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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 12, 2015, at 12 p.m.

Senate

MONDAY, MAY 11, 2015

The Senate met at 3 p.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.

Sovereign Lord, You are our light and salvation so we will not fear. You are the strength of our lives so we will be unafraid. Lord, we are grateful for Your steadfast love and unchanging mercy. Each day You provide us with Your power and compassion.

Sustain our lawmakers today, strengthening them in their challenging work of striving to find creative ways to solve the problems of our time. Inspire them to trust You without wavering, acknowledging You in all they do. Lord, be gracious to them, guiding them with Your wisdom as You gladden their spirits with Your eternal presence.

Send down Heaven's peace into all our hearts.

We pray in Your merciful 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.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

THE SENATE AT WORK

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I took a trip up to Boston this weekend to address the Kennedy Institute. It was really a unique experience.

I was there in a full-scale representation of the Senate Chamber to discuss how the real Senate is beginning to get back to work. I explained how committees are working again so Senators can have more of a stake in the legislative process. I explained how we are allowing more open floor debate and more amendment opportunities so Senators can better represent the voices of their constituents. And I explained how we are getting the fundamentals back on track, such as passing a budget.

This doesn't mean we have ironed out all the Senate's challenges. It doesn't mean a new era of good feelings beckons just around the corner. And it doesn't mean an exertion of will won't be necessary every now and then. But it does mean that we are beginning to open the Senate back up, and in a way that will make shared achievement more likely.

Recall just last week, when we overwhelmingly passed a bill to give the American people more of a say in President Obama's negotiations with Iran. Although we weren't able to consider nearly the number of amendments I would have liked to have seen considered to strengthen the bill, the legislation did provide for congressional oversight of any comprehensive agreement.

The White House had been threatening to veto that bill, but it passed with the bipartisan support of 98 percent of Senators anyway.

Later this afternoon, we will take up another Iran-related measure that I hope we will pass with similar bipartisan enthusiasm.

The resolution of the junior Senator from Idaho is simple. It calls on the administration to use the tools it has in pursuit of what should be a bipartisan goal: securing the release of American citizens being held as hostages by the regime in Iran.

One of those Americans, Saeed Abedini, has reportedly been held prisoner for what would appear to be the supposed crime of attempting to build and operate an orphanage—the supposed crime of building and operating an orphanage.

Beaten, denied access to medical care, and locked away in solitary confinement—that is apparently how the Iranian regime deals with those who dare to show love and compassion to others. No American should find this acceptable, just as no American should find it acceptable to imprison unjustly a reporter or a grandson coming to see his grandmother.

I think we can all agree that, at the very least, the American people should

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

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not be rewarding Iran for its disgraceful human rights abuses and that we should not be granting Iran access to the funding it desires to further its nuclear weapons program and terrorist proxies while this exploitation continues.

So I call on every Senator to join us in standing up for human rights. Let's pass Senator RISCH's legislation later this afternoon.

I mentioned earlier that committees are beginning to get back to work in the new Senate. We have seen a lot of bipartisan committee action in recent weeks. One standout achievement was the Finance Committee's overwhelming passage of bipartisan trade legislation, 20 to 6. It is incredibly important for American workers that we pass this bill. Without it, foreign countries will continue to be able to discriminate against American products and American produce, while we have some of the lowest duties in the world.

We need strong and fair trade legislation that expands Congress's oversight over the administration and sets clear rules and standards for its trade negotiators. That is the Bipartisan Congressional Trade Priorities and Accountability Act in a nutshell.

Yet some talk about preventing the Senate from even debating the bill. I would tell you, I think this would be a big mistake. The Bipartisan Congressional Trade Priorities and Accountability Act reported by the Finance Committee is already a strong bill, and we will have an amendment process on the floor that will allow Members the opportunity to advance their priorities. Voting to proceed to a bill is a vote that says this is worthy of debate—worthy of debate. Well, certainly this bill is indeed worthy of debate, supported by the President of the United States.

So I commend Senator HATCH, Senator WYDEN, and their colleagues on the Finance Committee for getting us this far. My hope is that we can continue this debate tomorrow.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

MOVING LEGISLATION AND REPUBLICAN PRIORITIES

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I must comment on some of the statements that my friend the Republican leader has made.

We have been able to accomplish a few things during this work period, and the reason we have been able to do so is that we, the minority, have cooperated.

For 4 years, my Republican colleagues in the minority objected to everything we tried to do—everything. I don't mean most everything; I mean everything. That was a plan they had. I have mentioned before and I will mention again that they decided they would make sure that Obama was not reelected. That failed. And, No. 2, they were going to oppose everything he tried to do, and they have done that overwhelmingly. So it was really hard for 4 years to get things done.

Now, my friend the majority leader can talk all he wants about how much we have gotten done. Look at what we have been able to accomplish. The majority of the measures we have done could have been done before, if Republicans had not objected to them and stopped us from moving to those matters.

So we are going to continue to do everything we can to move measures, in conjunction with my Republican friends, but we shouldn't be hearing a lot of speeches here about how great things are now, because every time that happens I am going to come and tell everybody what has happened for 4 years.

Government is all about priorities. What do we, as Senators, value the most? With only a few days before the Memorial Day recess, I am disturbed and distressed by the Republicans' priorities. For example, the majority leader knows that the Federal highway program expires this month—not next month, this month. He knows that the highway trust fund runs out of money a few weeks later. Why then are Republicans making no serious effort to pass a long-term reauthorization of the Federal highway program?

I can easily answer this question. They do not know how to pay for America's next jobs bill. So with no as the answer, they again do nothing. Another short-term extension—this is one of many—one of many. I think the last I remember, the last my staff brought me up to date—I think it has been 12 or 15 times that it has been extended for short periods of time. This is not good. This is such bad news for every State—every State—because the directors of the departments of transportation can't do anything long term. The only way to have a good program for construction is to be able to look ahead.

As the Senator from Vermont said the other day, Vermont's season to be able to do construction work is very short, and they can't do long-term planning when the money is only going to be available for a few months.

So this is really unfortunate and really too bad. I say again, this could be America's next jobs bill. So it is really too bad.

We also have the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, known as FISA. It expires on June 1. It must be extended and reformed. Last week, the Second Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the bulk collection program, as currently constructed, is not authorized under current law—meaning the law is illegal. It would be irresponsible for this Congress to merely reauthorize and not reform. How can we reauthorize something that is illegal? We can't. We shouldn't. Why would anyone agree to reauthorize a program which our circuit courts deem to be illegal?

My friend the majority leader keeps talking about extending the program for 5½ years. Extending an illegal program for 5½ years? That is not sensible. What should happen is that we should move forward and do something that is needed here; that is, do it all over again.

The House of Representatives is sending us on Wednesday a new FISA bill, one that has been vetted by those people concerned about the rights of our citizens. They have determined that what the House has done is good. They have passed it out of committee 25 to 2. Senator LEAHY has a bill over here that is almost identical to that bill. So I can't understand why we just don't wait until the House sends us that bill and we turn around immediately and give it to the President as passed by the House of Representatives. The President will sign it. He realizes the program has to be changed. We cannot reauthorize a program that is illegal.

So I hope we can move forward on what the House has done. To his credit, Senator LEAHY is not saying: We have to have my bill. He is saying: If we don't do my bill—Senator LEAHY's bill—pass the House bill. That would be good.

This is the only bipartisan, bicameral solution we have today that will end the illegal bulk collection program in its current form and reform and reauthorize key provisions of FISA. Otherwise, I am not the only one, Mr. President. I was told walking over here that the junior Senator from Kentucky is not going to let the extension of FISA take place.

So why don't we just go ahead and get it done now; that is, when the House sends us their bill, say we are going to pass that and send it to the White House for signature.

I hope the majority leader will reassess his priorities and instead choose to protect Americans' civil liberties.

What is the business of the day, Mr. President?

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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.

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

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

HONORING VIETNAM VETERANS AND NORTH DAKOTA'S SOLDIERS WHO LOST THEIR LIVES IN VIETNAM

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, I rise today to continue our efforts to honor the 198 North Dakotans who gave their lives while serving in the Vietnam war.

Together with Bismarck High School's 11th graders and their teachers, my office is reaching out to the families and friends of these fallen heroes to learn about their lives. I am humbled to learn the tidbits shared with us about each young man, and I wish I could dedicate a whole speech to each unique life.

Today, I also want to highlight the service and contributions to North Dakota and our country by my good friend Rick Maixner of Bismarck. Rick served as a Navy pilot during the Vietnam war, earning many distinguished medals for his aerial service. He then served the State of North Dakota as a State senator and member of the State house of representatives. In his forties, Rick earned his law degree. Throughout his career, he has always been a true public servant. I wish Rick a very happy 70th birthday.

Now I will share about the lives of some of the North Dakotans who did not come home from the Vietnam war.

JAMES FREIDT

James Freidt was from Grand Forks and was born May 5, 1947. He served in the Army's 1st Cavalry Division. James was 20 years old when he died on October 11, 1967.

James's father served our country during World War II and received a Purple Heart for his service.

James was one of 10 children and was one of three children in his family to die tragically.

His family and friends called him Jimmy and remember him as a very protective brother who was always smiling. The siblings have fond memories of playing games like kick the can together.

Shortly before beginning his tour of duty, James was able to attend one of his sisters' weddings. The family is grateful for that good memory of James. He was killed just over 1 month after arriving in Vietnam.

ROBERT ''BOBBY'' SCHMITZ

Robert ''Bobby'' Schmitz was from Martin and was born February 25, 1944. He served in the Army's 4th Infantry Division. Bobby was 25 years old when he died on September 16, 1969.

He was the oldest of six children. His father, Eugene, and a brother, Denny, also served our country in the Army. Growing up, Bobby helped his family with farming and their dairy cows. He and his brother, Denny, were both on the wrestling team. Bobby graduated from NDSU with a degree in business administration before serving in Vietnam. He was engaged to be married and was looking forward to starting his life with his fiancee after he completed his service.

LOREN ''DOUG'' HAGEN

Loren ''Doug'' Hagen was born in Fargo on February 25, 1946. He served as a Green Beret in the Army Special Forces. On August 7, 1971, Doug died. He was 25 years old.

Doug was the eldest of three sons. He was an Eagle Scout and an honor student. After graduating from NDSU with a degree in engineering, Doug enlisted in the Army. His goal was to find his best friend from high school, who had gone missing in action 2 years prior.

Doug was killed 2 weeks into his second tour of duty, which was 1 week prior to his being promoted to captain.

Doug was awarded the Medal of Honor for extraordinary heroism for his actions trying to rescue his fellow soldiers on the day he died. His Medal of Honor was presented to his father by President Gerald Ford at the White House in 1974.

Last month, the American Legion Post 308 was created in West Fargo and was named the Loren ''Doug'' Hagen Post in his honor.

I am grateful to Jordan Haluzak, Jasmine Nice, Brady Bieber, and Alex Love of Bismarck High School for sharing with us about Doug and his family. Jordan is related to Doug and is learning more about his family tree through this project.

MICHAEL HIMMERICK

Michael Himmerick was from Valley City and was born November 28, 1947. He served as a Navy medic for a group of 100 marines. Michael died on April 6, 1967. He was 19 years old.

Michael was one of four boys, and two of his brothers also served in the Navy. His family called him Mickey, and the marines he served with called him Doc. His bother Jim says Michael was one heck of a ballplayer. He was scouted by four Major League Baseball teams when he was a sophomore in high school, but he threw his arm out the summer after his junior year.

Jim remembers Michael's plans to put his intelligence and military experience to good use to become a doctor after completing his service.

LARRY SIKORSKI

Larry Sikorski was from Fairmount and was born April 1, 1947. He served in the Marine Corps' Hotel Battery, 3rd Battalion, 12th Marines. Larry died on February 25, 1969. He was 21 years old.

He had two sisters, Yvonne and Arlene. He had four brothers, Chet, Richard, Daniel, and Orrin—all of whom served our country in the U.S. military.

Larry's nephew Dale was just 1 year younger than Larry. He cherishes his memories of building a raft together, just like Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer. They spent 3 days together building it, but, unfortunately, once sent into the river, the raft did not float.

Dale remembers Larry as being outgoing and very intelligent. Larry earned straight A's while studying predentistry at the University of North Dakota before enlisting in the Marines.

Before going to Vietnam, when Dale dropped Larry off at the airport, Larry told Dale he would never see him again.

RICHARD ''JIMMY'' GAFFNEY, JR.

Richard ''Jimmy'' Gaffney, Jr., was from Fargo. He was born October 23, 1948. He served in the Marine Corps' Echo Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marines. Jimmy died on July 13, 1968. He was 19 years old.

Jimmy enlisted in the Marine Corps shortly after he graduated from Fargo Central High School in 1966. During his first 13-month tour of duty in Vietnam, he was promoted to the rank of corporal.

In letters he mailed to his family, Jimmy wrote that he had made a lot of good friends in his fellow soldiers. When his first tour came to an end, Jimmy signed up for a second tour. Shortly after starting his second tour of duty, he was killed by a land mine.

RICHARD VOLK

Richard Volk was from Minot. He was born March 20, 1949. He served in the Marine Corps' Echo Battery, 2nd Battalion, 12th Marines. Richard died on March 19, 1969, the day before his 20th birthday.

Richard was one of 11 children. Three of the four sons in his family served our country in the military. At one point, Richard and his older brother, Stephen, were both serving in Vietnam at the same time.

Richard was a hard worker, working on the Soo Line Railroad and at his brother-in-law's restaurant, the Pantry Cafe. His brother Virgil remembers that Richard loved hunting and fishing. Virgil said Richard was the best looking in the family, and he knew it.

ROGER SVIR

Roger Svir was from Park River and was born December 1, 1950. He served in the Army's 1099th Transportation Company, called the River Rats. Roger died on September 26, 1971. He was 20 years old.

He was the oldest of four children. His father and seven uncles served our country in World War II and Korea.

During high school, Roger worked for a potato farmer and shared his earnings with his mother Virginia. His mother cherishes her memories of Roger and his cousin playing together along the river and of Roger fixing his car.

He had plans to buy a piece of land with his father and start their own farm. After Roger died, his father thought he was too old to start farming alone, and he gave up on the dream.

Roger was proud to hold the same position as an Army River Rat ship fitter that his father held during World War II.

WILLIS WEBER

Willis Weber was from Valley City and was born July 1, 1937. He served in the Army's 1st Infantry Division. His regiment was called the Blue Spaders of the Big Red One. Willis was 28 years old when he died on November 11, 1965.

At College High School in Valley City, his friends called him Willie. He participated in journalism, printing, basketball, football, and intramural sports.

Prior to his Army service, Willis served in the Air Force and in the Valley City Police Department.

Three weeks after arriving in Vietnam, Willis was shot, and he died a few days after because of that injury. He was awarded six medals in recognition for his actions while serving in Vietnam.

The Valley City AMVETS Post 3 and the Auxiliary are named after Willis in honor of his service and sacrifice to his country.

I want to thank Woody Wendt, a charter member of the Willis Weber AMVETS Post, Sarah Lerud, and Wes Anderson—all of Valley City—for sharing these details of Willis' life.

EDWARD ALEC WERMAN

Edward Alec Werman was from Hansel and was born April 11, 1938. He served with the Green Berets in the Army's Special Forces. Edward was 33 years old when he died on June 1, 1971.

In addition to his parents and five siblings, he left behind his wife Nancy, his daughter Robin, and his son Alec.

His sister Linda remembers Edward as a hard worker who loved his children. His daughter Robin loved traveling as a child with her family to places such as Myrtle Beach and Washington, DC.

Edward became a captain in the Army after attending West Point. He served two tours of duty in Vietnam and died when the helicopter he was in crashed and burned.

