of a country that for 67 years has defied all odds and a long list of existential threats not only to exist but to thrive as a powerhouse of innovation and national resilience.

Every year, the celebration of the birth of the Jewish state comes on the heels of Israel's Memorial Day, Yom Ha'zikaron. The sirens that ring throughout the country to mark the day of remembrance serve as a stark reminder of the ultimate price its citizens have paid to make the State of Israel possible.

The special relationship between our two countries spans all of Israel's 67 years, beginning the moment that President Harry Truman famously recognized the State of Israel only 11 minutes after its declaration of statehood on May 14. 1948.

Since that time, Israel has served as a bright beacon of democracy and human rights in a region scarce with both. As terrorist groups like ISIS spread their brutality, a civil war rages in Syria that has claimed the lives of hundreds of thousands of civilians, and a regime in Iran calls for the annihilation of Israel as it pursues a nuclear program, we are reminded of the importance of our alliance and shared values. On this day, we must reaffirm our steadfast commitment to the State of Israel and our shared goals of democracy, peace, security, and prosperity.

I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing the people and leaders of Israel chag sameach and a happy 67th Independence Day.

HONORING SETH ARGYLE

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Seth Argyle. Seth is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 125, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Seth has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Seth has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Seth has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Seth Argyle for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

NATIONAL DISTINCTION

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the City of Meadows Place and their fire department on receiving the rare national distinction of a PPC top ranking of 1. Out of the 48,000 other communities that were evaluated, only 80 out of the entire nation have received such an incredible ranking from the Insurance Services Office (ISO).

The ISO utilizes a classification system to rank cities on their Fire Department's ability to protect their communities from fire-related incidents. The system evaluates fire alarm facilities, fire suppression equipment, and other fire department procedures. This comprehensive evaluation method demonstrates that it takes both exemplary city leadership and a dedicated Fire Department to achieve a ranking of this superior level. The leadership and Fire Department of the City of Meadows Place have truly prioritized the safety and welfare of their citizens.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to the City of Meadows Place and its Fire Department on receiving the highest rank from the ISO. We know that you will continue to set an example in excellence, and we thank you for your service.

IN HONOR OF THOMAS A. BEATON

HON. BRUCE POLIQUIN

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. POLIQUIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise along with my colleague Mr. MOULTON of Massachusetts to commemorate Thomas A. Beaton, Phillips Academy Andover Class of 1973, as he completes his service as the President of the Phillips Academy Alumni Council. I want to celebrate Tom as a role model that embodies our school's ''non sibi'' motto, which translates to ''not for self.''

An energetic volunteer and philanthropic supporter of Andover, Tom has served as a member of the Alumni Council since 2004, during which time he twice co-chaired the Non Sibi Committee and the Mentoring Committee. Mr. Beaton also cofounded the Andover and the Military Committee, among other activities.

Today, we want to celebrate the fact that, in 2007, Tom pioneered Non Sibi Day, Andover's worldwide service effort in which alumni, parents, faculty and students participate. Under Tom's leadership and steadfast support, Non Sibi Day has evolved into what is now known

as the Non Sibi 365 initiative, which is the name given to the Non Sibi Committee's efforts to serve as a catalyst for year-round expressions of the Non Sibi spirit of the alumni of Phillips Academy and Abbot Academy. The initiative includes all public service acts done in the spirit of Non Sibi, from individual acts of kindness to group projects that bring the Andover alumni community together, with the express purpose of helping others.

Over the years, Tom has led Non Sibi projects at the Pine Street Inn to help end homelessness and cycled in the Pan-Mass Challenge to support cancer research, to name just two of the countless manifestations of Non Sibi in Tom's life. Tom's efforts have inspired thousands of alums to participate in hundreds of projects around the world. Thank you, Tom. for your inspiring and transformative leadership. Semper Non Sibi.

HONORING PAYTON RODGERS

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Payton Rodgers. Payton is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 125, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Payton has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Payton has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Payton has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Payton Rodgers for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

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 $18,151,908,849,687.15. We've added $7,525,031,800,774.07 to our debt in 6 years. This is over $7.5 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

IRAN IS THE WORLD THREAT TO PEACE

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Iran pretends like it wants peace, but it really wants to conquer the entire Middle East.

While the Supreme Leader's henchmen meet with our diplomats in Geneva, the Iranians are building up their war technology. Iranian news sources indicate that since 2014, Iran has been developing combat suicide drones. This technology uses drones as suicide weapons to destroy jet aircraft, helicopters, and even warships. The drone development includes drones that elude radar, have tracking devices, and fly for hours with a long range.

The Supreme Leader says he wants to destroy Israel and the United States and you know what? I believe him. He has used his terrorist proxy group Hezbollah to go after Israelis around the world. Hezbollah killed a bus full of Israeli tourists in Bulgaria. It was caught trying to kill Israelis in India, Turkey, Thailand, Azerbaijan, and Georgia.

I was in Israel not too long ago and I met with Prime Minister Netanyahu.

He told me the interim Iran nuclear deal was the worst deal of the century.

A year later we have a so-called final deal that is just as bad if not worse than the interim deal.

Iran gets to keep enriching uranium. It does not have to dismantle any of its nuclear infrastructure. No centrifuges will be disabled, no fissile material will be shipped out of the country, Arak will not be destroyed and Fordow will not be closed.

That means at the end of the deal it basically just has to flip a switch to get a nuclear bomb. Why would we be okay with Iran getting a nuclear bomb in 10 or 15 years but not today? To use a football analogy, this deal puts Iran on the goal line with just inches to go before it scores a touchdown.

The deal is also weak on inspections. Nowhere in any fact sheet is it clear that the IAEA will have "anytime, anywhere" inspections. In fact, an Iranian general said that military sites will be off limits.

Our one point of leverage—tough sanctions that this Congress passed—the Administration seems ready to get rid of sooner rather than later. President Rouhani said "We will not sign any agreement, unless all economic sanctions are totally lifted on the first day of the implementation of the deal." Then our President talked about giving Iran $10 billion up front from oil revenue that is frozen in Iran's bank account. That does not sound like a tough negotiator to me.

As bad as this deal is, I'm not even sure there is a deal. Supreme Leader Khamenei said "there are no binding results." And you know what? I hope he's right.

As Netanyahu put it when he came to speak to Congress, "the alternative to a bad deal is a better deal." We can reimpose sanctions, bring even tougher sanctions, and return to our original goals of bargaining: dismantle nuclear infrastructure (including centrifuges and enrichment facilities), no enrichment, require anytime/anywhere snap inspections, stop research and development on advanced centrifuges, and no development of ICBMs.

Right now, today, Iran is trying to gobble up Yemen, Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon. That is four countries in the Middle East. Now imagine what Iran would do once it had a nuclear weapon? We cannot let that happen. We must stop the Iranian mullahs that threaten both the United States and Israel.

And that's just the way it is.

HONORING OFFICER JACOB BALDWIN

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Officer Jacob Baldwin, a police officer and hero with the Pleasant Valley Police Department, on being awarded the Pleasant Valley Police Service Purple Heart, in recognition of his injuries in the line of duty.

After serving in the United States Air Force, Officer Baldwin continued his devotion to service by becoming a member of the Kansas Air National Guard, serving in the 284th Air Support Operation Squadron. Through his four deployments to Africa, Kuwait and Iraq and his time with the Pleasant Valley Police Department, Officer Baldwin has gone above and beyond his call of duty. On December 13th, Officer Baldwin sustained severe injuries from a gunshot wound. While wounded, Officer Baldwin exemplified selflessness and bravery by notifying proper authorities of the situation at hand so they could apprehend the suspect before he brought harm to another member of the community. Throughout his many years of meritorious service and commitment to the force, Officer Baldwin has inspired his fellow officers and many in the community which he protects.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in recognizing Officer Jacob Baldwin for his admirable service to the Pleasant Valley Police Department and his selfless dedication to protecting the residents who reside in the city.

COMMITMENT TO ENERGY EFFICIENCY

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Memorial Hermann Health System for being recognized as a 2015 ENERGY STAR Partner of the Year by the Environmental Protection Agency, EPA. This marks the third consecutive year that Memorial Hermann has received this honor.

Every year, the EPA's ENERGY STAR label is given to hospitals across the country for their energy performance management. For 2015, 20 percent of U.S. hospitals given this label were part of the Memorial Hermann Health System. I commend Memorial Hermann for their continued commitment to energy efficiency.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again

to the Memorial Hermann Health System for receiving this worthy recognition. Thank you for being a leader in our community and the health care industry.

IN RECOGNITION OF CAPTAIN JEREMY HAYNES

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a true patriot and American hero, Captain Jeremy Haynes. On August 5, 2014, Captain Haynes was critically wounded while serving our country in Afghanistan. Captain Haynes will be honored for his outstanding contributions to the United States Army and to our great nation at the Third Annual Ceola Alexander Memorial Prayer Breakfast on May 2, 2015 in Arlington, Georgia.

A native of Albany, Georgia, Captain Haynes attended Calhoun County Schools and Early County Schools before graduating from Dougherty County High School. He was commissioned into the Quartermaster Corps at Georgia Military College in 2004, and graduated cum laude from Fort Valley State University in 2006 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in History. Most recently, Captain Haynes earned a Master of Science degree in Management magna cum laude from the Florida Institute of Technology in 2013.

Captain Haynes has distinguished himself through a number of previous assignments, including Platoon Leader & Executive Officer, 421st Quartermaster Company (Riggers), U.S. Army Reserves in Fort Valley, Georgia; Battalion Logistics Officer, 3rd Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Brigade, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault); Commander, 623rd Quartermaster Company (Riggers), 82nd Sustainment Brigade (Airborne); Training with Industry, American Red Cross National Headquarters in Washington, D.C.; and Instructor at the United States Army Logistics University in Fort Lee, Virginia.

During his extensive military career, Captain Haynes has been honored with a multitude of awards, among them the Purple Heart, Bronze Star Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal, Iraqi Freedom Campaign Medal, Combat Action Badge, Senior Parachutist Badge, Air Assault Badge, Parachute Rigger Badge, German Jump Wings, and the Norwegian 30K Road Mark Badge.