STEVE ESCALLIER

Steve Escallier enlisted while living in Portal and was born February 13, 1950. He served in the Army's 1st Cavalry Division. Steve died on October 31, 1969. He was 19 years old.

Steve's siblings remember him as an exceptional brother with good looks and long eyelashes. He held closely the Native American values of truth, life, family, and God. Steve was a firm believer in the United States and the obligation to help those who asked, so he chose to enlist. He had plans to become a teacher after completing his service.

Steve's sister Elyse believes the whole town where they lived in California mourned Steve's death. It took the family years after his death to be able to say ''Vietnam'' and even longer to be able to say Steve's name.

STEVEN HANSON

Steven Hanson spent his early childhood in Aneta and was born October 27, 1949. He served in the Army's 101st Airborne Division. Steve died on September 24, 1971. He was 21 years old.

His family and friends called him Steve. While growing up, Steven's father Gordon served as a Lutheran pastor in the small town of Dazey, and the family traveled all over the world with his father's work as an Army chaplain.

Steven's younger brother by 10 years, David, tells of a letter the family received from a fellow soldier whose life Steven saved the day he died.

The letter described Steven as the pilot of his helicopter crew of four soldiers. Steven's helicopter was shot down, but he was able to guide it to a semicontrolled crash landing. A fellow pilot of Steven's also had survived a recent crash, and Steven was heard joking on the radio to tell so-and-so that he now has safely landed one, too.

One of his crew members was pinned under the helicopter and injured, so Steven helped to free him and called the evacuation helicopter. Later, a second chopper came and dropped down the cable to take Steven and his crewman to safety, but they were drawing fire, and the cable gave way. Steven fell 100 feet to his death.

In addition to his parents and siblings, Steven left behind a wife and son.

LEON COX

Leon Cox was from Jamestown and was born May 4, 1934. He enlisted in the Army's 1st Infantry Division. Leon was 35 years old when he died on May 17, 1969.

Leon, or ''Fuzzy,'' as he was affectionately called by his family, was the seventh of 12 children. Leon grew up in a family dedicated to serving our country. His father served in World War I; two brothers, John and Alex, served in World War II; and two other brothers, Donnie and Jim, served in Korea.

Leon made a career out of his military service. During his senior year of high school, he joined the National Guard and was deployed to Korea. After returning from his deployment, he joined the Army and was stationed in Germany, where he and his wife adopted a young girl named Nicolette.

Leon's family remembers him as a proud man who believed in his country.

GUNDER GUNDERSON

Gunder Gunderson was from Walhalla and was born on July 25, 1941. He served in the Army's 1st Cavalry Division. Gunder was 24 years old when he died on November 23, 1965.

His fellow platoon soldier, Paul Guglietta, says that it was an honor to serve in the same platoon as Sergeant Gunderson. Paul remembers Gunder as being dedicated, hard-working, and very intelligent. He always drove himself to improve on everything he did. Paul was injured at the same time Gunder was killed and says that Gunder was a brave and courageous soldier.

ROY WAGNER

Roy Wagner was from Bismarck and was born February 23, 1947. He served in the Army's 1st Infantry Division. Roy died October 2, 1967, at the age of 20.

When Roy's brother Toby was drafted, Roy decided to enlist. When the draft board met the brothers together, they decided that Toby should go home because he had a wife and kids. Roy was more than happy to take Toby's place.

While in Vietnam, Roy met a young Vietnamese boy whose parents had been killed in the conflict. It was Roy's intention to adopt the boy once he married his fiancee while on leave, but Roy was killed before he could marry his sweetheart or adopt the boy.

The day he died, Roy was in the field with five other soldiers. The group was led into a tunnel and ambushed. Three of the men were shot, and Roy knew that he needed to buy them some time. He stood at the front of the group shooting at the enemy until all of the other men got out. He took seven bullets, saved all five men, and lost his life that day. All five men later contacted the family to tell them of Roy's self-sacrifice.

The AMVETS post in Bismarck is named after Roy to honor his service and his sacrifice.

I wish to thank Bismarck High School students Kyra Wetzel and Hunter Lauer for sharing their research about Roy Wagner with us.

These are just a few of the brave men who served our country in Vietnam. As we are now experiencing the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam war, commemorated by an official proclamation by the President, I think it is important that we honor those who were killed in action and that we share their stories with the next generation of North Dakotans, the next generation of Americans, so they can truly appreciate the sacrifice of those who served us in the U.S. military and certainly the sacrifice which gave the last great measure of their lives.

I thank the Presiding Officer and 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. NELSON. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). Without objection, it is so ordered.

FREEDOM FOR BOB LEVINSON

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, at 5:30 p.m. today, we are going to vote on S. Con. Res. 16, which calls on the Government of Iran to release Americans who are being held. It also calls on the government to cooperate in finding, locating, and ultimately releasing Bob Levinson.

Robert Levinson, a retired FBI agent, while visiting the tourist Island of Kish in the Persian Gulf, which is a part of Iran, suddenly disappeared in 2007. It has been 8 years since his disappearance, which occurred on March 9, 2007. Since Bob is a part of this resolution, this is just another of a continuing conversation this Senator from Florida has had over the course of the last 8 years. It is unbelievable that it has been 8 years.

It wasn't until 2010—3½ years after his disappearance—that the Levinson

family received a proof-of-life video. Then, 1 year later, they received photographs of Bob, in April of 2011. Since then, nothing.

Now, if the Government of Iran really wanted to help, they could. It may be that one part of the Iranian Government is keeping it from other parts. It could be the military—or the special part of the military, the Quds Force—knows, and it may be that the Foreign Minister and the President of Iran do not have the facts. But there is somebody in Iran who can produce the facts, if he wanted to, and that is the Supreme Leader.

Now, in this era of intense negotiations over preventing Iran from having a nuclear weapon and preventing them from the ability to develop a nuclear weapon any time in the next 10 years without us at least getting 1 year's advance notice so we can take countermeasures; in this time of intense discussions with Iran—of course, it is constantly brought up by our negotiating team, including Secretary of State Kerry, but it is rather inexcusable that the only answer Iran has is, We don't know anything about Bob Levinson.

This is, of course, personal to the FBI community because the hostage is one of their retired agents. It is personal to us in Florida as well. Bob left behind a wife, seven children, and four grandchildren. Christine Levinson lives in Florida. A number of the FBI agents who have tried to help her over the course of the years also live in Florida. We are hopefully and prayerfully expectant that if it is a successfully concluded negotiation to prevent Iran from having a nuclear weapon, that the Government of Iran will immediately release all Americans who are in jail whom we know about and likewise will make the effort to find Bob and bring him home to his wife and seven children. That is what humanity would absolutely require.

So at this particular time—8 years-plus into the process—we make this plea for former FBI agent Bob Levinson.

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

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

INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Madam President, spring in Washington, DC, is one of the most beautiful times of the year, as it is in Connecticut and around the country. We have endured a tough winter in the Northeast—a lot of snow and a lot of cold. And now a lot of potholes are all around the country. Spring means potholes, which are endemic not only to the Northeast but to our roads all around America. Potholes are just the latest reminder of infrastructure challenges facing our Nation. That is one reason why this week is, in fact, Infrastructure Week, a time when we should be focusing on rail and roads, the decaying and aging infrastructure that bedevils and hobbles our Nation as we seek to compete globally. And our businesses in Connecticut seek to compete nationally as well as globally.

This time of year is also the beginning of the construction season, especially in the colder regions of the country, such as the Northeast and Iowa, Nebraska, and the Midwest.

In Connecticut, construction workers are ready to go, ready to take advantage of this chance to address our aging and decaying transportation assets.

I know that trade is on our agenda this week. I urge and implore that trade be set aside, that the trade bill be delayed—not forever, by any means. As the leader of our caucus has urged—our leader HARRY REID has implored that we focus on infrastructure. We face a deadline. May marks the last month of MAP–21, the law governing surface transportation funding. On May 31—just 20 days from now—the authorization governing our highway trust fund will expire. That is right. There is a highway cliff that we are just days away from going over. This Nation will go over that cliff unless we act, and now is the moment. Now is the time. Now is our opportunity, and it is an opportunity that will not excuse us from acting.

The bill covers more than just funding. It is crucial to keeping our roadways safe. Now, 2014 was a record year for auto recalls, auto problems, and issues. So part of what needs to be done in addressing the expiration of MAP–21 is to make safety a priority. But it cannot be achieved if we don't address the fundamental challenges of our aging infrastructure.

Fundamental reforms are needed at the NHTSA and other safety watchdogs to make sure our constituents are safe. So one would think now would be the time to discuss legislation that would fix our streets and stop potholes from imperiling our drivers and put construction workers back on the job, providing a lifeline to nearly 2 million Americans who have jobs directly tied to the transportation sector.

One would think we would want to cut down on our unemployment. In the construction sector, joblessness remains at a 10-percent level. You would think that now is the time to be advancing a multiyear, long-term bill that will provide certainty to States and municipalities so they can finalize planning for long-term projects. You would think that now is the time to take a hard look at our safety oversight agencies—NHTSA, the FRA, the Federal Highway Administration—and to make reforms and increase the tools that they have in fines and penalties they can exact to protect all who rely on our transportation network.

Unfortunately, the approach of this Congress is going to be, as engineers say, patch and pray. Patch the potholes, patch the roads, patch the railroads—even when the tracks are cracked, even when ballasts are failing. Patch the bridges. Patch and pray. We are about to become a nation of patch and pray when it comes to decaying, deficient roads, bridges, railroads, and all the vital nuts and bolts, literally, that transport our Nation.

How ironic it is at this moment—when it is spring, when the construction industry is about to rely on the opportunities it has to put people back to work, and when many of us in this Chamber and others at school commencements will be talking about the big ideas, the big challenges, the big dreams and hopes that our graduates have for the future—that we are thinking small. We are thinking about patching—patching our highway transit fund for months, maybe until the end of the year. A nation that patches and prays cannot be exceptional, cannot be a great nation when it comes to shortchanging investments in the vital facilities, in the nuts and bolts, in the roads and bridges that make it a national competitor.

This kind of short-term extension of a highway and transit system fails to match the challenges that our Nation faces. We spend less and invest less as a percentage of our gross domestic product than many other industrialized nations. Europe and China spend far more as a percentage of their gross domestic product than we do.

So I call on the leadership, my good friends and colleagues on the other side of the aisle, to make infrastructure our priority for this week, as it should be for this decade. Within this decade, according to some projections, one in four of our bridges will be 65 years or older, making them even more prone to decay and disrepair.

The consequences are real and costly. Bridges collapse, such as the 50-year old Skagit River Bridge in Washington. The bridge collapsed sending cars into the river below. That wasn't a remote bridge. It was over Interstate 5, a major artery on the west coast. Of course, we all remember the 2007 bridge collapse in Minneapolis. We remember the Mianus River Bridge collapse in Connecticut, the Bridgeport derailment due to decaying and cracking tracks that were improperly repaired. We remember where lives were lost because of a derailment and the failure to invest in train communication and signaling that could have prevented that tragedy. We remember the railroad grade crossings where insufficient investment in modern technology causes deaths all around the country—hundreds of them every year—not to mention billions of dollars due to these collisions, derailments, crashes on the roads, costing lives and imperiling our Nation's future.

A short-term patch robs our States and municipalities of the certainty

they need to contract what is essential to construction at the lowest possible cost in the most efficient way. The certainty and reliability in funding are essential to our municipalities, knowing what their resources will be not just this year but into the future and driving the bargaining with contractors and subcontractors.

It is not just because of our rebuilding needs that we need this investment. There are also many other significant related issues that we must address to keep our roads and bridges safe and reliable. We need to ensure that trucks on the road aren't too big, that truck drivers have enough rest, that our railroads are properly overseen, that constant train control is implemented, that testing for physical and emotional problems is done regularly and reliably. And the long list of NTSB regulations needs to be finally addressed and implemented.

We are in a time when we are talking to young men and women as they graduate from school about those big ideas and about their futures and dreams, when we invoke what is best and brightest about America, our foresight, our strength, our courage to take risks, to invest in ourselves and our future. It is the same spirit that led to the building of the Erie Canal, the transcontinental railroad, and the interstate highway system. Those initiatives were not partisan initiatives. The greatest generation came back from World War II and built the interstate highways under the leadership of President Dwight Eisenhower. He was committed to making America one Nation in its roads, tying us and binding us together as a Nation through that investment. He had the courage—as we should today—to say that what is great about America is what we give back, what we are willing to invest—not only for today, but for tomorrow.

And we are in danger today in this Chamber, in this Nation, of being one of the first generations that left a lesser America for our children. Think of it—a lesser America at a time when the words ''exceptional'' and ''exceptionalism'' trip off the tongues of many of our colleagues here in the Chamber. We need to match that rhetoric with real action.

So today, let us resolve that we will debate and act on a long-term investment program to make sure that our roads and bridges, our railroads and airports, and the ports that could make our Nation the envy of the world are matching our rhetoric and our goals; that they truly make us competitive for businesses in Connecticut and around the Nation, competitive on the global scene, where competition has never been tougher and where our infrastructure needs to be better.

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

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

WASTEFUL SPENDING

Mr. COATS. Madam President, I am back on the floor again for ''Waste of the Week'' No. 10. As my colleagues know, I have been coming down every week talking about waste, fraud, and abuse, ways we can save taxpayer dollars. While we have not been able to address, unfortunately, tragically, the larger issue of the plunge into deficit spending and debt that our Nation has incurred over the past several years, in particular—every effort, every bipartisan effort, has been thwarted by the President's refusal to engage in that, and yet the debt clock keeps on ticking. We keep spending more money than we take in. We keep putting more and more of a burden on future generations as well as our own.

Our economy is not growing. One of the reasons is that we have not achieved fiscal responsibility in the Congress. So while we have not been able to address the larger issue, we can at least address some of those issues that have been documented as waste, fraud, and abuse, documented by nonpartisan agencies that are established for the sole purpose of weeding out some of the excess spending that is not essential to the functioning of government.

We have put up some pretty interesting numbers relative to what we have achieved. We are already over $50 billion of spending that has been documented as totally unnecessary. Some of it has been of the character of somewhat ridiculous. Some has been very, very substantial. We are going to continue to do this, pointing out to the American taxpayer and pointing out to government officials who run these agencies and make these decisions that we simply cannot afford to keep doing this.

So today's waste of the week will be addressed, hopefully by the Appropriations Committee, which will soon be working now that we have passed a budget, to distribute those funds that are necessary for the functioning of government.

I am urging them to use a system and means of identifying what is essential and what is not essential. Now, there may be some things we would like to do but cannot afford to do. They need to be put on hold until we can do them. But there are a lot of issues and a lot of spending that goes on that should not be done in the first place.

Significant savings can be made. Even though it is much smaller than what we need to do, we certainly can address issues that will save taxpayer dollars and better allocate spending for government. When our previous Governor in Indiana, Mitch Daniels, took over, he brought with him a resume as former Director of the Office of Management and Budget. Then-President George W. Bush gave him the name ''The Blade.'' ''The Blade'' looked at every small, little detail of spending and asked a lot of questions: Why are we doing this? How can we save? How can we make government more efficient? There are essential things government has to do. But when he became Governor, he transferred over some of that knowledge and expertise and started doing some simple things, asking some simple questions: Why are we spending money on this? Why are we spending money on that?

Let me give you just a couple of examples. He gathered some of his staff and said: I want you to go out and put pennies on the tires of our State-owned vehicles wherever they are housed. Wherever they are parked, put pennies on them. He waited several months then said: Now, go back and identify all of those vehicles where the pennies are still on the tire. In other words, they had not been moved. They had not even been shifted to another parking spot. They simply were just sitting there.