On August 5, 2014, Captain Haynes' life was changed forever. While acting as an Aide-de-Camp to Major General Harold Green among a delegation of Coalition and Afghan Forces, a member of the Afghan army opened fire upon the group, critically wounding Captain Haynes and more than a dozen others.

After suffering gunshot wounds so severe that they required numerous surgeries and left him in a coma, Captain Haynes woke up to find that his legs would not move. Adding even more mental anguish to his physical trauma, he also discovered that Major General Green had been killed. But despite the extremity of his injuries, both physical and emotional, Captain Haynes has not only returned to the loving arms of his wife and six children, but he also took his first steps since the attack just before last New Year's Eve.

His example reminds us all just how deeply the men and women in the Armed Forces give of themselves on our behalf, and how much they are willing to endure, both physically and mentally, to safeguard our cherished liberties. Captain Haynes sets an extraordinary standard of altruism to emulate and for his sacrifices, we shall forever be grateful.

Mr. Speaker, today I ask my colleagues to join me, my wife, Vivian, the more than 730,000 people in Georgia's Second Congressional District, and all Americans, in extending our sincere gratitude and appreciation to Captain Jeremy Haynes. Captain Haynes' courageous leadership among his peers and his enduring dedication to our country showcase an individual of truly noble character. The impact of his valor and sacrifice are deeply felt within the hearts of those whose paths he crosses, and we wish him all the best as he continues to touch the lives of those in his community. May his future endeavors reward and inspire him, as he has inspired us.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NEW JERSEY STATE LEAGUE OF MUNICIPALITIES

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the New Jersey State League of Municipalities on its 100th anniversary this year. This incredible milestone and the League's efforts to support New Jersey's local governments are truly deserving of this body's recognition.

Born out of the need for a statewide alliance supporting and representing the common interests of local governments, the New Jersey State League of Municipalities was conceived and formally authorized by state statute Chapter 163, Laws of 1915. Trenton Mayor Frederick W. Donnelly served as the League's first president, along with three vice presidents, a 14-member executive committee (now known as the executive board) and an executive secretary (known today as the executive director). Over the years, the organization's structure has remained the same. In its 100th year, Piscataway Mayor Brian Wahler serves as League President.

Evidence of its success, the League has grown immensely since its formation. Begun with 51 charter member municipalities, today the voluntary association boasts a membership of all 565 of New Jersey's municipalities, representing more than 560 mayors and 13,000 elected and appointed officials. Its headquarters, moved from Princeton to Trenton in 1921, continued to expand and was housed in several buildings before settling in its current location in 2007. For 100 years, the New Jersey State League of Municipalities has evolved and grown to meet the changing, complex needs of local government.

Through its legislative activity, the League continues to be the leading voice on municipal affairs and an effective advocate on behalf of New Jersey's communities. Its services, programs and resources, particularly its annual conference and monthly magazine, are invaluable resources to local officials, providing outlets to share issues, solutions and ideas. Throughout its history, the League has successfully fought for greater local autonomy, improved local governance and the protection of municipal rights. Its achievements and influence are immeasurable.

Mr. Speaker, once again, please join me in recognizing the New Jersey State League of Municipalities as it celebrates 100 years of local government collaboration. The New Jersey State League of Municipalities continues to represent a commitment to good government.

PROVIDE SEXUAL ASSAULT VICTIMS WITH PERMANENT PROTECTION FROM THEIR ATTACKERS

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Sexual Assault Awareness Month and call attention to legislation I reintroduced this morning that will help to ensure that victims of sexual assaults can seek and receive permanent protection from their attackers.

By way of background, Nicole Norberto, a constituent of mine from Jackson, New Jersey and for whom the bill is named, was raped at the age of 15 by an acquaintance. While seeking prosecution of the attacker and appropriate restraints to protect herself, Nicole was advised by a court clerk in her home county that she could not request a permanent restraining order from the judge because she was not in a ''dating relationship'' with her attacker.

As a result, Nicole's no-contact order, which offered her a significant means of protection from her attacker, ended when her attacker was released from government supervision. To remedy this situation, the New Jersey state legislature adopted legislation (Chapter 133 of the laws of 2007) to extend the right of permanent protection to all victims of sexual abuse.

In my state, Nicole's Law closed a gaping loophole and the bill I introduced today will provide victims across the country with the same protections.

Mr. Speaker, the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN) estimates that approximately 2/3 of assaults are committed by someone known to the victim and 38 percent are a friend or acquaintance. Nicole's Law will ensure all victims have the option of obtaining a permanent restraining order—and the peace of mind it provides.

In addition to requiring states to ensure their laws afford victims the option of seeking a permanent restraining order, my bill will allow a judge to, essentially, default to permanent protection instead of issuing protection orders which expire on a specific date or upon termination. In other words, if the offender would like the order removed, the burden is on the offender to ask for its removal, rather than on the victim to ask for its continuance.

Mr. Speaker, RAINN states that 68 percent of sexual assaults are not reported to police and 98 percent of rapists will never spend a day in jail.

By offering victims added protection and support, we can enable them to have greater

confidence in the administration of justice. The more support and confidence victims have in the ability of our justice system to hold those who commit sex crimes accountable, the more likely victims will come forward—which will help ensure that more criminals are properly prosecuted, leading to fewer victims in the future.

As Nicole stated this week: ''This law is a chance to help ensure victim's rights are protected and needs are met before, during and after a sexual assault. Hopefully this law will help victims of sexual assault be more comfortable with coming forward about their incident knowing that there are laws set in place to help protect them during this difficult process.''

We should do all we can to encourage victims to come forward and ensure those victims who do, are afforded permanent protection. My legislation will help this effort and I urge all members to support it.

LEGENDARY COACH

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Ms. Donna Vacek on her long and successful career as head coach of the Lady Oilers, the Pearland girls' basketball team.

With over 449 career wins and two regional tournament appearances, Ms. Vacek has coached the Lady Oilers to incredible victories over her 29 year career. While she is still in her prime in coaching, Ms. Vacek opted to retire and spend time caring for her family. She is leaving a legacy of victory and determination that will continue to motivate the team in future tournaments.

On behalf of the residents of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again on your exemplary career as head coach of the Lady Oilers. We know that you will continue to set an example in excellence and compassion, and we thank you for leadership.

PROTECTING CYBER NETWORKS ACT (H.R. 1560) NATIONAL CYBERSECURITY ADVANCEMENT PROTECTION ACT OF 2015 (H.R. 1731)

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, last week I voted against H.R. 1560. With two bills on the floor with the same purpose to improve public-private cybersecurity information sharing, I simply prefer the alternative legislation, the National Cybersecurity Protection Advancement Act of 2015 (H.R. 1731).

I commend the Select Committee on Intelligence for their efforts to produce quality, effective legislation to increase public-private cybersecurity information sharing. However, it made more sense to me that this information sharing would be channeled through the existing National Cybersecurity and Communications Integration Center (NCCIC) already in place under the Department of Homeland Security, as provided in H.R. 1731. I am concerned that this bill would provide too many opportunities for mistakes as cybersecurity information would be shared by private entities with any civilian Government agency of their choice. With so many government entities eligible to receive this information, and then pass it on to other government organizations, H.R. 1560 would not ensure protection of private personal information.

A coalition of 18 security researchers and 36 privacy organizations, including the American Civil Liberties Union, have similar concerns, and while I applaud the effort to move forward to address cybersecurity issues, it's critical to get the privacy protections right.

I recognize the importance of establishing cybersecurity legislation. and support the Administration's position that information sharing legislation must carefully safeguard privacy and civil liberties and provide for appropriate sharing with targeted liability protections.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in opposing the Protecting Cyber Networks Act and support the National Cybersecurity Advancement Protection Act of 2015.

HONORING COMCAST CARES DAY

HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the spirit of volunteerism demonstrated by Comcast Cares Day.

Since 2001, over 600,000 volunteers have logged over 3.7 million service hours throughout the country during Comcast Cares Day, a celebration that brings communities together to encourage service and promote volunteerism. This year in Will County, volunteers will work with the Forest Preserve District of Will County for a project at Whalon Lake.

I would like to thank the organizers and volunteers of Comcast Cares Day for the work they do in our community and for their commitment to service.

CONGRATULATING THE COPPELL HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS SOCCER TEAM ON THEIR STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the Coppell High School girls soccer team and their recent victory in the 2015 UIL 6A State Championship game. Coppell defeated then-unbeaten Highland Park High School by a score of 3–0, giving the Cowgirls their second state championship.

The Cowgirls, led by longtime coach Chris Stricker, finished the season undefeated with 28 wins, three ties, and zero losses, making them only the 9th UIL girls soccer champion to finish a season without a loss. What makes this championship victory that much more impressive is the difficult road the Cowgirls had to traverse, beating nationally ranked teams like Plano West just to get into the State tournament. Not only did Coppell finish the season as the best team in Texas, they were ranked the #1 team in the nation by Top Drawer Soccer. The achievements and accomplishments attained this season by the Cowgirls, listed below, cannot be understated and are deserving of the highest praise.

Seniors: Rachel Johnson #00, Cami Studebaker #6, Grace Vowell #8, Liat Even #10, Christina Liu #12, Rachel Koury #18, Sarah King #21, Tara Vishnesky #22

Juniors: Kristen Racz #5, Maddie Dickson #11, Madeline Guderian #13, Kate Kaiser #16, Ashleigh Little #25, Emma Jett #27, Shay Johnson #31

Sophomores: Kelly Rohe #0, Maddie Weber #1, Erian Brown #7, Tori Teffeteller #26, Sarah Houchin #30

Freshmen: Italia Bradley #3, Tyler Runnels #9, Sydney Andrews #20, McKenzie McFarland #23

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 24th Congressional District of Texas, I ask all my distinguished colleagues to join me in honoring this great achievement by the Coppell High School girls soccer team.