Well, interestingly enough, he found that many unused State vehicles still had the pennies on their tires. If they had been sitting there for months and nobody was using them, why are we paying for them? Why are we spending money on purchasing these? Let's sell them off, save some money for the State. They obviously are not necessary. It was one-third of the State's fleet of vehicles.

Another thing he did, he said: Let's look at our printing costs. The State had its own printing operation. He said: Let's shop around and see if the private sector can do this more effectively and efficiently. Of course, they did find a private vendor in Indiana that did it much more effectively.

You save a lot of money just going black and white, maybe not quite as pretty, maybe not quite as attractive as color, but another way to save money.

These are small things, but when you total them up for all the agencies that are in Washington—as was determined by the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform—it adds up to a lot of money. This government is more vast than anyone can possibly imagine.

Well, the Commission found that Federal agencies could save at least $10 billion over 10 years by cutting out waste in federal travel, printing and vehicle expenses. So here again is a waste of the week that we are going to add to our ever-increasing gauge of the waste. All this now in red, these are what we have been adding, the 10 items that we have added. We are approaching now, looks like $60 billion, on our way to $100 billion. I think we will probably be having to add extensions to this because, folks, I mean, there is waste out there, there is fraud out there, there is abuse out there like you would not believe.

Should we be dealing with the larger question, the runaway entitlements, the lack of money to adequately fund NIH or scientific research or education but we cannot because our budget is totally out of control? Should we be doing this? Absolutely. That is what we are here for. We have talked about this for the last 5 years since I have been back here. Despite the many alternatives that have been presented to the White House, every one has been rejected.

So at least let's do those things where we have more control through the appropriations process and better manage government, make it more efficient and make it more effective. That is why we point out these and we will continue to point out these in the ''Waste of the Week'' No. 10. I cannot wait to get down here next week and do No. 11.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COATS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is now closed.

STATING THE POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES REGARDING THE RELEASE OF UNITED STATES CITIZENS IN IRAN

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of S. Con. Res. 16, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 16) stating the policy of the United States regarding the release of United States citizens in Iran.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 30 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form prior to a vote on adoption of S. Con. Res. 16.

The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I first want to thank Senator RISCH for his tireless dedication to the plight of the three American citizens unjustifiably detained in Iran, as well as his efforts to call upon the Iranian Government to cooperate in locating Robert Livingston, a missing fourth American, and also returning him to his family.

I also want to thank my colleagues from the States these Americans are from—Senators FEINSTEIN and BOXER from California, Senators STABENOW and PETERS from Michigan, Senators NELSON and RUBIO from Florida, and Senators CRAPO and RISCH from Idaho—for their efforts in working with the families of these American citizens who have been held too long in Iran.

I call upon the government of Iran to do the right thing—do the right thing and immediately release these citizens and send them home to their families and communities as soon as possible. The resolution has a statement of policy that is absolutely unobjectionable in any way.

Let me point out one last thing, if I might. As the ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, I want to reassure the families of these Americans that I will continue to urge the U.S. Government to use every tool at its disposal to secure the release of these Americans, and I will continue to call upon the Iranian Government to immediately and unconditionally release these men and send them home to their families.

I am very pleased we will soon be voting on this resolution, which unequivocally says that America should use all the tools at its disposal for the return of these Americans.

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. 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 ask unanimous consent that during the quorum call, the time be equally divided between the majority and the minority.

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

Mr. CARDIN. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. STABENOW. 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. STABENOW. Mr. President, I commend Senator RISCH, and I am pleased to be a cosponsor of this resolution, which is incredibly important to people in Michigan as well as across the country.

We have a very special man who unfortunately is being held as a hostage in Iran, and he needs to come home now. I have had the honor of getting to know the family of Amir Hekmati. He is a patriotic American from Flint, MI, who served his country honorably and bravely as a marine between 2001 to 2005 in Iraq and Afghanistan. He is an American citizen but also became a dual citizen with Iran in order to be able to visit his grandmother and other family members in Iran.

In August 2011, he was visiting his grandmother and was arrested by the Iranian authorities and charged with spying for the CIA, which was absolutely false, absolutely trumped-up charges. He was then deprived of a fair trial and jailed on those totally trumped-up charges.

Of those Americans confirmed as prisoners in Iran, none have been incarcerated longer than Amir Hekmati. He has been waiting the longest to come home. He has been tortured and is locked inside a prison notorious for its deplorable conditions. Meanwhile, Amir's father is battling terminal brain cancer.

I was very honored to have the opportunity to spend time with his family—his mom and dad, his sister and two brothers—who are passionately engaged in speaking out, coming to Washington, meeting with the State Department, and making sure we are laser-focused on their brother and their son. My heart went out to them.

Think about all of us who have children. Speaking to his mom and dad, it is frightening, it is deplorable, it is outrageous, and he needs to come home—now.

I can't say enough about the love and devotion of the Hekmati family. I have had a number of different opportunities to meet with them. Amir's sister and brother have frequently been here in Washington making sure we are not forgetting about this brave marine. They have fought so hard for his freedom.

I also commend Congressman DAN KILDEE, who represents the Hekmati family in Flint, MI, for being a great partner and such a strong advocate and a strong voice on behalf of Amir and his family.

This resolution is a clear message to the Iranian Government: If you want a seat at the table with the rest of the international community, free Amir Hekmati now, as well as all the other U.S. citizens who are being held as hostages.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to all of their families. I can tell this body that for us, in Michigan, we are laser-focused on making sure that Amir Hekmati's name is lifted up at every opportunity and that it is very clear that this brave, courageous marine who served our country so well has the full support of our government to bring him home immediately.

I congratulate and thank my colleague.

I am proud to be one of the cosponsors on this resolution.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I thank Senator STABENOW for her work on this resolution and for her actions on behalf of her constituent who is being held in Iran. She has been extremely helpful in bringing this resolution forward.

I see Senator RISCH on the floor. I want to state one last time that because of Senator RISCH, we are on the floor tonight with a vote in the full

Senate. I thank him for his tenacity and persistence on bringing this resolution forward so we can focus this on the four Americans being held by Iran and our desire to get them home as soon as possible and use every tool we have at our disposal on behalf of those Americans.

Mr. President, I thank Senator RISCH for his leadership.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, in addition to thanking Senator RISCH for his tenacity and making sure we are at this point with this resolution, I must also go back to our vote last week and the incredible work of our two colleagues in a bipartisan way, as we saw Senator CORKER and Senator CARDIN come together and lead us forward with a very thoughtful piece of legislation that makes clear the role of the Senate in a very important process right now in negotiations.

I thank Senator CARDIN as the ranking member of the Foreign Relations Committee for his leadership.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to add Senators PORTMAN, ROBERTS, KIRK, BOOZMAN, SASSE, and ROUNDS as cosponsors to S. Con. Res. 16.

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

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, I thank my colleagues for those kind words. I think ''tenacity'' is probably an appropriate description. I would like to have had a little more tenaciousness if it would have resulted in better and stronger language than we have. Nonetheless, we have what we have.

I congratulate Senator CARDIN and Senator CORKER for their hard work on the resolution that passed here last week, which went out of here with only one dissenting vote. It was a difficult process, to say the least. Obviously, it didn't rise to the level that a lot of us wanted to see where this—it could have and should have been handled like a treaty. Indeed, it is a treaty. No matter what else we call it, it is a treaty. Nonetheless, we are where we are. We are better off with these things than without. We are going to wait to see how this plays out as the summer unfolds. We have an important June 30 date. Once an agreement is reached, then, of course, we will be on the floor talking and discussing the appropriateness of the agreement.

There are a lot of us who have been critical of how this started and, for that matter, where we are today. In my judgment, this shouldn't have even started. They shouldn't have even sat down at the table until these people were released and/or accounted for. Nonetheless, we are where we are.

There are four people we are talking about in this resolution. Senator STABENOW already referred to one and gave an excellent description of where we are with that individual.

Next, I will talk about the gentleman from California who is also being held. His name is Jason Rezaian. He has been held on unspecified charges since July 2014, denied access to an attorney in violation of Iran's own laws and international norms, for that matter.

Robert Levinson of Florida is a retired FBI agent who was pursuing an investigation in Iran. He was abducted off Kish Island, off the coast of Iran, in March 2007. His whereabouts are unknown. The Iranian Government has repeatedly said they are not holding Levinson, but certainly they should cut loose the information they have, and this resolution requires them to do so.

Lastly, I want to talk about Saeed Abedini. Pastor Abedini is a constituent of mine from Idaho. He is an ordained Christian minister. He has family in Iran. At the time he was arrested, he was in Iran visiting family and in the process of setting up and running an orphanage. He is detained at the present time in Evin Prison, which is considered one of the worst prisons in Iran. He has been held in solitary confinement, physically beaten, denied access to necessary medical treatment as a result of abuse, and was denied access to his lawyer until just before trial.

He had a trial. He was convicted and sentenced to 8 years. And his offense—his offense—was being Christian and pursuing Christianity in a country where this is not permitted. I think it is shocking to most Americans that this could happen in today's age. This is barbarous conduct by a regime that knows no shame. This man should be released from prison and should be released forthwith. He has done absolutely nothing that is a threat to the Iranian people or, in fact, to the Iranian regime—those are two different things we are talking about here. He has done nothing to be a threat to those people, and he should be released.

Iran thinks it elevates its position in the world because it does these kinds of things. It does not. Certainly it shows toughness but a barbarian type of toughness that the world is not impressed with at all.

This is a country which pushes the envelope whenever it can. This country is at the heart of virtually every problem we have in that part of the world. Most importantly, it is one of if not the most prominent promoters of terrorism in the world. Some time ago, this was thought of as a good thing by some of these nations that do not rise to what they should be on the world stage as an important nation. Terrorism was thought of as a way that things could be done.

In recent years, most every country has had it with terrorism. It is no longer something people look at and say, well, yes, there is terrorism, but you need to understand the root causes. That is gone. That is absolutely gone. The other countries in this region have had it with terrorism. Everyone in the region now is going to feel that as we go forward.

There is hope for Iran. The demographics in that country show there is a real disconnect between the people of that country and the regime that operates that country. Most notably, as a downside for the present regime, is that the demographics show that the vast majority of people who are living in Iran are young people. They have a different view of the world than the regime does. They are a secular people who do not want to be ruled by religious fanatics, which is what they have today. In any event, the world is watching how this is going to unfold.

Now, we have a clear expression—and Senator CARDIN made mention of this. We ran this as a separate document, not as part of the resolution we passed last week. This is a separate document, where we are going to have a clear expression of the nature and the view of what the world thinks of this and the view that the U.S. Senate and the U.S. Congress takes of the conduct that Iran is engaged in. It is a separate view, and I believe it will be very helpful to the notion that this regime in Iran cannot—cannot—continue down the road it is going down. The Iran regime purports to represent its people. What it is doing is not helpful to the Iranian people.

I yield the floor.

Mr. President, I will yield back all remaining time, with the consent of my colleague from Maryland.

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

The question occurs on agreeing to S. Con. Res. 16.

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 Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE), and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 90, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 175 Leg.]

YEAS—90

Alexander	Blumenthal	Burr
Ayotte	Blunt	Cantwell
Baldwin	Boozman	Capito
Barrasso	Boxer	Cardin
Bennet	Brown	Carper

Casey	Heller	Paul
Cassidy	Hirono	Perdue
Coats	Hoeven	Peters
Cochran	Inhofe	Portman
Collins	Isakson	Reed
Coons	Johnson	Reid
Corker	Kaine	Risch
Cornyn	King	Roberts
Cotton	Klobuchar	Rounds
Crapo	Lankford	Sasse
Daines	Leahy	Schatz
Donnelly	Lee	Schumer
Durbin	Manchin	Scott
Enzi	Markey	Sessions
Ernst	McCain	Shaheen
Feinstein	McCaskill	Shelby
Fischer	McConnell	Stabenow
Flake	Menendez	Tester
Franken	Merkley	Tillis
Gardner	Mikulski	Toomey
Gillibrand	Moran	Udall
Grassley	Murkowski	Warner
Hatch	Murphy	Warren
Heinrich	Murray	Whitehouse
Heitkamp	Nelson	Wicker

NOT VOTING—10

Booker	Rubio	Vitter
Cruz	Sanders	Wyden
Graham	Sullivan	
Kirk	Thune	

The concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 16) was agreed to, as follows:

S. CON. RES. 16

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring),

SECTION 1. STATEMENT OF POLICY ON RELEASE OF UNITED STATES CITIZENS IN IRAN.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Saeed Abedini of Idaho is a Christian pastor unjustly detained in Iran since 2012 and sentenced to eight years in prison on charges related to his religious beliefs.

(2) Amir Hekmati of Michigan is a former United States Marine unjustly detained in 2011 while visiting his Iranian relatives and sentenced to 10 years in prison for espionage.

(3) Jason Rezaian of California is a Washington Post journalist credentialed by the Government of Iran. He was unjustly detained in 2014 and has been held without a trial.

(4) Robert Levinson of Florida is a former Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) official who disappeared in 2007 in Iran. He is the longest held United States citizen in United States history.

(b) STATEMENT OF POLICY.—It is the policy of the United States that—

(1) the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran should immediately release Saeed Abedini, Amir Hekmati, and Jason Rezaian, and cooperate with the United States Government to locate and return Robert Levinson; and

(2) the United States Government should undertake every effort using every diplomatic tool at its disposal to secure their immediate release.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. 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. Without objection, it is so ordered.

USA FREEDOM ACT

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, section 215 of the USA PATRIOT Act expires in a matter of weeks. Senator LEE and I have a bipartisan bill, the USA FREEDOM Act, that would end the use of section 215 to authorize the bulk collection of Americans' phone records and replace it with a more targeted program. It also would enact other important reforms to bring more accountability and transparency to government surveillance. The Speaker of the House of Representatives is bringing that same bill for a vote in the House on Wednesday.

Last week, some opponents came to the floor to voice their opposition. They claimed that ending this bulk collection program would somehow put our national security at risk and that a bulk collection program like this could somehow have prevented the September 11 attacks. But the facts are not on their side. According to the headline of a recent National Journal story, these opponents of reform have made ''dubious claims in defense of NSA surveillance.''

I agree these claims are dubious, and I want to set the record straight. I ask unanimous consent that the National Journal story dated May 8, 2015, and an analysis by the Center for Democracy and Technology of similar claims be printed in the RECORD.

One Senator stated on the Senate floor last week, ''If this program had existed before 9/11, it is quite possible we would have known that 9/11 hijacker Khalid Al Mihdhar was living in San Diego and was making phone calls to an Al Qaeda safe house in Yemen.''

Another seemed to suggest that the bulk collection program would ''have prevented 9/11.''

When I was chairman in the last Congress, the Senate Judiciary Committee held six hearings to examine revelations about government surveillance activities. At one of those hearings, I asked former counterterrorism official Richard Clarke, who was working in the Bush administration on September 11, whether the NSA bulk collection program would have prevented those attacks. He testified that the government had the information it needed to prevent the attacks but failed to properly share that information among Federal agencies.

Senator Bob Graham, who investigated the September 11th attacks as head of the Senate Intelligence Committee, likewise has said that ''there were plenty of opportunities without having to rely on this metadata system for the FBI and intelligence agencies to have located Mihdhar.''

The other claim that has been made repeatedly over the past few days is that, as one Senator put it, the bulk collection of Americans' phone records is ''very effective at keeping America safe.'' Another stated that the USA FREEDOM Act would ''eliminate the essential intelligence this program collects.''

But numerous national security experts also have concluded that the NSA's bulk collection program is not essential to national security. The President's Review Group on Intelligence and Communications Technology, which included two former national security officials, stated:

> The information contributed to terrorist investigations by the use of section 215 telephony metadata was not essential to preventing attacks and could readily have been obtained in a timely manner using conventional section 215 orders.