TOP 10 COLLEGE WOMEN OF THE YEAR

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Vanessa Alejandro for being named one of Glamour Magazine's Top 10 College Women of the Year. This prestigious recognition highlights ten young women whose actions lead to positive changes in their community.

Vanessa grew up in Pearland, Texas and was always fond of exploring nature as a child. Upon attending University of Houston, she realized many inner city children fail to have a safe environment to explore nature like she did as a child. As a result, she founded Warriors of the Wild, a nonprofit that teaches inner city kids about science and the environment. While pursuing her academic leadership, she became a cancer survivor. Two years ago, Vanessa was diagnosed with thyroid cancer. She battled cancer like a champion continuing her studies at the same time. Her efforts to help bring the world of science to those with limited access and her success in overcoming cancer are an inspiration to all young women.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Vanessa Alejandro for being named Glamour Magazine's Top 10 College Women of the Year. We are very proud of her.

MAYOR DONNIE McMANNES

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, after ten years in office, City of Humble, Texas Mayor

Donnie McMannes will officially bring his stellar public career to an end next month. His tireless efforts have improved our community, and it is with great pleasure that I express my admiration, gratitude and respect to a hometown hero and committed public servant.

Donnie was born in Houston and spent much of his childhood in the Heights area before moving with his mother to Humble in 1945 and attending Charles Bender High School, where he became a football star before graduating in 1953.

After graduating high school, he married his high school sweetheart, Georgia. He was soon drafted into the U.S. Army. His love for football continued while in the service when he played football for the Army in Germany in what was called the Rhine Conference. In 1955, his team went undefeated and won the Rhine Conference Championship.

After completing his service in the Army, Donnie returned home to Texas and to his wife, Georgia. At the age of 23, he joined the City of Houston Police Department.

For 27 years, Donnie put on the badge to protect and serve Houstonians. His long career at HPD included assignments in patrol, investigator, and narcotics. He was promoted to detective in the Burglary and Theft Division, where he served for fourteen years. After retiring from HPD, he continued his career as a Texas lawman, working ten more years for Constable Walter Rankin's Precinct One Constable Office. He is a lifetime member of what I refer to as the ''Poe-leece''—a group of my friends in the Texas law enforcement community.

Donnie is the epitome of civil servant. After officially retiring from law enforcement in 1995, Donnie decided to become more actively involved in local government and ran for the position of Council Member with the City of Humble. He served on the Humble City Council for 10 years. He then decided to run for mayor in 2005 and has spent the last 10 years as its mayor.

Under his leadership, he's overseen many successful projects through the Humble City Council, including bringing the City out of debt and into a surplus. Mayor McMannes has given Humble financial flexibility and the ability to start and complete projects, noting that the projects are always ''paid for by cash.''

Congress could certainly stand to gain from following in Mayor McMannes' commonsense, fiscally responsible footsteps. In addition, working alongside many of his Humble-born and bred friends from the '50s, the City of Humble recently finished managing a total restoration project on the old Charles Bender High School building turning it into the new Charles Bender High School Performing Arts Center. As an alum of Charles Bender High School, this project was close to Mayor McMannes' heart, and appropriately, the new facility is immersed in important memories and milestones in Humble's rich roots.

On behalf of the Second Congressional District, I thank Mayor McMannes for his service and wish him and Georgia nothing but the best in their future endeavors.

As a resident of Humble, I can tell you that his presence in the city government will be missed. As Donnie likes to say, ''I'm Texas born, Texas bred, and I'll be Texas dead right here on Main Street.''

And that's just the way it is.

FBISD ELEMENTARY TEACHER OF THE YEAR

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Melanie Hines of Oyster Creek Elementary on being named Fort Bend Independent School District's 2015 Elementary Teacher of the Year.

Ms. Hines has been a teacher for ten years, devoting the last two years to Oyster Creek Elementary. She prides herself on taking a special interest in each student and is dedicated to preventing achievement gaps in the classroom for all of her students. I wish Ms. Hines the best of luck in her teaching career and am thankful for teachers like her that go above and beyond for their students. Great teachers help develop future leaders.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, I congratulate Melanie Hines for her commitment to teaching and for earning the Fort Bend ISD 2015 Elementary Teacher of the Year.

RECOGNIZING THE DISTINGUISHED CAREER AND SERVICE OF DR. S. ALAN RAY

HON. PETER J. ROSKAM

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a dedicated servant of higher education from the state of Illinois, Dr. S. Alan Ray. In June, Dr. Ray will conclude his service as President of Elmhurst College.

During his tenure as President, Dr. Ray has been an exemplary leader and servant of Elmhurst College. He created the first comprehensive strategic planning process in the school's history. The Elmhurst College Strategic Plan 2009–2014 clarified and systemized the College's core values and beliefs and charted a course for the College's institutional growth during those years. He has since created a second strategic plan, with the help of the school's trustees, to lay out the groundwork for academic and institutional growth through the year 2020. Dr. Ray's strategic vision and dedicated execution have strengthened Elmhurst College and better served countless students.

Under Dr. Ray's direction, Elmhurst College has grown significantly. It increased its full-time faculty, greatly increased its minority student population, and launched a school of professional studies, which specializes in graduate and adult education. The College has also completed construction and renovation projects, including the Elmhurst College Simulation Center at Elmhurst Memorial Hospital. The simulation center is a state-of-the-art facility built to improve nurses' clinical knowledge and skills through active, hands-on clinical scenarios.

Dr. Ray's long and distinguished tenure at Elmhurst College has been a time of dynamic growth for the institution and academic excellence for its student population. Elmhurst College has solidified its place as an integral part of our local community and an excellent place to study and receive training for a successful career.

Mr. Speaker and Distinguished Colleagues, please join me in congratulating Dr. S. Alan Ray on his seven years of service to Elmhurst College and in wishing him all the best for the new chapter on which he is about to embark.

RECOGNIZING VOLUNTEERS WITH THE MOUNTAIN EMPIRE OLDER CITIZENS FOSTER GRANDPARENT PROGRAM

HON. H. MORGAN GRIFFITH

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Speaker, I submit these remarks to recognize volunteers with the Mountain Empire Older Citizens Foster Grandparent Program, which pairs people aged 60 and older with students for tutoring and mentorship purposes. The Foster Grandparent Program is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year, and has been operating at Mountain Empire Older Citizens, Inc. since 1997.

It is my honor to submit the names of Mountain Empire Older Citizens Foster Grandparent Program volunteers:

Irene Bailey, Lucille Baker, Minnie Baker, Betty Barker, Mary Dawson, Nelda Denninson, Shirley Gardner, Ruth Gibson, Bess Gillenwater, Ruth Hogue, Patsy King, Janie Marshall, Sheila Miller, Edith Moore, Sharon Mullins, Bonnie Olinger, Mary Rogers, Ruth Shawver, Marie Smith, Thelma Smith, Betty Stewart, and Thelma Welch.

Additionally, I would recognize Sarah Parsons for her 15 years of service, and note with sadness the passing of Aleatha Strong, who served for 7 years as a Foster Grandparent.

Mr. Speaker, I want to send my genuine thanks to folks working with and volunteering for the Mountain Empire Older Citizens Foster Grandparent Program. I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing these volunteers and others throughout the nation for their efforts on behalf of America's young people. Best wishes to the Foster Grandparent Program many more years of success.

TRIBUTE TO SYDNEY PEARL

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Sydney Pearl, a twelve year old author from West Des Moines, Iowa.

Sydney, a student at Stilwell Junior High School recently completed a book about holocaust survivor David Wolnerman. Mr. Wolnerman and his wife Mrs. Jennie Wolnerman are the last known living holocaust survivors in Central Iowa. I applaud Sydney's effort to preserve their story in her book A Lucky Lie.

This book is an oral history of Mr. Wolnerman during his time in Nazi concentration camps and his life afterwards. The title comes from the lie Mr. Wolnerman told long ago in 1940, about his age as he was entering

the concentration camp. By claiming he was 18, when he was only 13, he narrowly avoided being sent to the gas chamber. Mr. Wolnerman believes God allowed him to make that choice and ultimately it helped him survive. Sydney, through her words, was able to pass along his message for others to hear. The tragedy of the holocaust must never be forgotten.

Sydney was encouraged to write the book by the Jewish Federation and A Book by Me, an Illinois company that taps children to tell stories of Jewish survivors. Her book passes down the oral history of David Wolnerman for other children nationwide.

I congratulate Sydney Pearl for writing this book and for preserving the history of those that survived the horrors of the Holocaust during the Second World War. I am proud to represent them in the United States Congress. I know that my colleagues join me in congratulating Sydney Pearl and wishing her many successes in the future.

HONORING ALLAN LEE McCROSKEY

HON. H. MORGAN GRIFFITH

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Speaker, I submit these remarks to commemorate the life of my friend Allan Lee McCroskey of Roanoke County, who went to be with his Lord on Tuesday, April 7, 2015.

Allan served our nation in the United States Air Force during Vietnam. In spite of his service-related ailments, Allan was always quick to greet you with a smile. He went on to serve as Commander for the Disabled American Veterans, Department of Virginia (2012–2013). In fact, Allan was a life member of the Disabled American Veterans, and was a Disabled American Veterans National Service Officer. He also was retired from the Veterans Administration.

Not only did Allan serve our nation, he actively served the community as well. He was Assistant Scout Master and Board Member of the Blue Ridge Council of Boy Scouts of America, and received the District Award of Merit, the Silver Beaver Award, and the James E. West Fellowship Award. He also was a member of the Scouting Heritage Society.

Additionally, Allan was board member for Climbing Higher Ministries of Lynchburg and Combining Chapters of the DAV. He also was a member of Living Water Christian Church and Cave Spring Masonic Lodge #230.

Allan was preceded in death by his father, Richard L. McCroskey; his stepmother, Agnes McCroskey; his mother, Virginia Johnson McCroskey; his loving wife of 37 years, Reatha Tuck McCroskey; and his second wife of eight years, Linda Perkins McCroskey; his sons, Matthew David and Stephen Paul McCroskey; and his brother, Richard F. McCroskey. He is survived by his son and daughter-in-law, Eric and Anne McCroskey of Goodview; his brother, Michael E. McCroskey of Mechanicsville; and his sister, Carolyn S. Wallace of Colonial Heights.