Former Acting CIA Director Michael Morell testified to the Senate Judiciary Committee that the review group's recommendation to end the government's collection of that data and instead allow the government to search phone records held by the telecommunications providers would not add a substantial burden to the government. That is precisely the approach of our bipartisan USA FREEDOM Act.

Last year, the Director of National Intelligence and the Attorney General supported a prior version of the USA FREEDOM Act, which also ended bulk collection under section 215 and replaced it with a more targeted phone records program. The Attorney General and the Director of National Intelligence said that our bill ''preserve[d] essential Intelligence Community capabilities.''

These individuals are not newcomers to the issue of national security. They understand the threats to our Nation. They do not have a political motive. They have the best interests of our Nation and its values in mind when they tell us that we can end the dragnet collection of innocent Americans' phone records and keep our country safe.

The USA FREEDOM Act does not just end NSA's bulk collection program under section 215. It also fills other gaps in our intelligence capabilities. It ensures that the government can quickly obtain business records—including phone records—in emergency situations. It ensures that if a foreign terrorist who poses a serious threat comes into the United States, the government does not have to stop its surveillance while it seeks emergency wiretap authorization from the Attorney General. It ensures that the government need not terminate FISA surveillance on a foreigner who temporarily travels outside the United States. And it ensures that the FBI has the tools it needs to investigate individuals who are facilitating the international proliferation of weapons of mass destruction on behalf of a foreign government or terrorist organization. These provisions were requested by the FBI and by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. They were not part of the bill that was filibustered in the Senate in November.

As a final matter, it is notable that there has been not a single Senate committee hearing on surveillance reform or the expiring provisions in the 5 months of this new Congress under Republican leadership. There has been zero committee consideration on the bill that Senator MCCONNELL has now brought directly to the Senate calendar that would simply extend these

expiring provisions. I recall the promises that under new leadership the committees would work through regular order, but that has not occurred even though it was apparent to all last year that we would need to grapple with long-overdue reforms. This lack of leadership or any committee process is also despite the fact that the leader and chairmen of the relevant committees would not even let us debate the USA FREEDOM Act last year, in part because it had not gone through committee. As the process moves forward this year, we should not be hearing complaints about lack of process from those who did not provide it.

There is no question that the USA FREEDOM Act contains far-reaching surveillance reforms. But the most high-ranking intelligence officials in the country have endorsed its approach because it is a responsible bill. It protects Americans' privacy and keeps them safe. The Senate should take up the bill once the House passes it this week.

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

[From National Journal, May 8, 2015]

REPUBLICANS MAKE DUBIOUS CLAIMS IN DEFENSE OF NSA SURVEILLANCE

MITCH MCCONNELL AND HIS COHORT OF SECURITY HAWKS ARE STOPPING AT NOTHING TO RENEW THE SPY AGENCY'S PHONE DRAGNET. BUT HOW FAIR IS THEIR DEFENSE?

(By Dustin Volz)

One by one, several powerful Republican senators took to the floor Thursday morning to offer one of the most full-throated defenses of the National Security Agency's bulk collection of billions of U.S. phone records since Edward Snowden exposed the program nearly two years ago.

The crux of their argument is unmistakable: The NSA's expansive surveillance powers need to remain intact and unchanged to keep Americans safe from potential terrorist threats—and if these powers existed before Sept. 11, 2001, they may have assisted in preventing the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

But some of the talking points used by Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and his allies appear to rely heavily on assertions that are either dubious in their veracity or elide important contextual details.

Here is a review of some of their declarations:

Claim: ''Not only have these tools kept us safe, there has not been a single incident, not one, of intentional abuse of them.''—McConnell

McConnell may have been referring specifically to the phone records program here, but the NSA does not, as he implies, have a spotless record.

According to a 2013 inspector general report, NSA analysts intentionally misused foreign surveillance authorities at least a dozen times in the past decade, sometimes for the purpose of spying on their romantic interests. So-called ''loveint''—short for ''love intelligence''—was revealed by the inspector general in response to a letter sent from Republican Sen. Chuck Grassley, who this year renewed a call for the Justice Department to provide an update on how it was handling its investigation into the alleged willful abuses and to ''appropriate accountability for those few who violate the trust placed in them.''

Additionally, a 2012 internal audit obtained by The Washington Post found that the NSA has violated privacy restrictions set in place for its surveillance programs thousands of times each year since 2008. The audit found that most—though not all—infractions were unintended.

Claim: ''The compromise legislation rolls us back to the same thing we were doing pre–9/11.''—Senate Intelligence Chairman Richard Burr

The USA Freedom Act referenced by Burr would reauthorize three key surveillance provisions under the post–9/11 Patriot Act. It would usher in several reforms related to transparency and oversight, but it would keep those authorities intact. Section 215 of the law would no longer allow for the bulk collection of U.S. phone metadata by the NSA, but the authority—created after 9/11—would still exist.

Claim: ''The alternatives to the current program would not come close to offering the capabilities that now enable us to protect Americans.''—Sen. Tom Cotton

Cotton's claim does not align with the stance of Director of National Intelligence James Clapper and then-Attorney General Eric Holder, who sent a letter to lawmakers last year expressing their support for an earlier iteration of the Freedom Act. ''The intelligence community believes that your bill preserves essential intelligence-community capabilities; and the Department of Justice and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence support your bill and believe that it is a reasonable compromise that enhances privacy and civil liberties and increases transparency,'' the letter read. That version of the Freedom Act is widely considered more limiting of surveillance powers than the one being debated in Congress this year.

Claim: ''One alternative offered by opponents of this program is to have phone companies retain control of all call data and provide the NSA only the data responsive to searches phone companies would run on the NSA's behalf. This is not technologically feasible.''—Cotton

The reliance on phone companies to retain call data already occurs, as they are the ones who turn the records over to the government in bulk. Cotton, who voted for a pared down iteration of the Freedom Act last year when he served in the House, cites an 85-page study from the National Research Council to support this assertion. But the Arkansas freshman appears to be conflating its findings, which dealt with whether software could fully replace bulk collection, with what backers of the Freedom Act are attempting to do. ''Although no software can fully replace bulk with targeted information collection, software can be developed to more effectively target collection and to control the usage of collected data,'' the report concluded. Cotton's reservations—that the new system may take longer than the old—have more to do with process than technological capabilities.

Claim: ''Here's the truth. If this program had existed before 9/11, it is quite possible that we would have known that the 9/11 hijacker Khalid al-Mihdhar was living in San Diego and making phone calls to an al-Qaida safehouse in Yemen. There's no guarantee we would have known. Theres no way we can go back in time and prove it, but there is a probability that we would have known and there's a probability that American lives could have been saved.''—Sen. Marco Rubio.

Rubio hedges his language several times with this claim, but the statement still omits important context. As reported by a 2013 ProPublica investigation, ''U.S. intelligence agencies knew the identity of the hijacker in question, Saudi national Khalid al-Mihdhar, long before 9/11 and had the ability find him, but they failed to do so.'' Such missed opportunities to disrupt Midhar's activities, which were being monitored by at least as early as 1999, reflect a failure of information sharing among intelligence agencies, ProPublica notes, and are described in detail in the 9/11 Commission report.

SENATORS' QUESTIONABLE CLAIMS ABOUT NSA BULK COLLECTION

CENTER FOR DEMOCRACY & TECHNOLOGY

On May 7th, 2015, the Second Circuit issued a ruling that declared the NSA's bulk collection of Americans' phone records was clearly unlawful under the Section 215 of the PATRIOT Act. The ruling provided another boost to supporters of surveillance reform and the backers of the USA FREEDOM Act. Hours after the ruling came down, several U.S. Senators—Mitch McConnell, Richard Burr, Tom Cotton, Jeff Sessions, and Marco Rubio—took to the Senate Floor to forcefully defend the NSA's bulk collection program. The Senators made some statements that merit a second look, and serious skepticism.

Claim 1: The NSA's bulk collection of Americans' phone records is essential to national security. ''Under consideration in the House and proposed in the Senate is the socalled USA FREEDOM Act, which will eliminate the essential intelligence this program collects.''—Senator Tom Cotton

The weight of public evidence contradicts this claim, based on statements from experts with access to classified intelligence:

The Attorney General and the Director of National Intelligence stated that the USA FREEDOM Act of 2014—which is in all ways identical to or less restrictive of surveillance than the 2014 bill—''preserves essential Intelligence Community capabilities'' though the bill ''bans bulk collection under a variety of authorities.''

The President's Review Group noted in 2014 that the bulk collection program yielded information that was ''not essential to preventing attacks and could readily have been obtained in a timely manner using conventional section 215 orders.''

The Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board stated in 2014: ''Based on the information provided to the Board, including classified briefings and documentation, we have not identified a single instance involving a threat to the United States in which the program made a concrete difference in the outcome of a counterterrorism investigation. Moreover, we are aware of no instance in which the program directly contributed to the discovery of a previously unknown terrorist plot or the disruption of a terrorist attack.''

Senators Wyden, Heinrich, and Udall said in 2013 ''[We] have reviewed this surveillance extensively and have seen no evidence that the bulk collection of Americans' phone records has provided any intelligence of value that could not have been gathered through less intrusive means.''

It's important not to conflate the value of Sec. 215 overall with the effectiveness of the use of Section 215 for bulk collection. Sec. 215 can be used for targeted—not just bulk—data collection. The USA FREEDOM Act ends nationwide bulk collection under Sec. 215, but preserves the government's ability to use Sec. 215 for more targeted collection. What is at stake with USA FREEDOM is not Sec. 215 itself, but its continued use for bulk domestic surveillance.

Claim 2: The bulk collection program could have stopped 9/11. ''Here is the truth. If this program had existed before 9/11, it is quite possible we would have known that 9/11 hijacker Khalid Al Mihdhar was living in San Diego and was making phone calls to an Al

Qaeda safe house in Yemen.''—Senator Marco Rubio

A bulk collection program was not necessary to find Al Mihdhar prior to 9/11. As the PCLOB report details, the NSA had already begun intercepting calls to and from the safe house in Yemen in the late 1990s. Since the government knew the number of the safe house, and Al Mihdhar was calling that number, it would only be necessary to collect the phone records of the safe house to discover Al Mihdhar in San Diego. This is, in fact, an example of how targeted surveillance would have been more effective than bulk collection. The 9/11 Commission Report and other sources note that the CIA was aware of Mihdhar well before the attack and missed multiple opportunities to deny him entry to the U.S. or intensify their surveillance of him.

Claim 3: Bulk collection of phone records is the same as a subpoena. ''This is the way the system works and has worked for the last 50 years—40 years at least. A crime occurs. A prosecutor or the DEA agent investigates. They issue a subpoena to the local phone company that has these telephone toll records—the same thing you get in the mail—and they send them in response to the subpoena.''—Senator Jeff Sessions

The Second Circuit opinion, which held that the bulk collection program is unlawful, included a lengthy comparison of subpoenas and the bulk collection program. The bulk collection program encompasses a vastly larger quantity of records than could be obtained with a subpoena. The Second Circuit notes that subpoenas typically seek records of particular individuals or entities during particular time periods, but the government claims Sec. 215 provides authority to collect records connected to everyone—on an ''ongoing daily basis''—for an indefinite period extending into the future.

Claim 4: The government is only analyzing a few phone records. ''The next time that any politician—Senator, Congressman—talking head, whoever it may be, stands up and says ''The U.S. Government is [. . .] going through your phone records,'' they are lying. It is not true, except for some very isolated instances—in the hundreds—of individuals for whom there is reasonable suspicion that they could have links to terrorism.''—Senator Marco Rubio

The NSA's telephony bulk collection program collects the phone records of millions of Americans with no connection to a crime or terrorism. These records are stored with the NSA and they are analyzed scores of times each year when the NSA queries the numbers' connection to the phone numbers of suspects. Moreover, until 2014, when the NSA suspected a phone number was connected to terrorism, the NSA analyzed the phone records ''three hops'' out—querying those who called those who called those who called the original suspect number. As a result, the PCLOB estimated, a single query could subject the full calling records of over 420,000 phone numbers to deeper scrutiny. In 2014, the President limited the query to ''two hops''—though this can still encompass the full call records of thousands of phone numbers. The USA FREEDOM Act (Sec. 101) would authorize the government to obtain ''two hops'' worth of call records from telecom companies.

Claim 5: The USA FREEDOM Act threatens privacy by leaving phone records with telecom companies. ''[T]he opponents of America's counterterror programs would rather trust telecommunication companies to hold this data and search it on behalf of our government. [. . .] In addition to making us less safe, the USA FREEDOM Act would make our privacy less secure.''—Senator Mitch McConnell

The telecom companies already have the phone records since the records are created in the normal course of their business. The USA FREEDOM Act does not shift control of data from NSA to telecoms; the bill limits the volume of what the government can collect from companies with a single 215 order. Keeping the records with the phone companies, as the USA FREEDOM Act would require, does not create a new privacy intrusion, or, according to the public record, pose new security risks. In contrast, it is highly intrusive for the government to demand companies provide a copy of the communication records of millions of Americans on a daily basis to a secretive military intelligence agency for data mining.

One last important point: The discussion on the Senate Floor centered exclusively on the bulk collection of phone records. However, the debate and the legislation before Congress are not just about one telephony metadata program. The debate is over whether the government should have the authority to collect a variety of records in bulk under the PATRIOT Act. The government has claimed that its bulk collection authority extends to any type of record that can reveal hidden relationships among individuals—which could include phone call, email, cell phone location, and financial transaction records. Framing the issue in terms of phone records makes the problem seem much smaller than it is, especially as our society moves into a technology-enabled future where each individual will create much more metadata and digital records than the present. The stakes are high.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President. Due to a commitment in my state, I was unable to be here for the votes on the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act. Had I been present, I would have voted in support of this bill.

HONORING THOSE WHO HAVE GIVEN THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE SERVING IN U.S. CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, the mission of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, CBP, is broad and diverse. The more than 60,000 men and women of CBP protect our borders at and between our ports of entry. They protect Americans against terrorists and the instruments of terror. They enforce our laws and help boost our economic security and prosperity by facilitating trade and travel. While the roles they play each day may differ, the men and women of CBP share one common goal: to keep our country a safe, secure, and resilient place where the American way of life can thrive. They provide selfless service to our country, and they do so with honor and distinction under an ever-present and evolving threat.

Today I wish to pay tribute to the agents and officers who have given the ultimate sacrifice in the service of our Nation. All told, 33 courageous men and women of CBP have died in the line of duty since the agency's inception in 2003. Today we commemorate these brave men and women, celebrate their lives, and offer their families and loved ones our continued support. They have earned the respect and appreciation of a grateful nation. I ask unanimous consent that a list of these agents and officers be printed in the RECORD.

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

James P. Epling, Border Patrol Agent, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Yuma, Arizona, End of Watch: December 16, 2003; Travis W. Attaway, Senior Patrol Agent, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Harlingen, Texas, End of Watch: September 19, 2004; Jeremy M. Wilson, Senior Patrol Agent, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Harlingen, Texas, End of Watch. September 19, 2004; George B. Debates, Senior Patrol Agent, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Casa Grande, Arizona, End of Watch: December 19, 2004; Nicholas D. Greenig, Senior Patrol Agent, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Tucson, Arizona, End of Watch: March 14, 2006; David N. Webb, Senior Patrol Agent, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Ajo, Arizona, End of Watch: November 3, 2006.

Ramon Nevarez, Jr., Border Patrol Agent, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Lordsburg, New Mexico, End of Watch: March 15, 2007; David J. Tourscher, Border Patrol Agent, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Lordsburg, New Mexico, End of Watch: March 16, 2007; Clinton B. Thrasher, Air Interdiction Agent, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, McAllen, Texas, End of Watch: April 25, 2007; Richard Goldstein, Border Patrol Agent, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Indio, California, End of Watch: May 11, 2007; Robert F. Smith, Air Interdiction Agent, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, El Paso, Texas, End of Watch: May 22, 2007; Eric N. Cabral, Border Patrol Agent, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Boulevard, California, End of Watch: July 26, 2007.