Known for his exceptional goodwill and dedication to the United States military, veterans, and our community, I am honored to pay tribute to this man's many contributions. My thoughts and prayers go out to Allan's family and loved ones. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SCOTT GARRETT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, on roll call numbers 174 and 175, I could not be present to vote on the House Floor as I was in my district attending the funeral of a former member of my staff. Had I been present, I would have voted aye on both roll call votes.

CONGRATULATING MR. BEN TALLEY

HON. H. MORGAN GRIFFITH

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Speaker, I submit these remarks to congratulate Mr. Ben Talley, a science teacher at Van Pelt Elementary School in Bristol, Virginia, on being inducted into the 2015 National Teachers Hall of Fame.

Education is important to the Ninth Congressional District and the future of our nation. Mr. Talley has 24 years of teaching experience, and has been awarded the prestigious McGlothlin Award for Teaching Excellence, the Bristol Mayors' Award of Distinction, a Rotary Outstanding Teacher, and Virginia Teacher of the Year.

In addition to teaching at Van Pelt Elementary School, Mr. Talley teaches GED courses at the Bristol Virginia Jail. He has also written several books, including his 2007 book entitled ''The Game My Father Taught Me.''

Mr. Speaker, I again congratulate Mr. Ben Talley on his remarkable accomplishments and, on behalf of many in the Ninth District, thank him for all he has done for our area. Best wishes for many more years of continued success.

INTRODUCTION OF THE BUREAU OF RECLAMATION SURFACE WATER STORAGE STREAMLINING ACT OF 2015

HON. DAN NEWHOUSE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce my legislation, the Bureau of Reclamation Surface Water Storage Streamlining Act of 2015. This important and desperately needed legislation would streamline the Bureau of Reclamation's environmental planning and study process for new surface water storage projects. It would accomplish this by applying the same streamlined water project development process used by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers under the Water Resources Reform Development Act of 2014 to the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, in order to facilitate the construction of new dams and reservoirs.

Water is the lifeblood of communities in the arid West and the current water shortage crisis devastating much of the Western United States highlights the critical need for water supply to grow with demand. A streamlined process for new water storage projects is vital to prepare effectively for drought and to provide adequate water resources for future development. This bill allows forward-thinking improvements to the Bureau of Reclamation's permitting process to create new opportunities for water storage. Put simply, this legislation will reform the current cumbersome and lengthy process so that there is a mechanism to build new surface water storage projects in the West.

I urge all members to join me in supporting this legislation and I urge its swift passage.

TRIBUTE TO RICHARD LANGLEY SETTLE

HON. H. MORGAN GRIFFITH

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Speaker, I submit these remarks to commemorate the life of my friend Richard Langley Settle, who passed away on April 16, 2015.

Richard served our nation in the United States Air Force Communications Service at the Pentagon. He graduated from Russell County Public Schools, and went on to attend Clinch Valley College.

He was a 31-year employee of Verizon Virginia, and had an immense knowledge of telecommunications and legislative history. Richard left the company in 2003, having started as a pole climber and worked his way up to Southwest Area Manager of External Affairs. He was President of Settle Associates, a consulting group specializing in business development, telecommunications, government relations, and economic development.

Richard is well known for his public service, having served as Chair and Vice-Chair of the Russell County Board of Supervisors. He also served as a member of the Foundation Boards of both the Mountain Empire Community College and The University of Virginia—Wise. In 2003, he was the honeree of the Mountain Empire Community College Hall of Honor.

Further, Richard worked tirelessly to encourage economic development in Southwest Virginia. Appointed by three Governors, Richard served the Virginia Coalfield Economic Development Authority as Chair and Vice-Chair. He attended the 2001 Economic Summit in Tokyo, Japan as a special envoy of Virginia, and was also appointed to the Virginia Workforce Council.

Richard was appointed by the General Assembly of Virginia as a non-legislative member of the Southwest Economic Development Commission. He also was a charter member of the Southwest Virginia Technology Council, and was honored with a lifetime membership. Additionally, Richard served as a member of the Board of Directors of Virginia Economic Bridge, and held several advisory board positions for privately held companies.

He was involved in additional public service work and charitable work, having served as a

Deacon of Miller View Primitive Baptist Church in Lebanon, VA. He was also an active member of the Sandy Valley Masonic Lodge #17, the Wise County Shrine Club, and the Kazim Temple in Roanoke, VA.

Richard is survived by his wife Janet Swearingen Settle of Abingdon, VA; son Jamie Settle of Carbo, VA; daughter Sarah Rae Easter, MD and husband Nick Easter of Boston, MA; grandsons Tommy Settle and Taylor Settle; brother Billy Settle and sister-in-law Judy, daughter-in-law Jennifer Taylor Yates, and niece Sally Ketron and husband Wes all of Lebanon, VA; niece Lora Beth Settle of Denver, CO and niece Lindsay Greer and husband Joe of Damascus, VA.

Also surviving are his mother-in-law Sarah Baird Hutcheson; brother-in-law James Baird Swearingen, niece Alissa M. Swearingen MD and husband Nick Alexiou, nephew Travis B. Swearingen and wife Aftin all of Brentwood, TN; nephew Christopher J. Swearingen PhD and wife Emilee of San Marcos, CA; brother-in-law Ray Hutcheson and wife Sue of Franklin, KY; great nieces Avery Ketron, Ava Swearingen, Denbigh Swearingen; great nephews Joe Hank, Jacob and Britt Swearingen. Richard was preceded in death by his parents Richard L. and Lillian Jackson Settle, son Robert Kyle Settle, sister Mary Kay Settle, brother Fred Settle, and sister-in-law Martha Jones Swearingen.

Richard's counsel to me and others over the years was truly invaluable. His expertise and devotion had a tremendous impact on our region, and made it a better place to live. His input and dedication will be missed. Our thoughts and prayers go out to Richard's family and loved ones at this time. May God give them comfort.

TRIBUTE TO MEALS FROM THE HEARTLAND

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate and recognize Meals From The Heartland, a non-profit organization that operates out of West Des Moines, Iowa, for receiving the USA Today Make a Difference Day Award.

Make a Difference Day is a USA Today initiative that issues an award to honor the efforts of outstanding people who lead these projects. Each year, they award $140,000 in grants to 14 honorees chosen by a distinguished panel of judges. Award-winners can use their grant money to expand their Make a Difference Day projects, or donate them to a charity of their choice. Make a Difference Day is the nation's largest annual day of giving.

On Make a Difference Day, October 25, 2014, Meals from the Heartland produced over seven tons of food to those in need. A small portion of the 100,008 dried meals produced go to people in Iowa, but most are sent overseas to children in countries including Haiti, South Africa, and the Philippines.

I applaud and congratulate Meals from the Heartland for receiving this award and for their service to starving people around the world, in Central Iowa and elsewhere in the United States. I am proud to represent their leaders, employees, and volunteers in the United States Congress. I know that my colleagues join me in congratulating Meals from the Heartland and wishing them well and continued success in the future.

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, April 30, 2015 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

MAY 5

10 a.m.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Subcommittee on Surface Transportation and Merchant Marine Infrastructure, Safety and Security

To hold hearings to examine surface transportation reauthorization, focusing on the importance of a long term reauthorization.

SR–253

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold oversight hearings to examine the Federal government's role in wildfire management, the impact of fires on communities, and potential improvements to be made in fire operations.

SD–366

Committee on Environment and Public Works

Subcommittee on Clean Air and Nuclear Safety

To hold hearings to examine the legal implications of the Clean Power Plan.

SD–406

10:30 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2016 for the Securities and Exchange Commission and Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

SD–138

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

To hold hearings to examine the U.S. Grain Standards Act.

SR–328A

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

To hold hearings to examine precision medicine for patients.

SD–430

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold hearings to examine pending nominations.

SR–418

MAY 6

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Environment and Public Works

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2015 for the Fish and Wildlife Service, and S. 1036, to require the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to provide certain Western States assistance in the development of statewide conservation and management plans or the protection and recovery of sage-grouse species, S. 855, to amend the Endangered Species Act of 1973 to permit Governors of States to regulate intrastate endangered species and intrastate threatened species, S. 736, to amend the Endangered Species Act of 1973 to require disclosure to States of the basis of determinations under such Act, to ensure use of information provided by State, tribal, and county governments in decisionmaking under such Act, S. 655, to prohibit the use of funds by the Secretary of the Interior to make a final determination on the listing of the northern long-eared bat under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, S. 468, to provide a categorical exclusion under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 to allow the Director of the Bureau of Land Management and the Chief of the Forest Service to remove Pinyon-Juniper trees to conserve and restore the habitat of the greater sage-grouse and the mule deer, S. 293, to amend the Endangered Species Act of 1973 to establish a procedure for approval of certain settlements, S. 292, 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, S. 112, to amend the Endangered Species Act of 1973 to require the Secretary of the Interior to publish and make available for public comment a draft economic analysis at the time a proposed rule to designate critical habitat is published, and S. 1081, to end the use of body-gripping traps in the National Wildlife Refuge System.

SD–406

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine ensuring an informed citizenry, focusing on examining the Administration's efforts to improve open government.

SD–226

10 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

To hold hearings to examine global health problems.

SD–124

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Daniel R. Elliott III, of Ohio, to be a Member of the Surface Transportation Board, and Mario Cordero, of California, to be a Federal Maritime Commissioner.

SR–253

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

To hold hearings to examine reauthorizing the Higher Education Act, focusing on the role of consumer information in college choice.

SD–430

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Business meeting to consider S. 280, 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, S. 750, to achieve border security on certain Federal lands along the Southern border, S. 282, to provide taxpayers with an annual report disclosing the cost and performance of Government programs and areas of duplication among them, S. 434, to strengthen the accountability of individuals involved in misconduct affecting the integrity of background investigations, to update guidelines for security clearances, to prevent conflicts of interest relating to contractors providing background investigation fieldwork services and investigative support services, H.R. 623, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to authorize the Department of Homeland Security to establish a social media working group, S. 179, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 14 3rd Avenue, NW, in Chisholm, Minnesota, as the ''James L. Oberstar Memorial Post Office Building'', S. 994, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1 Walter Hammond Place in Waldwick, New Jersey, as the ''Staff Sergeant Joseph D'Augustine Post Office Building'', an original bill entitled, ''Integrated Public Alert and Warning System Modernization Act of 2015'', an original bill entitled, ''Truth in Settlements Act of 2015'', an original bill entitled, ''Presidential Transitions Improvements Act of 2015'', and the nominations of David Michael Bennett, of North Carolina, Mickey D. Barnett, of New Mexico, Stephen Crawford, of Maryland, and James C. Miller, III, of Virginia, each to be a Governor of the United States Postal Service.

SD–342

10:30 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Department of Defense

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the Department of Defense.

SD–192

2:15 p.m.

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine nominations.

SD–226

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship

To hold hearings to examine the impact of federal labor and safety laws on the U.S. seafood industry.

SR–428A

MAY 7

10 a.m.

Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

To hold hearings to examine child nutrition programs.

SH–216

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies

To hold hearings to examine rural health.

SD–124

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine social media in the next evolution of terrorist recruitment.

SD–342

10:30 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2016 for the Department of Justice.

SD–192

MAY 12

10 a.m.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold hearings to examine S. 883, to facilitate the reestablishment of domestic, critical mineral designation, assessment, production, manufacturing, recycling, analysis, forecasting, workforce, education, and research capabilities in the United States.

SD–366

Daily Digest

HIGHLIGHTS

House and Senate met in a Joint Meeting to receive His Excellency Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan.

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S2491–S2542

Measures Introduced: Thirteen bills and two resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 1126–1138, and S. Res. 154–155. **Pages S2429–30**

Measures Considered:

Protecting Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Responders Act—Agreement: Senate continued consideration of H.R. 1191, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, taking action on the following amendments proposed thereto: **Pages S2494–S2413**

Rejected:

By 45 yeas to 54 nays (Vote No. 168), Corker (for Barrasso) Amendment No. 1147 (to Amendment No. 1140), to require a certification that Iran has not directly supported or carried out an act of terrorism against the United States or a United States person anywhere in the world. (A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the amendment, having failed to achieve 60 affirmative votes, was not agreed to.) **Pages S2511–13**

Pending:

Corker/Cardin Amendment No. 1140, in the nature of a substitute. **Page S2494**

Corker/Cardin Amendment No. 1179 (to Amendment No. 1140), to require submission of all Persian text included in the agreement. **Page S2494**

Blunt Amendment No. 1155 (to Amendment No. 1140), to extend the requirement for annual Department of Defense reports on the military power of Iran. **Page S2494**

Vitter Modified Amendment No. 1186 (to Amendment No. 1179), to require an assessment of inadequacies in the international monitoring and verification system as they relate to a nuclear agreement with Iran. **Pages S2505–11**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the bill at approximately 9:30 a.m., on Thursday, April 30, 2015. **Page S2541**

Messages from the House: **Page S2525**

Measures Referred: **Page S2525**

Executive Communications: **Pages S2525–29**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S2530–32**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S2532–40**

Additional Statements: **Pages S2521–25**

Amendments Submitted: **Page S2540**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Pages S2540–41**

Privileges of the Floor: **Page S2541**

Record Votes: One record vote was taken today. (Total—168) **Page S2512**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 9:30 a.m. and adjourned at 6:23 p.m., until 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, April 30, 2015. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S2541.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

APPROPRIATIONS: NATIONAL GUARD AND RESERVE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Department of Defense concluded a hearing to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the National Guard and Reserve, after receiving testimony from General Frank J. Grass, Chief of the National Guard, Lieutenant General

Stanley E. Clarke III, Director of the Air National Guard, Major General Timothy J. Kadavy, Director of the Army National Guard, Lieutenant General Jeffrey W. Talley, Chief of the Army Reserve, Vice Admiral Robin R. Braun, Chief of the Navy Reserve, Lieutenant General James Jackson, Chief of the Air Force Reserve, and Lieutenant General Richard P. Mills, Commander, Marine Forces Reserve, all of the Department of Defense.

YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies concluded a hearing to examine the Department of Housing and Urban Development's efforts to prevent and end youth homelessness, after receiving testimony from Jennifer Ho, Senior Advisor to the Secretary, Department of Housing and Urban Development; Cyndi Lauper, True Colors Fund, New York, New York; Deborah Shore, Sasha Bruce Youthwork, Washington, D.C.; and Brittany Dixon, Auburn, Maine.

APPROPRIATIONS: DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Department of Homeland Security concluded a hearing to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the Department of Homeland Security, after receiving testimony from Jeh Johnson, Secretary of Homeland Security.

APPROPRIATIONS: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies concluded a hearing to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the Environmental Protection Agency, after receiving testimony from Gina McCarthy, Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency.

DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION REQUEST AND FUTURE YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Strategic Forces concluded open and closed hearings to examine military space programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2016 and the Future Years Defense Program, after receiving testimony from Deborah Lee James, Executive Agent for Space, Secretary of the Air Force, General John E. Hyten, Commander, Air Force Space Command, both of the Department of Defense; and Cristina T. Chaplain, Director, Acquisition and Sourcing Management, Government Accountability Office.

PRIVATE INVESTMENT IN PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: Subcommittee on Housing, Transportation, and Community Development concluded a hearing to examine opportunities for private investment in public infrastructure, after receiving testimony from Calvin E. Hollis, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority Countywide Planning and Development Managing Executive Officer, Pasadena, California; Colleen Campbell, Infrastructure Ontario Board of Directors Member, Montreal, Canada; and Jane F. Garvey, Meridian Infrastructure Fund, North America, New York, New York.

FIVE YEARS AFTER DEEPWATER HORIZON

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Committee concluded a hearing to examine five years after Deepwater Horizon, focusing on improvements and challenges in prevention and response, after receiving testimony from Charles Williams II, Center for Offshore Safety, Houston, Texas; Nancy E. Kinner, University of New Hampshire, Durham; Christopher M. Reddy, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, Woods Hole, Massachusetts; and Samantha B. Joye, University of Georgia, Athens.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Environment and Public Works: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

S. 653, to amend the Water Resources Research Act of 1984 to reauthorize grants for and require applied water supply research regarding the water resources research and technology institutes established under that Act;

S. 611, to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act to reauthorize technical assistance to small public water systems;

S. 612, to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 1300 Victoria Street in Laredo, Texas, as the "George P. Kazen Federal Building and United States Courthouse";

S. 261, to designate the United States courthouse located at 200 NW 4th Street in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, as the William J. Holloway, Jr. United States Courthouse;

S. 1034, to designate the United States courthouse located at 501 East Court Street in Jackson, Mississippi, as the "Charles Clark United States Courthouse"; and

The nomination of Mark Scarano, of New Hampshire, to be Federal Cochairperson of the Northern Border Regional Commission.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Finance: Committee ordered favorably reported S. 335, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to improve 529 plans.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY BUDGET

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2016 for the Department of Homeland Security, after receiving testimony from Jeh C. Johnson, Secretary of Homeland Security.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Indian Affairs: Committee ordered favorably reported S. 152, to prohibit gaming activities on certain Indian land in Arizona until the expiration of certain gaming compacts.

TRIBAL LABOR SOVEREIGNTY ACT

Committee on Indian Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine S. 248, to clarify the rights of Indians and Indian tribes on Indian lands under the National Labor Relations Act, after receiving testimony from Richard F. Griffin, Jr., General Counsel, National Labor Relations Board; Robert J. Welch, Jr., Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians, Alpine, California; E. Paul Torres, Pueblo of Isleta, Isleta, New Mexico; Keith B. Anderson, Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community, Prior Lake, Minnesota; and Richard Guest, Native American Rights Fund, Washington, D.C.

KING VS. BURWELL AND SMALL BUSINESSES

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the *King vs. Burwell* Supreme Court case and congressional action that can be taken to protect small businesses and their employees, after receiving testimony from Michael F. Cannon, Cato Institute, Linda J. Blumberg, The Urban Institute Health Policy Center, and Jeffrey H. Anderson, The 2017 Project, all of Washington, D.C.

GAO HIGH RISK LIST AND THE VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the Government Accountability Office's High Risk List and the Veterans Health Administration, after receiving testimony from Debra A. Draper, Director, Health Care, Government Accountability Office; and John D. Daigh, Jr., Assistant Inspector General, Office of Healthcare Inspections, and Carolyn M. Clancy, Interim Under Secretary for Health, Veterans Health Administration, both of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 40 public bills, H.R. 2082–2121; 1 private bill, H.R. 2122; and 8Usolutions, H. Res. 227–230, 232–235 were introduced. **Pages H2652–55**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H2655–56**

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

H.R. 308, to prohibit gaming activities on certain Indian lands in Arizona until the expiration of certain gaming compacts (H. Rept. 114–95);

Conference report on S. Con. Res. 11, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2016 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2017 through 2025 (H. Rept. 114–96);

Committee on Appropriations; Suballocation of Budget Allocations for Fiscal Year 2016 (H. Rept. 114–97); and

H. Res. 231, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1732) to preserve existing rights and responsibilities with respect to waters of the United States, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the conference report to accompany the concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 11) setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2016 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2017 through 2025; and providing for consideration of the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 43) disapproving the action of the District of Columbia Council in approving the Reproductive Health Non-Discrimination Amendment Act of 2014. **Pages H2516–74, H2652**

Guest Chaplain: The prayer was offered by the Guest Chaplain, Reverend Dr. Jimmy Jackson, Whitesburg Baptist Church, Huntsville, Alabama. **Page H2503**

Recess: The House recessed at 9:04 a.m. for the purpose of receiving His Excellency Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan. The House reconvened at 12:41 p.m., and agreed that the proceedings had during the Joint Meeting be printed in the Record. **Page H2506**