Julio E. Baray, Air Interdiction Agent, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, El Paso, Texas, End of Watch: September 24, 2007; Luis A. Aguilar, Border Patrol Agent, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Yuma, Arizona, End of Watch: January 19, 2008; Jarod C. Dittman, Border Patrol Agent, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, San Diego, California, End of Watch: March 30, 2008; Nathaniel A. Afolayan, Border Patrol Agent, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Artesia, New Mexico, End of Watch: May 1, 2009; Cruz C. McGuire, Border Patrol Agent, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Del Rio, Texas, End of Watch: May 21, 2009; Robert W. Rosas, Jr., Border Patrol Agent, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Campo, California, End of Watch: July 23, 2009.

Mark F. Van Doren, Border Patrol Agent, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Falfurrias, Texas, End of Watch: May 24, 2010; Charles F. Collins II, CBP Officer, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Anchorage, Alaska, End of Watch: August 15, 2010; Michael V. Gallagher, Border Patrol Agent, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Casa Grande, Arizona, End of Watch: September 2, 2010; John R. Zykas, CBP Officer, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, San Diego, California, End of Watch: September 8, 2010; Brian A. Terry, Border Patrol Agent, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Naco Cochise, Arizona, End of Watch: December 15, 2010; Hector R. Clark, Border Patrol Agent, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Yuma, Arizona, End of Watch: May 12, 2011; Eduardo Rojas, Jr., Border Patrol Agent, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Yuma, Arizona, End of Watch: May 12, 2011.

Leopoldo Cavazos, Jr., Border Patrol Agent, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Fort Hancock, Texas, End of Watch: July 6, 2012; James R. Dominguez, Border Patrol Agent, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Cline, Texas, End of Watch: July 19, 2012; Jeffrey Ramirez, Border Patrol Agent, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Laredo, Texas, End of Watch: September 15, 2012; Nicholas J. Ivie, Border Patrol Agent, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Bisbee, Arizona, End of Watch: October 2, 2012; David R. Delaney, Border Patrol Agent, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Big Bend National Park, Texas, End of Watch: November 2, 2012; Darrell J. Windhaus, CBP Officer, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Brownsville, Texas, End of Watch: December 29, 2013; Alexander I. Giannini, Border Patrol Agent, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Benson, Arizona, End of Watch: May 28, 2014; Tyler R. Robledo, Border Patrol Agent, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Carrizo Springs, Texas, End of Watch: September 12, 2014.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

DEREGULATION

• Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask to have printed in the RECORD a copy of my remarks at the American Action Forum.

The remarks follow.

DEREGULATION

Thank you for what the American Action Forum does. I've had a burr under my saddle for a long time about too much federal regulation. You always in politics have a hot button. That's my hot button. I had it when I was governor. I had it when I was university president. I had it when I was Education Secretary. I probably contributed to it when I was Education Secretary, so I've been trying ever since to do something about it.

Overregulation is annoying. It wastes time and money. It interferes with prompt decision making. It superimposes someone else's judgment on what you are trying to do. It interferes with your freedom. It comes from Washington, D.C. It usually prescribes a one-size-fits-all solution that doesn't fit the world in which you live.

Washington, D.C., in my judgment, is populated by too many elected officials of both political parties who think that because they take a one-hour airplane ride from their hometown that they suddenly get smarter when they get here.

Nothing used to make me more mad as governor than to look up towards Washington and see some member of Congress coming up with a big idea, holding a press conference, passing a law, taking credit for some great leap forward and sending the bill to me as governor. Then the next thing I know, that congressman would be home in Tennessee at the Lincoln Day Dinner or the Jackson Day Dinner giving a big speech about local control.

So, I've had a burr under my saddle for a long time about too much federal regulation.

I'm going to talk about two subjects this morning: overregulation of higher education and regulatory guidance. What connects the two? Federal government overreach.

The case of higher education has been the piling up of well-intentioned regulations that strangle our 6,000 colleges and universities.

The case of regulatory guidance, is the inclination of our legislative bureaucrats to forget why we had an American Revolution, which was against a king.

The agencies appear to be using guidance, which is free of notice and comment requirements—that means that people don't have any say about it—to put binding requirements on American businesses and colleges and universities.

To solve the problem, we have to have a bipartisan desire in Congress to weed the garden of bad laws and bad regulations and keep the garden clear. It's always been very hard to pass a law in this country. It ought to be very hard also to create a new regulation.

The good news is I believe for the first time in a long time there is bipartisan interest in weeding that garden. I'd like to tell you a little bit more about it.

Let me begin with higher education regulations.

Sometimes it's best to approach an issue with examples, so let me use three.

More than a year ago, Vanderbilt University in Nashville hired the Boston Consulting Group to determine how much it costs the university to comply with federal rules and regulations on higher education.

The answer: $150 million in a single year—or 11% of the university's total non-hospital expenditures.

Chancellor Nick Zeppos of Vanderbilt says this adds about $11,000 in additional tuition per year for each of the university's 12,700 students.

The second example:

Each year, twenty million families fill out a complicated 108–question form called the FAFSA.

108 questions. Now, think about this: 20 million American families fill this out. If you want a federal grant or you want a federal loan, you fill this out first and you fill it out every year. Now, you can do it online. After you've done it a few times, you know, it gets easier. But, several of our experts in this country that came from all different directions testified before our education committee in Congress that we only really needed two questions. What's your family income? And what's the family size? That would give you 95% of what you needed to know for the government to give out the $100 billion of student loans and the $33 billion of Pell grants that it gives out every year.

So, Senator Michael Bennet and I and Cory Booker and Richard Burr and Johnny Isakson, six of us, Democrats and Republicans have a bill in to cut this FAFSA to the two-question short form.

Now, we may not get that far, but it'll be closer to this short form than the FAFSA when we get through.

And, the President has even said he thinks it is a good idea. In his budget, he said that he could think of thirty or forty questions that could come off this.

Now, these aren't evil people who are putting questions on here. They're just well-intentioned people who say now, I've got an idea. I'd like to know this. They don't think about the fact that 20 million people have to fill this out.

The problem with this is a couple of obvious things. One is it wastes time and money. But the other problem is it discourages people from going to college who we'd like to have go.

The President of Southwest Community College in Memphis said he thinks he loses 1,500 students each semester because of the complexity of the form.

Tennessee has become the first state to make community college tuition free for qualifying students, but first every applicant must fill out that FAFSA. Now that tuition is free, the principle obstacle to a Tennessee high school senior going to community college is a federal, complicated set of regulations.

The third example: Ten years ago and again three years ago, surveys by the National Academy of Sciences—not the Republican National Committee, the National Academy of Sciences—found that principle investigators spend 42 percent of their time associated with federal research projects on administrative tasks instead of research.

I then asked the head of the National Academies what a reasonable period of time would be for a researcher to spend on administrative tasks. He said, well, maybe about 10 percent.

Now, think about how many billions we could save.

We, taxpayers give NIH $30 billion a year, $24 billion to research and development at colleges and universities.

The President has asked for another billion for NIH research. The Republican House has said let's make it $2 billion more every year.

But, the average annual cost of NIH research projects is $480,000, and if we reduce spending on unnecessary red tape by $1 billion, we could potentially fund a thousand multi-year grants.

Twenty-four of the 30 billion dollars that goes to NIH goes to university-based research. At the moment, 42% of an investigator's time is spent on administrative tasks.

This piling up of regulations is one of the greatest obstacles to innovation and cost consciousness in higher education has become—and the reason is us, the federal government.

So if all of us created the mess, then it is up to all of us to fix it.

We've begun to do that.

Here's the good news: On the Senate education committee, which I chair, there is a bipartisan effort to examine these regulations—to identify which ones are the problems, and see if we can get rid of them or simplify them.

More than a year ago, four members of the committee—Senator Mikulski and Senator Bennet, two Democrats, and Senator Burr and I, two Republicans—asked a group of distinguished educators to examine the federal rules and regulations for colleges and universities. They returned to us a document with 59 specific recommendations—requirements and areas for Congress and the Department of Education to consider—including 10 that were especially problematic. They told us that the colleges and universities were operating, in their words, in a ''jungle of red tape.''

I had a letter from a university president in Missouri who said that in his forty years of being in higher education, he had never been so oppressed by regulations.

Most of these are common-sensical things; for example, in our proposal to fix the student aid form, we suggest that students apply for student aid in their junior year in high school instead of their senior year.

Now, why does that make so much difference?

Well, one is if you know in your junior year, you're going to get this much in a Pell grant and this much in a loan, you can shop around and know where you're going.

Right now, you don't know the amount of money you'll get until after you're already enrolled in the school. So, that doesn't make any sense. In addition, you're asked in your senior year, which is the current way they do it, to report what your tax returns showed. Well, you haven't filed your tax returns yet for that year.

So, there are all sorts of unnecessary confusion, which could be solved by just moving the application time from the senior year in high school to the junior year.

The other area is regulatory guidance. Now, this is the kind of subject that usually puts people right to sleep—unless you're a

victim of it—but we see the ugly effects of government overreach.

It's very hard to pass a law in this country for good reason.

Our revolution was against a king. We chose to be represented by an elected Congress. They're the ones who are supposed to make the laws. Our Constitution makes it pretty hard to pass a law.

In some of our laws, Congress delegates some of the details of how to implement the laws to federal agencies—but it does it with specific requirements: Before those rules come out, the people who are governed have a chance to have a say. That's called notice and comment before you have a federal regulation.

Well, what's happening today is some of these agencies are using something called guidance to get around that requirement, to use the guidance as a non-binding way to tell the people. It's supposed to be a non-binding way of suggesting to people how to follow regulations that are properly in place, but what the agencies are doing is using the guidance to make new laws.

For example, I asked the assistant secretary for Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Education last year, whether she expects our more than 6,000 colleges and universities to comply with her agency's guidance—these are issued without any sort of notice or comment.

She answered, ''We do.''

So her agency is writing detailed guidance governing 22 million students on 7,200 campuses and it could be some individual's whim or idea.

How frequent is this? The distinguished group of educators led by the Vanderbilt Chancellor and the University of Maryland Chancellor who recommended the 59 changes in regulations that I talked about said that every single work day, on average, there's a new guidance or rule from the U.S. Department of Education to a college and university.

So, here you are operating with federal grants and loans at a Catholic college out in the Midwest, and you know every single day something's going to change from Washington about what you're doing.

It's very important that Congress make the law. It's very important because Congress answers to the people. That's the way our government ought to work.

When Congress isn't doing its job, the people can throw the bums out. It is very hard for the voters to do that to an unelected bureaucrat, say in the Civil Rights office at the U.S. Department of Education.

So, I'm about to begin a project with one of our outstanding new senators, James Lankford of Oklahoma, to examine whether agencies are abusing guidance and how to solve that problem.

Thank you for inviting me here to speak to you today about this burr that's been in my saddle for a long, long time.

I think that what you are trying to achieve here today is one of the most important things we can do in Washington—because as hard as it is to pass a law, it is almost harder to end one.

Probably the most famous comment about that came from Ronald Reagan who said: ''No government ever voluntarily reduces itself in size. Government programs, once launched, never disappear. Actually, a government bureau is the nearest thing to eternal life we'll ever see on this earth!''

Well, at least once or twice, I'd like to prove him wrong.

Thank you very much.●

RECOGNIZING REED BARRETT

● Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Reed Barrett for his hard work as an intern in my Cheyenne office. I recognize his efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Reed is a native of Cheyenne, WY, and is a graduate of Cheyenne East High School. He graduated from the University of Wyoming where he was a psychology major. He has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made him an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of his work is reflected in his great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Reed for the dedication he has shown while working for me and my staff. It was a pleasure to have him as part of our team. I know he will have continued success with all of his future endeavors. I wish him all my best on his next journey.●

RECOGNIZING BRIANA BLACK

● Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Briana Black for her hard work as an intern in my Washington, DC office. I recognize her efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Briana is a native of Casper, WY, and is a graduate of Kelly Walsh High School. She currently attends the University of Wyoming where she is pursuing a degree in international studies. She has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made her an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of her work is reflected in her great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Briana for the dedication she has shown while working for me and my staff. It was a pleasure to have her as part of our team. I know she will have continued success with all of her future endeavors. I wish her all my best on her next journey.●

RECOGNIZING BIRNEY BRAYTON

● Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Birney Brayton for his hard work as an intern in my Washington, DC office. I recognize his efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Birney is a native of Sheridan, WY, and is a graduate of Sheridan High School. He is a student at the University of Wyoming where he pursuing a degree in political science. He has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made him an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of his work is reflected in his great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Birney for the dedication he has shown while working for me and my staff. It was a pleasure to have him as part of our team. I know he will have continued success with all of his future endeavors. I wish him all my best on his next journey.●

RECOGNIZING ERIN JARNAGIN

● Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Erin Jarnagin for her hard work as an intern in my Republican Policy Committee office. I recognize her efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Erin is a native of Green River, WY, and is a graduate of Green River High School. She graduated from the University of Wyoming where she was an international studies major, and from The University of Chicago where she received her master's degree. She has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made her an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of her work is reflected in her great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Erin for the dedication she has shown while working for me and my staff. It was a pleasure to have her as part of our team. I know she will have continued success with all of her future endeavors. I wish her all my best on her next journey.●

RECOGNIZING CATHERINE MERCER

● Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Catherine Mercer for her hard work as an intern in my Washington, DC offices. I recognize her efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Catherine is a native of Cheyenne, WY, and is a graduate of Cheyenne East High School. She currently attends the University of Wyoming where she is pursuing a degree in psychology. She has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made her an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of her work is reflected in her great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Catherine for the dedication she has shown while working for me and my staff. It was a pleasure to have her as part of our team. I know she will have continued success with all of her future endeavors. I wish her all my best on her next journey.●

RECOGNIZING MICKALA SCHMIDT

● Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Mickala Schmidt, once again, for her hard work as an intern in my Casper, WY office. I recognize her efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Mickala is a native of Casper, WY, where she graduated from Natrona County High School. She attends Casper College where she is pursuing a degree in international studies and education. She has again demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made her an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of her work is reflected in her great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Mickala for the dedication she has shown while working for me and my staff. It was a pleasure to have her as part of our team. I know she will have continued success with all of her future endeavors. I wish her all my best on her next journey.●

RECOGNIZING TIM STANTON

● Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Tim Stanton for his hard work as an intern in my Republican Policy Committee office. I recognize his efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Tim is a student at the Colby College in Waterville, ME, where he pursuing a degree in government. He has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made him an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of his work is reflected in his great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Tim for the dedication he has shown while working for me and my staff. It was a pleasure to have him as part of our team. I know he will have continued success with all of his future endeavors. I wish him all my best on his next journey.●

RECOGNIZING KRISTEN TROHKIMOINEN

● Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Kristen Trohkimoinen for her hard work as an intern in my Indian Affairs Committee office. I recognize her efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Kristen is a native of Casper, WY, and is a graduate of Natrona County High School. She is a student at the University of Wyoming where she is pursuing a degree in political science and international studies. She has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made her an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of her work is reflected in her great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Kristen for the dedication she has shown while working for me and my staff. It was a pleasure to have her as part of our team. I know she will have continued success with all of her future endeavors. I wish her all my best on her next journey.●

RECOGNIZING DIEGO ZEPEDA

● Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Diego Zepeda, once again, for his hard work as an intern in my Sheridan, WY office. I recognize his efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Diego is from Gillette, WY, and a graduate of Campbell County High School. He currently attends Northern Wyoming Community College where he is studying business management. He has again demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made him an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of his work is reflected in his great efforts during his time in my office.