Joint Meeting To Receive His Excellency Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan: The House and Senate met in a joint session to receive His Excellency Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan. He was escorted into the Chamber by a committee comprised of Representatives McCarthy, Scalise, McMorris Rodgers, Walden, Messer, Foxx, Ryan, Frelinghuysen, Granger, Tiberi, Nunes, Salmon, Long, Pelosi, Hoyer, Becerra, Crowley, Edwards, DeLauro, Honda, Matsui, Takano, Takai, DeGette, McDermott, and Castro; and Senators McConnell, Cornyn, Hatch, Barrasso, Blunt, Wicker, Murkowski, Corker, Durbin, Murray, Cardin, and Hirono. **Pages H2503–06**

Moment of silence: The House observed a moment of silence for the victims of the earthquake in Nepal. **Page H2515**

Suspension—Proceedings Resumed: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measure which was debated on Tuesday, April 29th:

Designating the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 820 Elmwood Avenue in Providence, Rhode Island, as the "Sister Ann Keefe Post Office": H.R. 651, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 820 Elmwood Avenue in Providence, Rhode Island, as the "Sister Ann Keefe Post Office", by a ⅔ yea-and-nay of 423 yeas with none voting "nay", Roll No. 177. **Pages H2515–16**

Committee Resignation: Read a letter from Representative Dold wherein he resigned from the Committee on Financial Services. **Page H2574**

Committee Elections: The House agreed to H. Res. 229, electing Members to certain standing committees of the House of Representatives. **Page H2574**

Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2016: The House began consideration of H.R. 2029, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016. Consideration is expected to resume tomorrow, April 30. **Pages H2574–H2623**

Agreed to:

Stefanik amendment that increases funds, by offset, for acquisition, construction, installation, and equipment by $30,000,000 for activities and agencies of the Department of Defense; **Pages H2586–89**

Gosar amendment that increases funds, by offset, for Departmental Administration General Administration in the Department of Veterans Affairs by $8,000,000; **Page H2592**

Titus amendment that increases funds, by offset, for the womens health center within the VHA by $500,000; **Page H2592**

Gosar amendment that redirects $2,000,000 in funding within Departmental Administration, General Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs; **Pages H2592–93**

Sinema amendment that increases, by offset, funds for the General Services Administration by $50,000; **Page H2593**

Gosar amendment that reduces funds for Departmental Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs by $3,200,000 and increases Information Technology Systems by a similar amount; **Pages H2593–94**

Ruiz amendment that redirects $5 million in funding within the General Operating Expenses, Veterans Benefits Administration account; **Page H2594**

Walberg amendment that increases funding, by offset, for General Operating Expenses, Veterans Benefits Administration account by $5,000,000; **Pages H2594–95**

LaMalfa amendment that makes sundry corrections to the bill; **Pages H2598–99**

Jackson Lee amendment that adds a new section to the end of the bill revising amounts provided by the bill by reducing the amount made available for Department of Veterans Affairs-Departmental Administration-Information Technology Services and by increasing the amount made available for Veterans Health Administration-Medical Services by $2,000,000; **Pages H2606–07**

Jolly amendment that prohibits the use of funds to carry out the closure or transfer of the United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba; **Page H2607**

Babin amendment (No. 1 printed in the Congressional Record of April 28, 2015) that prohibits the use of funds to carry out the Appraised Value Offer program of the Department of Veterans Affairs; **Pages H2609–10**

Rothfus amendment (No. 2 printed in the Congressional Record of April 28, 2015) that prohibits the use of funds used by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to pay a performance award under section 5384 of title 5, United States Code; **Pages H2610–12**

Jackson Lee amendment that prohibits the use of funds for benefits for homeless veterans and training and outreach programs maybe be used by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs in contravention of subchapter III of chapter 20 of title 38, United States Code; **Page H2612**

Roe (TN) amendment (No. 6 printed in the Congressional Record of April 28, 2015) that provides that not more than $4,400,000 of the funds provided may be used for the Office of Congressional and Legislative Affairs, and the amount provided under that heading is reduced by $1,500,000; **Pages H2612–13**

Noem amendment that prohibits use of funds to end, suspend, or relocate, hospital-based services with respect to a VA health care facility that is the subject of an environmental impact statement, designated as a National Historic Landmark, or located in a highly rural area; **Page H2614**

Ratcliffe amendment (No. 5 printed in the Congressional Record of April 28, 2015) that prohibits use of funds in the bill for a new round of Base Realignment and Closures (BRAC); **Pages H2615–16**

Grayson amendment that prohibits use of funds to enter into a contract with any offeror; **Page H2616**

Hurd amendment that prohibits the use of funds in contravention of subtitle D of title VIII of the Carl Levin and Howard P. ''Buck'' McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015; **Pages H2616–17**

Roe (TN) amendment that prohibits the use of funds to pay an award or bonus to any employee of the Office of Construction and Facilities in VA, specifically in the locations of Denver, Orlando, Las Vegas and New Orleans; **Page H2617**

Stivers amendment that prohibits the use of funds to be used as salaries of orthotists and prosthetists who are not certified by a nationally accredited body; **Pages H2617–18**

Byrne amendment that prohibits the use of funds to transfer any funds from the Veterans Choice Fund; **Page H2618**

Gosar amendment that prohibits the use of funds to carry out the memorandum from the Veterans Benefit Administration known as Fast Letter 13–10, or to create or maintain any patient record-keeping system other than those currently approved by the Department; and **Pages H2618–19**

LaMalfa amendment that provides that for an additional amount for Department of Veterans Affairs-Departmental Administration-General Operating Expenses, Veterans Administration, there is hereby appropriated, and the amount otherwise provided by this Act is hereby reduced by $5,000,000. **Pages H2620–21**

Rejected:

McNerney amendment that sought to increase funding, by offset, for reimbursement of the General Services Administration by $177,300,000 for construction, major projects. **Pages H2591–92**

Withdrawn:

Brownley (CA) amendment that was offered and subsequently withdrawn that would have in the Department of Veterans Affairs- Departmental Administration- Construction, Major Projects account, struck the aggregate dollar amount and inserted $1,143,800,000 for Department of Veterans Affairs, Construction, Major Projects; **Pages H2595–98**

Boustany amendment that was offered and subsequently withdrawn that would have prohibited funds from being used to pay Veterans Affairs personnel due to backlog; **Pages H2605–06**

Adams amendment that was offered and subsequently withdrawn that would have provided that the General Operating Expenses, Veterans Benefits Administration account for FY 2016 may be used by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide discretionary competitive grants for State and local governments to establish or expand technology systems that develop a coordinated network of private, public and nonprofit services and resources to better serve veterans and their family members; **Page H2610**

Hill amendment that was offered and subsequently withdrawn that would have prohibited the use of funds to carry out any new Key Renewable VA Energy Project under the Department's Green Management Programs; and **Pages H2619–20**

Farenthold amendment that was offered and subsequently withdrawn that would have prohibited the use of funds to pay the salary of any VA employee who received an unsatisfactory work performance review in FY 2015. **Page H2620**

Point of Order sustained against:

Bishop (GA) amendment that sought to redirect funding for Military Construction, Army; increase funding by $154,643,000 for Veterans Health Administration, Medical Services; increase funding by $69,691,000 for medical support and compliance; increase funding by $105,132,000 for medical facilities; increase funding by $10,000,000 for Departmental Administration; increase funding by $95,000,000 for Information Technology Systems; increase funding by $582,000,000 for Construction, Major Projects; and strike Sections 233, 238, 240, and 241. Agreed to sustain the ruling of the Chair on a point of order raised against the amendment, by a recorded vote of 237 ayes to 180 noes, Roll No. 178. **Pages H2583–86**

Gosar amendment that sought to increase, by offset, funds for hospital care and medical services within the VHA by $2,031,000; **Pages H2589–91**

Benishek amendment that sought to add a new section to the bill requiring a report describing the status, including the timeline for completion, of each Community-Based Outpatient Clinic to be established by the Department of Veterans Affairs, through construction or lease, that is not yet complete be submitted to Congress; **Pages H2599–H2600**

Mulvaney amendment that sought to strike title IV, which overseas Contingency Operations Department of Defense; and **Pages H2600–03**

Pocan amendment that sought to prohibit use of funds to withhold any report of an Inspector General from any member of Congress in any case where the member of Congress has requested that such report be provided. **Page H2614**

Proceedings Postponed:

Van Hollen amendment that seeks to strike the pending paragraph pertaining to the Military Construction, Navy and Marine Corps; **Pages H2602–03**

Mulvaney amendment that seeks to strike the pending paragraph pertaining to the Military Construction, Air Force; **Page H2603**

Mulvaney amendment that seeks to strike the pending paragraph pertaining to the Military Construction, Defense-Wide; **Pages H2603–04**

Nadler amendment that seeks to strike section 512 from the bill pertaining to the United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba; **Pages H2604–05**

Blumenauer amendment that seeks to prohibit the use of funds to implement, administer, or enforce Veterans Health Administration directive 2011–004 with respect to the prohibition on ''VA providers for completing forms seeking recommendations or opinions regarding a Veteran's participation in a State marijuana program''; **Pages H2607–09**

Pocan amendment that seeks to prohibit the use of funds to enter into a contract with any person whose disclosures of a proceeding with a disposition listed in the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System include the term ''Fair Labor Standards Act''; **Pages H2613–14**

Hice (GA) amendment that seeks to prohibit the use of funds to pay a Federal Employee for any period of time during which such employee is using official time under U.S. Code; and **Pages H2621–22**

King (IA) amendment (No. 3 printed in the Congressional Record of April 28, 2015) that seeks to prohibit the use of funds to implement, administer, or enforce the prevailing wage requirements under what is commonly known as the Davis-Bacon Act. **Pages H2622–23**

H. Res. 223, the rule providing for consideration of the bills (H.R. 2028) and (H.R. 2029) was agreed to by a yea-and-nay vote of 240 yeas to 186 nays, Roll No. 176, after the previous question was ordered. **Page H2515**

Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2016: The House began consideration of H.R. 2028, making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016. Consideration is expected to resume tomorrow, April 30. **Pages H2506–15, H2623–51**

Agreed to:

Gosar amendment that increases funding for Investigations by $1,000,000 and reduces funding for Departmental Administration by a similar amount; **Page H2633**

Gosar amendment that increases funds for Construction by $3,000,000 and reduces funding for Departmental Administration by a similar amount; **Page H2633**

Murphy (FL) amendment that increases funds for Army Corps of Engineers Construction by $1,000,000 and reduces funding for Expenses by a similar amount; **Pages H2633–34**

Duffy amendment that increases, by offset, Army Corp of Engineers funding for Construction by $10,000,000 for the support of GLFER; **Pages H2634–35**

Huizenga (MI) amendment (No. 6 printed in the Congressional Record of April 28, 2015) that increases funds to Operations and Maintenance by $36,306,000 and reduces funding for Departmental Administration by a similar amount; **Pages H2635–37**

Gosar amendment that reduces funding for Regulatory Program by $424,000 and increases funding for the Office of Inspector General by a similar amount; **Page H2638**

Tipton amendment that increases funding for Water and Related Resources by $2,000,000 and reduces funding for Departmental Administration by a similar amount; **Pages H2643–45**

Lamborn amendment that, by offset, increases funding for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy by $4,000,000; **Pages H2646–47**

Bonamici amendment that increases funding for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy by $9 million and reduces funding for Departmental Administration by a similar amount; **Page H2648**

Cohen amendment that increases funding for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy by $2 million and reduces funding for Departmental Administration by a similar amount; **Pages H2648–49**

Rejected:

Beyer amendment that sought to strike section 104 from the bill. Section 104 prohibits use of funds

by the Corps of Engineers to develop, adopt, implement, administer, or enforce any change to the regulations pertaining to definitions of the terms "fill material" or "discharge of fill material"; **Pages H2640–41**

Beyer amendment that sought to strike section 105 from the bill. Section 105 prohibits use of funds in the bill by the Corps of Engineers to develop, adopt, implement, administer, or enforce any change to the regulations and guidance pertaining to the definition of waters under the Federal Water Pollution Control Act; **Pages H2641–42**

Castor (FL) amendment that sought to increase funding for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy by $266,161,000 and to reduce funding for Fossil Energy Research and Development by $355,000,000; **Pages H2645–46**

Withdrawn:

Crawford amendment that was offered and subsequently withdrawn that would have increased funding for Mississippi River and Tributaries by $27,000,000 and reduced EERE by $96,000,000; **Pages H2635–37**

Rice (SC) amendment that was offered and subsequently withdrawn that would have decreased Regulatory funding by $4,500,000 and increased funding for Operations and Maintenance by a similar amount; and **Pages H2637–38**

Perry amendment that was offered and subsequently withdrawn that would have increased funding for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy by $22,300,000 and to reduced funding for Departmental Administration by a similar amount. **Page H2647**

Proceedings Postponed:

McClintock amendment that seeks to reduce funding for sundry accounts and to apply the aggregate savings of $128,920,000 to the spending reduction account; **Pages H2638–40**

Ruiz amendment that seeks to increase funding for Water and Related Resources by $5,000,000 and to reduce funding for Fossil Energy Research and Development by $2,000,000; **Pages H2642–43**

Griffith amendment that seeks to increase funding for Fossil Energy Research and Development by $5,000,000 and to reduce funding for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy by a similar amount; **Page H2645**

Swalwell (CA) amendment that seeks to increase funding for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy by $25,500,000 and to reduce funding for Fossil Energy by $34,000,000; **Page H2647**

Byrne amendment that seeks to zero out funding for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy and to apply the savings of $1,657,774,000 to the spending reduction account; and **Pages H2649–50**

McClintock amendment that seeks to zero out funding for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, reduce Nuclear Energy by $691,886,000, and zero out funding for Fossil Energy and to apply the aggregate savings of $2,954,660,000 to the spending reduction account. **Page H2650**

H. Res. 223, the rule providing for consideration of the bills (H.R. 2028) and (H.R. 2029) was agreed to by a yea-and-nay vote of 240 yeas to 186 nays, Roll No. 176, after the previous question was ordered. **Page H2515**

Senate Message: Message received from the Senate by the Clerk and subsequently presented to the House today appear on page H2506.

Senate Referrals: S. 304 was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce. **Pages H2506, H2651**

Quorum Calls—Votes: Two yea-and-nay votes and one recorded vote developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H2515, H2515–16 and H2585–86. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 9 a.m. and adjourned at 11:29 p.m.

Committee Meetings

NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM AND ACTIVE FOREST MANAGEMENT

Committee on Agriculture: Subcommittee on Conservation and Forestry held a hearing to review the National Forest System and active forest management. Testimony was heard from Tom Tidwell, Chief, Forest Service; and public witnesses.

PUBLIC AND OUTSIDE WITNESS DAY

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education held a hearing for public and outside witnesses. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies held a markup on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies appropriations bill, FY 2016. The bill was forwarded to the full committee, without amendment.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE

Committee on Armed Services: Full Committee began a markup on H.R. 1735, the "National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016".

EXAMINING REFORMS TO MODERNIZE THE MULTIEMPLOYER PENSION SYSTEM

Committee on Education and the Workforce: Subcommittee on Health, Employment, Labor, and Pensions held a hearing entitled ''Examining Reforms to Modernize the Multiemployer Pension System''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Full Committee concluded a markup on H.R. 2042, the ''Ratepayer Protection Act''; and H.R. 2045, the ''Targeting Rogue and Opaque Letters (TROL) Act''. H.R. 2042 and H.R. 2045 were both ordered reported, without amendment.

THE IMPACT OF INTERNATIONAL REGULATORY STANDARDS ON THE COMPETITIVENESS OF U.S. INSURERS

Committee on Financial Services: Subcommittee on Housing and Insurance held a hearing entitled ''The Impact of International Regulatory Standards on the Competitiveness of U.S. Insurers''. Testimony was heard from Michael McRaith, Director, Federal Insurance Office, Department of the Treasury; Mark Van Der Weide, Deputy Director, Division of Banking Supervision and Regulation, Federal Reserve Board of Governors; and a public witness.

LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS TO ENHANCE CAPITAL FORMATION AND REDUCE REGULATORY BURDENS

Committee on Financial Services: Subcommittee on Capital Markets and Government Sponsored Enterprises held a hearing entitled ''Legislative Proposals to Enhance Capital Formation and Reduce Regulatory Burdens''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

THE GLOBAL MAGNITSKY HUMAN RIGHTS ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations held a hearing entitled ''The Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

ISIS: DEFINING THE ENEMY

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade held a hearing entitled ''ISIS: Defining the Enemy''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia, and Emerging Threats held a hearing entitled ''Progress and Challenges in the Western Balkans''. Testimony was heard from Hoyt Brian Yee, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, Department of State; Susan Fritz, Acting Assistant Administrator, Europe and Eurasia Bureau; U.S. Agency for International Development; former Member Joseph J. DioGuardi; and a public witness.

TERRORISM IN AFRICA: THE IMMINENT THREAT TO THE UNITED STATES

Committee on Homeland Security: Subcommittee on Counterterrorism and Intelligence held a hearing entitled ''Terrorism in Africa: The Imminent Threat to the United States''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

THE REGISTER'S PERSPECTIVE ON COPYRIGHT REVIEW

Committee on the Judiciary: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''The Register's Perspective on Copyright Review''. Testimony was heard from Maria A. Pallante, Register of Copyrights and Director, U.S. Copyright Office.

BUSINESS MEETING; BIRTHRIGHT CITIZENSHIP: IS IT THE RIGHT POLICY FOR AMERICA?

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security held a business meeting to adopt rules of procedure and statement of policy for private immigration bills and statement of policy on Federal charters; and a hearing entitled ''Birthright Citizenship: Is it the Right Policy for America?''. The rules of procedure and statement of policy for private immigration bills and statement of policy on Federal charters were adopted. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURE

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on the Constitution and Civil Justice held a hearing on H.R. 1927, the ''Fairness in Class Action Litigation Act of 2015''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

ZERO ACCOUNTABILITY: THE CONSEQUENCES OF POLITICALLY DRIVEN SCIENCE

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing entitled ''Zero Accountability: The Consequences of Politically Driven Science''. Testimony was heard from Clara Beckett, Commissioner, Bastrop County, Precinct 2, Bastrop, Texas; and public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Natural Resources: Full Committee began a markup on H.R. 774, the ''Illegal, Unreported,

and Unregulated Fishing Enforcement Act of 2015''; H.R. 1214, the ''National Forest Small Tracts Act Amendments Act of 2015''; H.R. 1335, the ''Strengthening Fishing Communities and Increasing Flexibility in Fisheries Management Act''; and H.R. 1991, the ''Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act Extension Act of 2015''.

FLYING UNDER THE RADAR: SECURING WASHINGTON D.C. AIRSPACE

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Flying Under the Radar: Securing Washington D.C. Airspace''. Testimony was heard from Admiral William Gortney, Commander, NORAD/USNORTHCOM; Michael Huerta, Administrator, Federal Aviation Administration; Joseph Clancy, Director, Secret Service; Robert MacLean, Chief, U.S. Park Police; Kim Dine, Chief of Police, Capitol Police; Paul Irving, Sergeant at Arms, House of Representatives; and Robert G. Salesses, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, Homeland Defense Integration and Defense Support of Civil Authorities, Department of Defense.

FOLLOWING THE TRAIL OF U.S. TAXPAYERS' DOLLARS ABROAD: ON-BUDGET ASSISTANCE IN AFGHANISTAN

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on National Security held a hearing entitled ''Following the Trail of U.S. Taxpayers' Dollars Abroad: On-Budget Assistance in Afghanistan''. Testimony was heard from John Sopko, Inspector General, Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction.

ENCRYPTION TECHNOLOGY AND POTENTIAL U.S. POLICY RESPONSES

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on Information Technology held a hearing entitled ''Encryption Technology and Potential U.S. Policy Responses''. Testimony was heard from Amy Hess, Executive Assistant Director, Science and Technology Branch, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Department of Justice; Daniel Conley, District Attorney, Suffolk County, Massachusetts; and public witnesses.