I want to thank Diego for the dedication he has shown while working for me and my staff. It was a pleasure to have him as part of our team. I know he will have continued success with all of his future endeavors. I wish him all my best on his next journey.●

OBSERVING INTERNATIONAL MIGRATORY BIRD DAY

● Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, today, I rise to speak in celebration of International Migratory Bird Day. Every spring, waterfowl such as canvasback ducks, northern pintails and goldeneyes, raptors such as sharp shinned hawks, broad winged hawks and kestrels, warblers, buntings, and of course orioles like Maryland's State bird, the Baltimore oriole, return north for the summer to breed, raise hatchlings, and brighten the United States' wildlife spectrum during the months of spring and summer. It is an exciting time of year for birders and naturalists who enjoy witnessing the annual return of these species from the tropics and who contribute billions of dollars to the outdoor recreation economy on travel and gear to support their passion and interests in the very special bird species who return to the United States every year.

In support of conserving these important migratory bird species, in March I reintroduced legislation to reauthorize the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act. This bill promotes international cooperation for long-term conservation, education, research, monitoring, and habitat protection for more than 350 species of neotropical migratory birds, such as the Baltimore oriole. Through its successful competitive, matching grant program, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service supports public-private partnerships in countries mostly in Latin America and the Caribbean. Up to one-quarter of the funds may be awarded for domestic projects.

More than half of the bird species found in the U.S. migrate across our borders, and many of these spend winter in Central and South America. This legislation aims to sustain healthy populations of migratory birds that are not only aesthetically beautiful but also help our farmers through consumption of billions of harmful insects and rodent pests each year, providing pollination services, and dispersing seeds. Migratory birds face threats from pesticide pollution, deforestation, sprawl, and invasive species that degrade their habitats in addition to the natural risks of their extended flights. As birds are excellent indicators of an ecosystem's health, it is troubling that—according to the National Audubon Society—half of all coastal migrating shorebirds, like the common tern and piping plover, are experiencing dramatic population declines.

The Baltimore oriole is a neotropical migratory bird whose song and bright orange and black plumage brightens all of the Northeastern and Midwestern United States each spring and summer. Sadly, Baltimore oriole populations have steadily declined despite legal protections under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 and the State of Maryland's Nongame and Endangered Species Conservation Act. Likewise, the iconic red knot, whose legendary 9,000-mile migration centers on a stopover in the Mid-Atlantic States, is decreasing in population quickly. Threats to these beloved Maryland birds are mainly due to habitat destruction and deforestation, particularly in Central and South America, where the birds winter. In addition, international use of toxic pesticides ingested by insects, which are then eaten by the birds, is significantly contributing to their decline. Conservation efforts in our country is essential, but investment in programs throughout the migratory route of these and hundreds of other migratory bird species is critical.

The goal of International Migratory Bird Day is to raise awareness about the plight of these birds during this special time of year when these birds are returning to the United States, and my legislation is critical to the conservation of these species.

The Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act has a proven track record of reversing habitat loss and advancing conservation strategies for the broad range of neotropical birds that populate the United States and the rest of the Western hemisphere. Since 2002, more than $50.1 million in grants have been awarded, supporting 451 projects in 36 countries. Partners have contributed an additional $190.6 million, and more than 3.7 million acres of habitat have been affected. In 2014, the grants totaled $3.6 million, with $12 million in matching funds across 20 countries.

On International Migratory Bird Day 2015, I am working with the sponsors of the bipartisan sportsmen's package, S. 659, and the leadership of the Environment and Public Works Committee to incorporate the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act into this legislation as it moves through committee. While sportsmen do not hunt songbirds, the financial assistance this program provides for habitat conservation provides cobenefits for games domestic species like wild turkey, deer, pheasant, elk, and quail, and the international investments benefit the conservation of sandhill cranes and migratory waterfowl that are popular game species. The resources of this program also help conserve critical wetland habitat which is incredibly important coastal and freshwater fish species like bass, perch, and sturgeon, as well as both migratory and resident duck and geese species. Incorporation of the

Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act into the bipartisan sportsmen's package would add a new element of game species conservation that will help ensure the presence of important game and fish species for generations of hunters and anglers and outdoor enthusiasts alike.

I urge my colleagues to support this simple reauthorization of this cost-effective, budget-friendly program that has been highly successful.●

TRIBUTE TO GREGORY LEACH

● Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President. I wish to commend the courageous actions of Gregory Leach, a transportation security specialist-explosives at Lihue International Airport and a resident of Hawaii. Mr. Leach helped to rescue three swimmers who were in danger of drowning. His heroism and selflessness deserve to be recognized on the Senate floor today.

Mr. Leach moved to Hawaii from Arkansas earlier this year to work as a transportation security specialist-explosives at Lihue International Airport. As a transportation security specialist-explosives, he supports screening operations to protect our transportation system from explosive threats.

This past March, on the beach in Wailua, Kauai, Mr. Leach noticed three swimmers who were struggling to return to shore. He acted quickly and decisively, grabbing a rescue buoy and swimming out to the group. One of the swimmers was unconscious, and Mr. Leach brought the man back to shore. He returned to the water to help the remaining two swimmers, and once all the swimmers were safely on the beach, Mr. Leach conducted chest compressions on the unconscious man until rescue personnel arrived. Mr. Leach's selfless efforts ensured that two of the swimmers survived. Unfortunately, the unconscious man later passed away.

According to Mr. Leach's supervisor, lead transportation security specialist-explosives Duane Samiano:

> Transportation Security Specialist-Explosives Leach did not hesitate to render aid in a life threatening situation to individuals he did not know. His actions speak greatly to his courage, selflessness and dedication to others. I am very proud to have him on my team. He is a great asset as a Transportation Security Specialist-Explosives and represents himself and this agency with excellence.

I commend Mr. Leach for his actions, and I hope that his courage serves as an example for others.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations and a withdrawal which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

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–1542. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Forest Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Paleontological Resources Preservation'' (RIN0596–AC95) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 29, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–1543. A communication from the Associate Administrator of the Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Honey Packers and Importers Research, Promotion, Consumer Education and Information Order; Assessment Rate Increase'' (Docket No. AMS–FV–14–0045) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 6, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–1544. A communication from the Associate Administrator of the Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Irish Potatoes Grown in Colorado and Imported Irish Potatoes; Relaxation of the Handling Regulation for Area No. 2 and Import Regulations'' (Docket No. AMS–FV–13–0073; FV13–3 FR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 6, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–1545. A communication from the Associate Administrator of the Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Avocados Grown in South Florida and Imported Avocados; Change in Maturity Requirements'' (Docket No. AMS–FV–14–0051; FV14–915–1 FIR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 6, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–1546. A communication from the Director, Employee Services, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Prevailing Rate Systems; Abolishment of the Portland, ME, Appropriated Fund Federal Wage System Wage Area'' (RIN3206–AN11) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 6, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–1547. A communication from the Administrator, Rural Business-Cooperative Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Subpart J—Value Added Producer Grant Program'' (RIN0570–AA79) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 6, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–1548. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Bacillus thuringiensis Cry1A.105 Protein in Soybean; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance'' (FRL No. 9926–23) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 6, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–1549. A communication from the Census Bureau Federal Register Liaison Officer, Census Bureau, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Foreign Trade Regulations (FTR): Reinstatement of Exemptions Related to Temporary Exports, Carnets, and Shipments Under a Temporary Import Bond'' (RIN0607–AA53) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 29, 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1550. A communication from the Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Federal Acquisition Regulation; Federal Acquisition Circular 2005–82; Small Entity Compliance Guide'' (FAC 2005–82) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 7, 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1551. A communication from the Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Federal Acquisition Regulation; Enhancements to Past Performance Evaluation Systems'' ((RIN9000–AM79) (FAC 2005–82)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 7, 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1552. A communication from the Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Federal Acquisition Regulation; Technical Amendments'' (FAC 2005–82) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 7, 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1553. A communication from the Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Federal Acquisition Regulation; Federal Acquisition Circular 2005–82; Introduction'' (FAC 2005–82) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 7, 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1554. A communication from the Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Federal Acquisition Regulation; Review and Justification of Pass-Through Contracts'' (FAC 2005–82) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 7, 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1555. A communication from the Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Federal Acquisition Regulation; Equal Employment and Affirmative Action for Veterans and Individuals with Disabilities'' ((RIN9000–AM76) (FAC 2005–82)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 7, 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1556. A communication from the Executive Director, Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Seventy-Third Financial Statement for the period of October 1, 2013 through September 30, 2014; to the

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1557. A communication from the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''ANC 6E Largely Compliant with Law''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1558. A communication from the Associate General Counsel for General Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Under Secretary for Management, Department of Homeland Security, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 6, 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1559. A communication from the Acting Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Charles T. Cleveland, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–1560. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on the continuation of the national emergency that was originally declared in Executive Order 13338 of May 11, 2004, with respect to the blocking of property of certain persons and prohibition of exportation and re-exportation of certain goods to Syria; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1561. A communication from the Director of Legislative Affairs, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Restrictions on Sale of Assets of a Failed Institution by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation'' (RIN3064–AE26) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 6, 2015; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1562. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 13067 of November 3, 1997, with respect to Sudan; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1563. 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; Reef Fish Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico; Amendment 40'' (RIN0648–BE47) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 6, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1564. 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 Island Fisheries; Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument Expansion'' (RIN0648–BE63) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 6, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1565. 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; Reef Fish Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico; Red Snapper Management Measures'' (RIN0648–BE44) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 6, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1566. A communication from the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, 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; Reef Fish Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico; Red Grouper Recreational Management Measures'' (RIN0648–BE62) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 6, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1567. 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–BE66) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 6, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1568. 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 Assistant Secretary for Budget and Programs and Chief Financial Officer, Department of Transportation, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 5, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1569. A communication from the Associate Chief of the Auctions and Spectrum Access Division, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Auction of FM Broadcast Construction Permits Scheduled for July 23, 2015; Notice and Filing Requirements, Minimum Opening Bids, Upfront Payments, and Other Procedures for Auction 98'' ((AU Docket No. 15–3) (DA 15–452)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 7, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1570. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval of Alabama's Request to Relax the Federal Reid Vapor Pressure Gasoline Volatility Standard for Birmingham, Alabama'' ((RIN2060–AS58) (FRL No. 9927–16–OAR)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 6, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1571. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Prevention of Significant Deterioration Permitting for Greenhouse Gases: Providing Option for Rescission of EPA–Issued Tailoring Rule Step 2 Prevention of Significant Deterioration Permits'' ((RIN2060–AS57) (FRL No. 9926–98–OAR)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 6, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1572. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Significant New Use Rules on Certain Chemical Substances'' ((RIN2070–AB27) (FRL No. 9925–42)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 6, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1573. 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: Infrastructure Requirements for the Fine Particulate Matter National Ambient Air Quality Standards'' (FRL No. 9927–45–Region 10) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 6, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1574. 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; Infrastructure Requirements for the 2010 Nitrogen Dioxide and 2012 Fine Particulate Matter National Ambient Air Quality Standards'' (FRL No. 9927–35–Region 3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 6, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1575. A communication from the Deputy Director, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Medicare Program; Changes to the Requirements for Part D Prescribers'' ((RIN0938–AS60) (CMS–6107-IFC)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 5, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1576. 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 15–019); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–1577. A communication from the Executive Analyst (Political), Office of the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Deputy Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on May 6, 2015; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–1578. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a financial report relative to the Animal Generic Drug User Fee Act for fiscal year 2014; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–1579. A communication from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA) Quarterly Report to Congress; Second Quarter of Fiscal Year 2015''; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC–1580. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a performance report relative to the Animal Drug User Fee Act for fiscal year 2014; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. BARRASSO, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, without amendment:

S. 184. A bill to amend the Indian Child Protection and Family Violence Prevention Act to require background checks before foster care placements are ordered in tribal court proceedings, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114–37).

S. 230. A bill to provide for the conveyance of certain property to the Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation located in Bethel, Alaska (Rept. No. 114–38).

By Mr. BARRASSO, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 246. A bill to establish the Alyce Spotted Bear and Walter Soboleff Commission on Native Children, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114–39).

By Mr. BARRASSO, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, without amendment:

S. 321. A bill to revoke the charter of incorporation of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma at the request of that tribe, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114–40).

S. 501. A bill to make technical corrections to the Navajo water rights settlement in the State of New Mexico, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114–41).

By Mr. HATCH, from the Committee on Finance, with amendments:

S. 995. A bill to establish congressional trade negotiating objectives and enhanced consultation requirements for trade negotiations, to provide for consideration of trade agreements, and for other purposes.

By Mr. HATCH, from the Committee on Finance, without amendment:

S. 1267. A bill to extend the African Growth and Opportunity Act, the Generalized System of Preferences, the preferential duty treatment program for Haiti, and for other purposes.

S. 1268. A bill to extend the trade adjustment assistance program, and for other purposes.

S. 1269. A bill to reauthorize trade facilitation and trade enforcement functions and activities, and for other purposes.

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. UDALL (for himself, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. HIRONO, and Mr. BENNET):

S. 1264. A bill to amend the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 to establish a renewable electricity standard, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. ROUNDS (for himself, Mr. HOEVEN, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. CRUZ, and Mr. CASSIDY):

S. 1265. A bill to require the Secretary of Defense to make certain certifications to Congress before retiring B–1, B–2, or B–52 bomber aircraft; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. KING):

S. 1266. A bill to expand the HUBZone program for communities affected by base realignment and closure, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

By Mr. HATCH:

S. 1267. A bill to extend the African Growth and Opportunity Act, the Generalized System of Preferences, the preferential duty treatment program for Haiti, and for other purposes; from the Committee on Finance; placed on the calendar.

By Mr. HATCH:

S. 1268. A bill to extend the trade adjustment assistance program, and for other purposes; from the Committee on Finance; placed on the calendar.

By Mr. HATCH:

S. 1269. A bill to reauthorize trade facilitation and trade enforcement functions and activities, and for other purposes; from the Committee on Finance; placed on the calendar.