REGULATORY INTEGRITY PROTECTION ACT OF 2015; HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION DISAPPROVING THE ACTION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COUNCIL IN APPROVING THE REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH NON–DISCRIMINATION AMENDMENT ACT OF 2014; CONFERENCE REPORT TO ACCOMPANY S. CON. RES. 11

Committee on Rules: Full Committee held a hearing on H.R. 1732, the ''Regulatory Integrity Protection Act of 2015''; H.J. Res. 43, disapproving the action of the District of Columbia Council in approving the Reproductive Health Non-Discrimination Amendment Act of 2014; and conference report to accompany S. Con. Res. 11, concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2016 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2017 through 2025. The committee granted, by record vote of 8–3, a structured rule for H.R. 1732. The rule provides one hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. The rule makes in order as original text for the purpose of amendment an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 114–13 modified by the amendment printed in part A of the Rules Committee report, and provides that it shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against that amendment in the nature of a substitute. The rule makes in order only those further amendments printed in part B of the report. Each such further amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question. The rule waives all points of order against the amendments printed in part B of the report. The rule provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions. In section 2, the rule provides for consideration of the conference report to accompany S. Con. Res. 11. The rule waives all points of order against the conference report and against its consideration. The rule provides that the conference report shall be considered as read. The rule provides that the previous question shall be considered as ordered without intervention of any motion except one hour of debate. The rule provides that debate on the conference report is divided pursuant to clause 8(d) of rule XXII. In section 3, the rule provides that section 604(g) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act shall not apply in the case of H.J. Res. 43. Additionally, the rule grants a closed rule for H.J. Res. 43. The rule provides one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform or their respective designees. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the joint resolution. The rule provides that the joint resolution shall be considered as read. The

rule waives all points of order against provisions in the joint resolution. The rule provides that pursuant to section 604(h) of the Home Rule Act, a motion to recommit is not in order to the joint resolution if under consideration while the act of the D.C. Council is within the congressional review period prescribed in section 602 of such Act. Testimony was heard from Chairman Tom Price of Georgia and Representatives Gibbs, Edwards, Palmer, Yarmuth, Meadows, and Norton.

REALITY CHECK PART II: THE IMPACT OF EPA'S PROPOSED OZONE STANDARDS ON RURAL AMERICA

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology: Subcommittee on Environment held a hearing entitled ''Reality Check Part II: The Impact of EPA's Proposed Ozone Standards on Rural America''. Testimony was heard from Jim Reese, Secretary and Commissioner of Agriculture, Oklahoma State Board of Agriculture; Cara Keslar, Monitoring Section Supervisor, Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality, Air Quality Division; and public witnesses.

THE FUTURE OF COMMERCIAL MOTOR VEHICLE SAFETY: TECHNOLOGY, SAFETY INITIATIVES, AND THE ROLE OF FEDERAL REGULATION

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Subcommittee on Highways and Transit held a hearing entitled ''The Future of Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety: Technology, Safety Initiatives, and the Role of Federal Regulation''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

Joint Meetings

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FILED

Conferees agreed to file a conference report on the differences between the Senate and House passed versions of S. Con. Res. 11, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2016 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2017 through 2025.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR THURSDAY, APRIL 30, 2015

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2016 for the National Institutes of Health, 10 a.m., SD–124.

Committee on Armed Services: to hold hearings to examine United States European Command programs and budget in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2016 and the Future Years Defense Program, 9:30 a.m., SD–G50.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: Subcommittee on Securities, Insurance, and Investment, to hold hearings to examine insurance capital rules and Financial Stability Oversight Council (FSOC) process, 10 a.m., SD–538.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: to hold hearings to examine S. 703, to reauthorize the weatherization and State energy programs, S. 720, to promote energy savings in residential buildings and industry, S. 858, to amend the National Energy Conservation Policy Act to encourage the increased use of performance contracting in Federal facilities, S. 523, to coordinate the provision of energy retrofitting assistance to schools, S. 600, to require the Secretary of Energy to establish an energy efficiency retrofit pilot program, S. 723, to amend the National Energy Conservation Policy Act to provide guidance on utility energy service contracts used by Federal agencies, S. 869, to improve energy performance in Federal buildings, S. 878, to establish a State residential building energy efficiency upgrades loan pilot program, S. 886, to amend the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to provide for a smart energy and water efficiency pilot program, S. 888, to promote Federal-State partnerships for developing regional energy strategies and plans to mitigate risks in changing energy systems, S. 893, to establish an Energy Productivity Innovation Challenge (EPIC) to assist energy policy innovation in the States to promote the goal of doubling electric and thermal energy productivity by January 1, 2030, S. 939, to require the evaluation and consolidation of duplicative green building programs within the Department of Energy, S. 1029, to amend the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to prohibit the Secretary of Energy from prescribing a final rule amending the efficiency standards for residential non-weatherized gas furnaces or mobile home furnaces until an analysis has been completed, S. 1038, to clarify that no express or implied warranty is provided by reason of a disclosure relating to voluntary participation in the Energy Star program, S. 1039, to require certain agencies to conduct assessments of data centers and develop data center consolidation and optimization plans to achieve energy cost savings, S. 1044, to enhance consumer access to electricity information and allow for the adoption of innovative products and services to help consumers manage their energy usage, S. 1046, to accelerate the adoption of smart building technologies in the private sector and key Federal agencies, S. 1047, to require the Secretary of Energy to review rulemaking proceedings of other Federal agencies for the potential to cause an adverse effect on the cost, time, or difficulty of complying with energy efficiency regulations, guidelines, or standards, S. 1048, to remove the authority of the Secretary of Energy to amend or issue new energy efficiency standards for ceiling fans, S. 1052, to require a study on the impact of State and local performance benchmarking and disclosure policies for commercial and multifamily buildings, to provide for competitive awards to utilities,

States, and units of local government, S. 1053, to amend the National Energy Conservation Policy Act to promote alternative fueled vehicle fleets and infrastructure, and S. 1063, to amend title VI of the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 to establish a Federal energy efficiency resource standard for electricity and natural gas suppliers, 10 a.m., SD–366.

Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests, and Mining, to hold hearings to examine the Bureau of Land Management's final rule on hydraulic fracturing, 2:30 p.m., SD–366.

Committee on the Judiciary: business meeting to consider S. 993, to increase public safety by facilitating collaboration among the criminal justice, juvenile justice, veterans treatment services, mental health treatment, and substance abuse systems, 10 a.m., SD–226.

Select Committee on Intelligence: to hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters, 2:30 p.m., SH–219.

House

Committee on Agriculture, Full Committee, markup on the ''United States Grains Standards Act Reauthorization Act of 2015''; and the ''Mandatory Price Reporting Act of 2015'', 10 a.m., 1300 Longworth.

Committee on Appropriations, Full Committee, markup on Legislative Branch Appropriations Bill for FY 2016, 10:30 a.m., 2359 Rayburn.

Committee on Education and the Workforce, Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training, hearing entitled ''Improving College Access and Completion for Low-Income and First-Generation Students'', 10 a.m., 2175 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Health, hearing entitled ''Legislative Hearing on 21st Century Cures'', 10 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Energy and Power, hearing entitled ''Strategic Petroleum Reserve Discussion Draft and Title IV Energy Efficiency'', 10:15 a.m., 2322 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Communications and Technology, hearing entitled ''FCC Reauthorization: Improving Commission Transparency'', 2 p.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa, hearing entitled ''Regional Impact of U.S. Policy Towards Iraq and Syria'', 11 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, hearing entitled ''Bangladesh's Fracture: Political and Religious Extremism'', 2 p.m., 2255 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, hearing entitled ''Migration Crisis: Oversight of the Administration's Proposed $1 Billion Request for Central America'', 2 p.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Committee on Homeland Security, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Allegations of Special Access and Political Influence at the Department of Homeland Security'', 10 a.m., 311 Cannon.

Subcommittee on Transportation Security, hearing entitled ''A Review of Access Control Measures at Our Nation's Airports, Part II'', 2 p.m., 311 Cannon.

Committee on the Judiciary, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 2048, the ''USA FREEDOM Act of 2015'', 10 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Natural Resources, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 774, the ''Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing Enforcement Act of 2015''; H.R. 1214, the ''National Forest Small Tracts Act Amendments Act of 2015''; H.R. 1335, the ''Strengthening Fishing Communities and Increasing Flexibility in Fisheries Management Act''; and H.R. 1991, the ''Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act Extension Act of 2015'' (continued), 10 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''EPA Mismanagement'', 9 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Health Care, Benefits and Administrative Rules; and the Subcommittee on Monetary Policy and Trade of the Committee on Financial Services, joint hearing entitled ''Examining the Export-Import Bank's Mandates'', 1 p.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Full Committee, markup on the ''National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act for 2016 and 2017'', 11 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 1987, the ''Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2015''; H.R. 1642, to designate the building utilized as a United States courthouse located at 150 Reade Circle in Greenville, North Carolina, as the ''Randy D. Doub United States Courthouse''; and General Services Administration Capital Investment and Leasing Program Resolutions, 10:30 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Full Committee, business meeting to consider a motion to issue a subpoena to the Department of Veterans Affairs, to produce complete MSPB and EEO files from the Regional Office in Philadelphia to the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs; hearing entitled ''Examining Access and Quality of Care and Services for Women Veterans'', 10:30 a.m., 334 Cannon.

Committee on Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Human Resources, hearing entitled ''Next Steps for Welfare Reform: Ideas to Improve Temporary Assistance for Needy Families to Help More Families Find Work and Escape Poverty'', 3 p.m., 1100 Longworth.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

9:30 a.m., Thursday, April 30

Senate Chamber

Program for Thursday: Senate will continue consideration of H.R. 1191, Protecting Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Responders Act.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

10 a.m., Thursday, April 30

House Chamber

Program for Thursday: Complete consideration of H.R. 2029—Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2016 and H.R. 2028—Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2016.

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