By Mr. GARDNER:

S. 1270. A bill to amend the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to reauthorize hydroelectric production incentives and hydroelectric efficiency improvement incentives, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. MARKEY:

S. 1271. A bill to require the Secretary of the Interior to issue regulations to prevent or minimize the venting and flaring of gas in oil and gas production operations in the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Ms. WARREN):

S. 1272. A bill to direct the Comptroller General of the United States to conduct a study on the effects of forward capacity auctions and other capacity mechanisms; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. AYOTTE:

S. 1273. A bill to establish the Strengthening America's Bridges Fund , and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. HIRONO:

S. 1274. A bill to amend the National Energy Conservation Policy Act to reauthorize Federal agencies to enter into long-term contracts for the acquisition of energy; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. MERKLEY:

S. 1275. A bill to establish a Financing Energy Efficient Manufacturing Program in the Department of Energy to provide financial assistance to promote energy efficiency and onsite renewable technologies in manufacturing and industrial facilities; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. CASSIDY (for himself, Mr. VITTER, Mr. WICKER, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. COCHRAN):

S. 1276. A bill to amend the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act of 2006 to increase energy exploration and production on the outer Continental Shelf in the Gulf of Mexico, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. HIRONO (for herself and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 1277. A bill to improve energy savings by the Department of Defense, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI:

S. 1278. A bill to amend the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act to provide for the conduct of certain lease sales in the Alaska outer Continental Shelf region, to make certain modifications to the North Slope Science Initiative, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. WARNER (for himself, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. KAINE, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. PERDUE, and Mr. ISAKSON):

S. 1279. A bill to provide for revenue sharing of qualified revenues from leases in the South Atlantic planning area, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. MARKEY:

S. 1280. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to establish an annual production incentive fee with respect to Federal onshore and offshore land that is subject to a lease for production of oil or natural gas under which production is not occurring, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. UDALL (for himself and Mr. BOOZMAN):

S. 1281. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a standard home office deduction; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MANCHIN (for himself and Ms. HEITKAMP):

S. 1282. A bill to amend the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to require the Secretary of Energy to consider the objective of improving the conversion, use, and storage of carbon dioxide produced from fossil fuels in carrying out research and development programs under that Act; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. MANCHIN (for himself and Ms. HEITKAMP):

S. 1283. A bill to amend the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to repeal certain programs, to establish a coal technology program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. KING:

S. 1284. A bill to clarify the treatment of carbon emissions from forest biomass, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Ms. HEITKAMP (for herself and Mr. MANCHIN):

S. 1285. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Energy to enter into contracts to provide certain price stabilization support relating to electric generation units that use coal-based generation technology; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mr. LEAHY, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BROWN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. UDALL, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. 1286. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to reduce the backlog of appeals of decisions of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs by facilitating pro bono legal assistance for veterans before the United States Court of Veterans Appeals and the Board of Veterans' Appeals, to provide the Secretary with authority to address unreasonably delayed claims, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mr. BROWN, and Mr. DURBIN):

S. Res. 176. A resolution designating September 2015 as ''National Brain Aneurysm Awareness Month''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. COONS, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Ms. HEITKAMP, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. HATCH, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. ALEXANDER, Ms. WARREN, Mr. COTTON, Mr. BROWN, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. THUNE, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. KAINE, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. WARNER, Mr. RUBIO, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. WICKER, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. TESTER, and Mr. PETERS):

S. Res. 177. A resolution designating the week of May 10 through May 16, 2015, as ''National Police Week''; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 27

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) were added as cosponsors of S. 27, a bill to make wildlife trafficking a predicate offense under racketeering and money laundering statutes and the Travel Act, to

provide for the use for conservation purposes of amounts from civil penalties, fines, forfeitures, and restitution under such statutes based on such violations, and for other purposes.

S. 141

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 141, a bill to repeal the provisions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act providing for the Independent Payment Advisory Board.

S. 257

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 257, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act with respect to physician supervision of therapeutic hospital outpatient services.

S. 366

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 366, a bill to require Senate candidates to file designations, statements, and reports in electronic form.

S. 373

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, her name 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 name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 423, a bill to amend the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act to provide an exception to the annual written privacy notice requirement.

S. 497

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 497, a bill to allow Americans to earn paid sick time so that they can address their own health needs and the health needs of their families.

S. 578

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the names of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) were added as cosponsors 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. 609

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 609, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend and increase the exclusion for benefits provided to volunteer firefighters and emergency medical responders.

S. 622

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 622, a bill to strengthen families' engagement in the education of their children.

S. 632

At the request of Mr. COONS, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 632, a bill to strengthen the position of the United States as the world's leading innovator by amending title 35, United States Code, to protect the property rights of the inventors that grow the country's economy.

S. 740

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the names of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 740, a bill to improve the coordination and use of geospatial data.

S. 857

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the names of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON), the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN), the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) and the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) were added as cosponsors of S. 857, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage under the Medicare program of an initial comprehensive care plan for Medicare beneficiaries newly diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, and for other purposes.

S. 883

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 883, a bill to facilitate the reestablishment of domestic, critical mineral designation, assessment, production, manufacturing, recycling, analysis, forecasting, workforce, education, and research capabilities in the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 889

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 889, a bill to provide regulatory relief to alternative fuel producers and consumers, and for other purposes.

S. 911

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 911, a bill to direct the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to issue an order with respect to secondary cockpit barriers, and for other purposes.

S. 1002

At the request of Mr. ENZI, the names of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) were added as cosponsors of S. 1002, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for collegiate housing and infrastructure grants.

S. 1032

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SHELBY) 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. 1040

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1040, a bill to direct the Consumer Product Safety Commission and the National Academy of Sciences to study the vehicle handling requirements proposed by the Commission for recreational off-highway vehicles and to prohibit the adoption of any such requirements until the completion of the study, and for other purposes.

S. 1119

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the names of the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) and the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) were added as cosponsors of S. 1119, a bill to establish the National Criminal Justice Commission.

S. 1135

At the request of Mrs. MCCASKILL, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1135, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for fairness in hospital payments under the Medicare program.

S. 1136

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of 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.

S. 1140

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) and the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) were added as cosponsors of S. 1140, a bill to require the Secretary of the Army and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to propose a regulation revising the definition of the term ''waters of the United States'', and for other purposes.

S. 1212

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1212, 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.

S. 1243

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) and the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) were added as cosponsors of S. 1243, a bill to facilitate modernizing the electric grid, and for other purposes.

S.J. RES. 15

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from New Jersey

(Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 15, a joint resolution removing the deadline for the ratification of the equal rights amendment.

S. CON. RES. 16

At the request of Mr. RISCH, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. SASSE), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) and the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) were added as cosponsors of S. Con. Res. 16, a concurrent resolution stating the policy of the United States regarding the release of United States citizens in Iran.

S. RES. 168

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the names of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 168, a resolution recognizing National Foster Care Month as an opportunity to raise awareness about the challenges of children in the foster care system, and encouraging Congress to implement policy to improve the lives of children in the foster care system.

S. RES. 174

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) and the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 174, a resolution recognizing May 2015 as ''Jewish American Heritage Month'' and honoring the contributions of Jewish Americans to the United States of America.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. KING):

S. 1266. A bill to expand the HUBZone program for communities affected by base realignment and closure, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise to introduce legislation to better tailor the HUBZone program to meet the needs of communities affected by the closure of U.S. military installations through the Base Closure and Realignment, or BRAC, process. I am pleased to be joined by my colleague from Maine, Senator KING, in introducing this legislation, the HUBZone Expansion Act of 2015.

This issue hits close to home for both Senator KING and me. When Loring Air Force Base closed in 1994 through the BRAC process, my home of Aroostook County lost 15 percent of its population. Senator KING lives in Brunswick, ME, which also experienced a considerable drop in population when it lost a major naval air station in 2011.

Military bases are often the economic heart of the towns and cities in which they are located, and communities can struggle for years to overcome the closure of those facilities as the redevelopment process is often lengthy and riddled with bureaucratic hurdles.

In recognition of these challenges, Congress passed legislation providing HUBZone status for 5 years to military facilities closed through the BRAC process. This status allows small businesses located on former military bases or in ''economically distressed communities'' with high rates of poverty or unemployment to obtain certain Federal contracting preferences.

According to the Small Business Administration, there are currently 107 BRAC-related HUBZones in the U.S. Unfortunately, for many of the communities surrounding closed military bases, HUBZone status has not always had the intended effect. One of the reasons is simple. The law defines the geographic boundaries of a BRAC-related HUBZone to be the same as the boundaries of the closed base. When combined with the requirement that 35 percent of the employees of a qualifying business live within the HUBZone, redevelopment efforts are slowed or stalled. Very few people actually live on these former bases, making it difficult, if not impossible, for businesses and job seekers alike to meet the HUBZone requirements.

We have seen this very situation play out following the closure of the former Brunswick Naval Air Station, which closed as a result of the 2005 BRAC round. When the Navy left, Brunswick and its neighbor, Topsham, lost more than 2,400 military and civilian personnel. These two towns have a combined population of just 22,000, so losing these jobs has taken a significant economic toll. Because so few people live within the actual boundaries of the former naval air station, its HUBZone designation does not provide the help these communities need.

To address this first concern, our legislation would permit prospective employees who live just outside of the boundaries of the closed base to count toward the 35 percent requirement. Employees who live in the census tracts touching the boundaries of the closed base, and in census tracts that touch those census tracts, would be included, providing a large enough pool of potential workers for qualifying businesses to locate within the HUBZone.

A second reason that businesses have difficulty benefiting from the HUBZone program is because closed bases are given HUBZone status for a limited time, only 5 years. Local economic development agencies working to attract new businesses to a former base cannot begin until a base is closed, and this process can take many years. Because HUBZone preferences only apply for 5 years from closure, businesses often lose years of program eligibility. In fact, the Association of Defense Communities reports that in the seven years following the 2005 BRAC round, only ⅓ of former base property has been transferred to local authorities for redevelopment. Our legislation would address this problem by extending the period of time for which a closed base is eligible for HUBZone status from 5 years after closure to 8 years.

Steve Levesque, the Executive Director of the Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority, oversees the redevelopment of the former Brunswick Naval Air Station. Steve supports this legislation, explaining that BRAC facilities do not have adequate residential areas needed to support the 35 percent residency requirement and that businesses cannot ''realize the HUBZone benefits for BRAC'd installations as envisioned by Congress.''

Heather Blease is a Mainer who has explained the need for these changes as well. Heather is an entrepreneur who opened a small business at the former Brunswick Naval Air Station in 2013. She has described the HUBZone law as ''flawed,'' because the limited number of residences on the base make it nearly impossible to meet the 35 percent residency requirement. She says that this proposed legislation ''would make all the difference in the world'' for her business, and would create needed jobs for Mainers.

The Association of Defense Communities also supports our effort to tailor the HUBZone program to make it more usable by closed military bases.

I ask my colleagues to support the HUBZone Expansion Act of 2015 to help communities and the people most affected get back on their feet after the loss of a military installation, closed through the BRAC process.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a letter of support be printed in the RECORD.

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

ASSOCIATION OF DEFENSE COMMUNITIES,
May 5, 2015.

Hon. JOHN MCCAIN,
Chairman, Armed Services Committee, United States Senate, Washington, DC.

Hon. JACK REED,
Ranking Member, Armed Services Committee, United States Senate, Washington, DC.

Hon. MAC THORNBERRY,
Chairman, Armed Services Committee, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. ADAM SMITH,
Ranking Member, Armed Services Committee, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN MCCAIN, RANKING MEMBER REED, CHAIRMAN THORNBERRY AND RANKING MEMBER SMITH: On behalf of the Association of Defense Communities Board of Directors, I want to express my deep appreciation for your leadership to support defense communities across the country. As the leading organization serving communities with active, realigned or closed military installations, ADC represents more than 200 communities, states, regions and their partners.

Communities impacted by the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process continue to face severe, long-term economic distress. To assist in these communities' recovery, Congress authorized additional support in the Small Business Reauthorization Act

of 1997, declaring that military bases closed by BRAC are eligible for designation as Historically Underutilized Business Zones (HUBZones). As you know, the HUBZone program allows small businesses in disadvantaged areas additional opportunities to compete for federal procurements. Eighteen years later, the HUBZone designation remains integral for attracting small businesses to these communities and is one of the few available federal tools supporting a community's economic transition.

While the intent of Congress was to provide the HUBZone designation to help closed military installations attract small businesses, one aspect of the HUBZone program actually works against these redevelopment areas. Under the current law, 35 percent of a business's employees also must live in a HUBZone area. Because a military installation's HUBZone area encompasses only the boundaries of the former base, many closed military installations do not have a substantial number of HUBZone-certified residential areas from which to draw a sufficient workforce for the businesses desiring to locate on those properties. It often is impossible, therefore, for a business looking to relocate to these communities to qualify for HUBZone status. Further, there traditionally are many delays in the multi-year process through which local redevelopment authorities assume control of former federal property, leaving little or no opportunity to recruit small businesses before the statutory five-year HUBZone designation has expired.

ADC is honored to endorse the current bipartisan legislative language offered by Senators King and Collins and Representatives Pingree and Poliquin, and support its inclusion in the FY 2016 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). The proposal would (1) allow small businesses in HUBZone areas to recruit personnel from a broader workforce and (2) extend from five years to eight years the period for which a BRAC-impacted community could be designated a HUBZone. If adopted, this language would be extremely helpful to communities across the country that have supported our nation's military missions but now are struggling to overcome distinct economic challenges. ADC is hopeful that your colleagues will support this provision and its inclusion in the FY 2016 NDAA as that important legislation moves forward.

Thank you again for your leadership on this and other important issues. We look forward to working with you and your colleagues to further strengthen America's defense communities.

Respectfully,

MICHAEL COOPER,
President.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 176—DESIGNATING SEPTEMBER 2015 AS ''NATIONAL BRAIN ANEURYSM AWARENESS MONTH''

Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mr. BROWN, and Mr. DURBIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 176

Whereas a brain aneurysm is an abnormal saccular or fusiform bulging of an artery in the brain;

Whereas an estimated 1 out of every 50 people in the United States has a brain aneurysm;

Whereas brain aneurysms are most likely to occur in people between the ages of 35 and 60, and there are typically no warning signs;

Whereas brain aneurysms are more likely to occur in women than in men by a 3-to-2 ratio;

Whereas young and middle-aged African-Americans have a higher risk of brain aneurysm rupture compared to Caucasian Americans;

Whereas, based on a 2004 study, the most recent year with readily-available data, the combined lost wages of survivors of a brain aneurysm rupture and their caretakers for 1 year were $138,000,000;

Whereas various risk factors can contribute to the formation of a brain aneurysm, including smoking, hypertension, and a family history of brain aneurysms;

Whereas approximately 6,000,000 people in the United States have a brain aneurysm;

Whereas an unruptured brain aneurysm can lead to double vision, vision loss, loss of sensation, weakness, loss of balance, incoordination, and speech problems;

Whereas a brain aneurysm is often discovered when it ruptures and causes a subarachnoid hemorrhage;

Whereas a subarachnoid hemorrhage can lead to brain damage, hydrocephalus, stroke, and death;

Whereas, each year, more than 30,000 people in the United States suffer from ruptured brain aneurysms, 50 percent of whom die as a result;

Whereas, annually, between 3,000 and 4,500 people in the United States with ruptured brain aneurysms die before reaching the hospital;

Whereas a number of advancements have been made in recent years regarding the detection of aneurysms, including the computerized tomography scan, the magnetic resonance imaging test, and the cerebral arteriogram, and early detection can save lives;

Whereas various research studies are currently being conducted in the United States in order to better understand, prevent, and treat brain aneurysms;

Whereas the United States spends only $1.30 per person for research each year on the approximately 6,000,000 people of the United States who suffer from brain aneurysms; and

Whereas the month of September would be an appropriate month to designate as ''National Brain Aneurysm Awareness Month'': Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates September 2015 as ''National Brain Aneurysm Awareness Month''; and

(2) continues to support research to prevent, detect, and treat brain aneurysms.

SENATE RESOLUTION 177—DESIGNATING THE WEEK OF MAY 10 THROUGH MAY 16, 2015, AS ''NATIONAL POLICE WEEK''

Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. COONS, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Ms. HEITKAMP, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. HATCH, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. ALEXANDER, Ms. WARREN, Mr. COTTON, Mr. BROWN, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. THUNE, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. KAINE, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. WARNER, Mr. RUBIO, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. WICKER, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. TESTER, and Mr. PETERS) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 177

Whereas, in 1962, John Fitzgerald Kennedy signed the Joint Resolution entitled ''Joint Resolution to authorize the President to proclaim May 15 of each year as Peace Officers Memorial Day and the calendar week of each year during which such May 15 occurs as Police Week'' (36 U.S.C. 136);

Whereas law enforcement officers are charged with pursuing justice and protecting communities in the United States;

Whereas Federal, State, local, and tribal police officers, sheriffs, and other law enforcement officers across the United States serve with dignity and integrity;

Whereas, in 2015, on the 20th anniversary of the Oklahoma City Murrah Federal Building bombing, the Senate honors the memory of those who perished in the bombing and the role of law enforcement officers as both first responders to terrorist attacks and protectors of the homeland from foreign and domestic threats;

Whereas law enforcement officers selflessly serve their communities even at the risk of their own personal safety, including the abhorrent murders of New York Police Department Officers Rafael Ramos and Wenjian Liu;

Whereas Peace Officers Memorial Day honors all law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty;

Whereas Peace Officers Memorial Day, 2015, honors 127 law enforcement officers recently killed in the line of duty, including David T. Johnson, Terry B. Fisher, Clinton Jeffrey Holtz, Carlos A. Rivera-Vega, Thomas A. Smith, Jr., Kristian D. Willhight, Brian D. Beck, David M. Baldwin, Eddie Maurice Hamer, Carlos Papillion, Jr., Cory B. Wride, Percy Lee House III, Jonathan Scott Pine, Amanda B. Baker, Brian M. Law, Juan Jaime Gonzalez, John T. Hobbs, Nicholas Choung Lee, Derek Andrew Hansen, Joaquin Correa-Ortega, Jason M. Crisp, Marc Uland Kelley, Allen Ray Richardson, James P. Morrissy, Ricky Del Fiorentino, Robert G. German, Mark A. Mayo, Mark H. Larson, Alexander E. Thalmann, David W. Smith, Jr., Gregory T. Maloney, Ernest T. Franklin, Dennis Guerra, Christopher A. Cortijo, Douglas H. Mayville, Mareli A. Morales-Santiago, Dennis Oliver Simmonds, Michael J. Seversen, William Heath Kelley, Bryan Marshall Berger, Gabriel Rich, Patrick Scott Johnson, Roberto Carlos Sanchez, Chelsea Richard, Noel Lee Hawk, John Collum, Michael Alexander Petrina, Charles Dinwiddie, Stephen Arkell, Steven LaCruz Thomas, Chad Charles, Jair A. Cabrera, Alexander Giannini, Christopher Skinner, Frank McKnight, Brian W. Jones, Paul A. Buckles, Kevin Dorian Jordan, Daryl Giles, Igor Soldo, Alyn R. Beck, Scott M. Hewell, Lee Dixon, Allen Bares, Jr., Jacob Daniel Calvin, Perry W. Renn, Jeffrey Brady Westerfield, Frank Gregory Bordonaro, Melvin Santiago, Christopher M. Goodell, Scott Patrick, Mark A. Hecker, Patrick Libertone, Joseph James Dunn I, Michael Pimentel, Geniel Amaro-Fantauzzi, Cleveland Johnson, Jr., Paul Ferrara, Daryl R. Pierson, Nickolaus E. Schultz, Jason E. Harwood, Joseph J. Matuskovic, Tyler R. Robledo, Byron Keith Dickson II, Michael Norris, Reinaldo Arocha, Jr., Jessica Laura Hollis, Michael C. Williams, Jordan J. Corder, David Kedra, Michael Joe Naylor, Eddie Johnson, Jr., Danny Oliver, Michael David Davis, Jr., Kagan Dindar, John Timothy Williamson, Anthony Haase, Robert Blajszczak, Jeffrey W. Garrett, Yevhen Eugene Kostiuchenko, Jesse Valdez III, Shaun Richard Diamond, David Payne, Robert Parker White, Matthew Chism, Darrell Perritt, Holmes Nathaniel Smith, Jr., Ronald A. Leisure, Justin Winebrenner, Jeffrey Wayne Greene, Alejandro Martinez, Sr.,

Christopher Smith, James Hart, Edwin O. Roman-Acevedo, Ernest J. Montoya, Sr., Grant William Whitaker, Richard Anthony Champion, John Robert Street, Rafael Ramos, Wenjian Liu, Charles R. Kondek, Jr., Jamel Clagett, Tyler Jacob Stewart, Stephen Petruzzello, Thomas Choi, James E. Foster, Jr., and Timothy Mitchell; and

Whereas 44 law enforcement officers across the United States have made the ultimate sacrifice during the first 4 months of 2015: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the week of May 10 through May 16, 2015, as ''National Police Week'';

(2) expresses strong support for law enforcement officers across the United States for their efforts to build safer and more secure communities;

(3) recognizes the need to ensure that law enforcement officers have the equipment, training, and resources necessary to protect their health and safety while the law enforcement officers are protecting the public;

(4) recognizes the members of the law enforcement community for their selfless acts of bravery;

(5) acknowledges that police officers and other law enforcement officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice should be remembered and honored; and

(6) encourages the people of the United States to observe National Police Week with appropriate ceremonies and activities that promote awareness of the vital role of law enforcement officers in building safer and more secure communities across the United States.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on May 11, 2015, at 6 p.m., to conduct a classified hearing entitled ''Understanding the Commercial, Political, and Security Implications of the U.S.-China Civil Nuclear Agreement.''

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON AIRLAND

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Airland of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on May 11, 2015, at 2:30 p.m.

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

GOLD STAR FATHERS ACT OF 2015

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 67, S. 136.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 136) to amend chapter 21 of title 5, United States Code, to provide that fathers of certain permanently disabled or deceased veterans shall be included with mothers of such veterans as preference eligibles for treatment in the civil service.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements related to the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

The bill (S. 136) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed as follows:

S. 136

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Gold Star Fathers Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. PREFERENCE ELIGIBLE TREATMENT FOR FATHERS OF CERTAIN PERMANENTLY DISABLED OR DECEASED VETERANS.

Section 2108(3) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking subparagraphs (F) and (G) and inserting the following:

''(F) the parent of an individual who lost his or her life under honorable conditions while serving in the armed forces during a period named by paragraph (1)(A) of this section, if—

''(i) the spouse of that parent is totally and permanently disabled; or

''(ii) that parent, when preference is claimed, is unmarried or, if married, legally separated from his or her spouse;

''(G) the parent of a service-connected permanently and totally disabled veteran, if—

''(i) the spouse of that parent is totally and permanently disabled; or

''(ii) that parent, when preference is claimed, is unmarried or, if married, legally separated from his or her spouse; and''.

SEC. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE.

The amendment made by this Act shall take effect 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

THE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar Nos. 69 and 70, S. 179 and S. 994, en bloc.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bills en bloc.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bills be read a third time and passed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to the bills be printed in the RECORD, all en bloc.

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

JAMES L. OBERSTAR MEMORIAL POST OFFICE BUILDING

The bill (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,'' was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 179

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. JAMES L. OBERSTAR MEMORIAL POST OFFICE BUILDING.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 14 3rd Avenue, NW, in Chisholm, Minnesota, shall be known and designated as the ''James L. Oberstar Memorial Post Office Building''.

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the ''James L. Oberstar Memorial Post Office Building''.

STAFF SERGEANT JOSEPH D'AUGUSTINE POST OFFICE BUILDING

The bill (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,'' was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 994

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. STAFF SERGEANT JOSEPH D'AUGUSTINE POST OFFICE BUILDING.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1 Walter Hammond Place in Waldwick, New Jersey, shall be known and designated as the ''Staff Sergeant Joseph D'Augustine Post Office Building''.

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the ''Staff Sergeant Joseph D'Augustine Post Office Building''.

SISTER ANN KEEFE POST OFFICE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 71, H.R. 651.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A 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.''

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I further ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The bill (H.R. 651) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 177, submitted earlier today

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows.

A resolution (S. Res. 177) designating the week of May 10 through May 16, 2015, as ''National Police Week.''

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 177) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

APPOINTMENTS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the majority and Democratic leaders of the Senate and the Speaker and minority leader of the House of Representatives, pursuant to Section 301 of Public Law 104–1, as amended by Public Law 108–349, and as further amended by Public Law 114–6, announces the joint reappointment of the following individuals as members of the Board of Directors of the Office of Compliance: Barbara L. Camens of the District of Columbia and Roberta L. Holzwarth of Illinois.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, MAY 12, 2015

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Tuesday, May 12; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business until 12:30 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided in the usual form; further, that the Senate recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly conference meetings; further, that the time from 2:15 p.m. until the cloture vote be equally divided in the usual form; finally, that the mandatory quorum call under rule XXII be waived with respect to the cloture vote.

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

PROGRAM

Mr. MCCONNELL. Senators should expect a cloture vote on the motion to proceed to TPA at 2:30 p.m. tomorrow.

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 and Senator MENENDEZ.

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

The Senator from Ohio.

TRADE PROMOTION AUTHORITY

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, some in this body seem to be on the verge of approving the largest trade deal in our Nation's history with little debate, one rushed hearing, and barely any understanding of what we are signing on to. The last time Congress considered fast-track was 13 years ago; the Senate spent 3 weeks considering that bill.

But some would like to condense consideration of the biggest trade deal we have ever debated—ever debated—and have it done in advance of Memorial Day; the reason—they know that the more we talk about U.S. trade policy, the more the American public does not like it.

Trade promotion authority will give up Congress's authority to amend trade agreements. Not only will this affect the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement and so-called TTIP, the United States-European Union agreement, it will affect any trade deal until 2021. With TPP and TTIP, 60 percent of the world's GDP is at stake. Millions of American jobs are on the line. This is too important to rush through with little debate and little congressional input.

With the Memorial Day recess approaching, there simply is not enough time to consider fast-track in a manner that allows full debate and consideration of amendments. We do not even know if the Senate will vote on all four bills as a package that we considered in the Finance Committee or just vote on fast-track or some combination of the four. If we voted on fast-track alone, we would be giving new rights to corporations while turning our backs on critical trade enforcement measures and the workers who are left behind by unfair foreign trade. Imagine if just TPA—fast-track—gets to the President's desk; we will have done nothing on enforcement and we will have left out help for workers who have lost their jobs because of what this institution did. Fast-tracking fast-track will prevent us from having serious debates on issues from public health, to the auto industry, to international monetary policy.

During the Finance Committee's consideration of this bill, I filed 88 amendments to the package of four bills, 81 of those to fast-track alone. I offered a number during markup, and I will offer more on the floor. I know Senator MENENDEZ had a very important amendment—and he will be speaking in a moment—in the Finance Committee that was adopted. I know other colleagues have amendments that will be considered. We should debate these amendments to legislation as important as this.

Now the majority leader, who just spoke, wants us to rush this bill through, to fast-track fast-track in the last few days just to get it done, just so the public won't be able to find out what is in it. We owe it to the American people to not rush through something as important as our national trade policy. We owe it to the American people to spend the limited time available on the floor passing a job-creation bill, such as the highway bill, which is set to expire May 31, rather than a provably job-killing trade agreement, as NAFTA was, as PNTR was, as CAFTA was, as South Korea was.

We know the real answer, that this deal amounts to more empty promises. If it were really good for the American worker, why can't the American worker see it? More corporate handouts, more worker sellouts.

As many of my colleagues know, this trade agreement simply doesn't work for us. This is what is wrong with the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

First, with China, there is no guarantee it will not join later. There is no prohibition in this language—as far as we can see, with the limited access to the text—that China can't backdoor into this agreement without a vote of Congress, without any examination from the American public.

Second, what happens to competition? American workers are paid a living wage. In Vietnam, the average wage is $3 per day. How do we compete with that? With currency. We know China has gamed the currency system year after year after year. They don't play by the same rules as we do.

Corporations shift from democratically elected governments to corporations. We have seen it in tobacco, we have seen it in public health, and we have seen it with minimum wage, where corporations can sue foreign governments. Corporations in one country can sue a government, even if that government has passed a law democratically through a democratic process.

Our trade deals amount to corporate handouts and worker sellouts. People in my State know what has happened since NAFTA. They promised NAFTA would bring millions of jobs. Instead, we have lost 5 million manufacturing jobs in this country since 1994. It is only since the auto rescue in 2010 that we have begun to gain those jobs back.

We know our trade deals were for small business to compete with companies abroad that pay their workers pennies on the dollar. These foreign companies don't have to abide by the same American laws that we do.

With so much to do at home and so much at stake in this deal, we shouldn't be rushing the process of considering fast-track. We should be working on a living wage. We should be working on paid sick and family leave. We should be working on equal pay for equal work. We should be working on investment to infrastructure and innovation. Instead, the majority leader

wants to fast-track, fast-track. He wants to put this trade agreement on the floor as quickly as possible.

This body should deliberate methodically and carefully before we agree to become a rubberstamp for the White House's trade policy. It has not worked for us in the past; it will not work for us in the future. This body should not be rushing to give up our authority on trade.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND TRADE

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I rise to draw attention to the international plight of human trafficking and its relationship to our Nation's trade agenda.

According to the State Department's Trafficking in Persons Report, ''Human trafficking'' is about recruiting, harboring, transporting, providing or obtaining a person for compelled labor or commercial sex acts through the use of force, fraud or coercion. It is an unacceptable global scourge that must end and cannot be rewarded by any trade agreement.

Sexual exploitation, forced labor, forced marriage, debt bondage, and the sale and exploitation of children around the world should be a global cry for justice. But as Benjamin Franklin once said: ''Justice will not be served until those who are unaffected are as outraged as those who are.''

Today, we are all outraged at the violence, the psychological terror, and the greed that drives human trafficking. We are outraged that there are 50 million refugees and displaced people around the world, the largest number since World War II, many of whom are targets of traffickers. We are outraged that 36 million women, children, and men around the world are subjected to involuntary labor or sexual exploitation. We are outraged when we hear that over 5 million of them are children, that forced labor generates about $150-plus billion in profits annually, the second largest income source for international criminals next to the drug trade.

For the victims of these crimes, the term ''modern slavery'' more starkly describes what is happening around the world, and it must end.

The Trafficking Victims Protection Act requires that the State Department annually publish a Trafficking in Persons Report, known as the TIP Report, which ranks each country based upon the extent of government action to combat trafficking.

Tier 3 in that listing is the worst of these rankings. It indicates that a government does not comply with the Trafficking Victims Protection Act's minimum standards, and it is not making significant efforts to do so. Tier 3 countries are those that have not even taken the most basic steps to address their human trafficking problem and have not provided protection for trafficking victims.

In the most recent TIP Report published, the State Department ranked 23 countries as tier 3. Countries such as North Korea, Iran, and Cuba have flaunted international legal norms and threatened to upend global security.

I am most disappointed to say that Malaysia—a middle-income country by most standards, a party to the Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations—has the resources and the wherewithal to address human trafficking within its borders but has for years failed to take sufficient action to warrant an upgrade on the TIP Report. So it is unfortunate that the scale of the human trafficking problem in Malaysia is vast, and it is in sectors that will directly benefit from increased trade when TPP trade agreement is concluded.

The State Department's 2014 Trafficking in Persons Report states:

> Many migrant workers on agricultural plantations, at construction sites, in textile factories, and in homes as domestic workers throughout Malaysia are exploited and subjected to practices indicative of forced labor, such as restrictions on movement, deceit and fraud in wages, passport confiscation, and imposition of significant debts by recruitment agents or employers.

Most disappointingly, the State Department wrote last year that the Malaysian Government was neglecting the problem. The 2014 TIP Report continues:

> Malaysian authorities continued to detain trafficking victims in government facilities for periods of time that sometimes exceeded a year; victims had limited freedom of movement and were not allowed to work outside the facilities. The government provided minimal basic services to those staying in its shelters; NGOs—with no financial support from the government—provided the majority of rehabilitation and counseling services. . . . The government identified 650 potential victims in 2013—significantly fewer than the 1,096 potential victims identified in 2012. It reported fewer investigations (89 compared to 190) and fewer convictions (nine compared to 21) compared to the previous year.

Furthermore, in January, 2013, the Malaysian Government implemented a policy that places the burden of paying immigration and employment authorization fees on foreign workers rather than on employers, increasing the risk of workers falling into debt bondage. And, while nearly a year has passed since the State Department issued its 2014 report—as recently as April 17, this past month—the U.S. Ambassador to Malaysia said the Malaysian Government needs to show greater political will in prosecuting human traffickers and protecting their victims if the country hopes to improve on its current lowest ranking in the TIP Report.

It is precisely to combat crimes such as these that Congress has taken action this year to fight modern slavery. Earlier this year, the Foreign Relations Committee, under the leadership of Chairman CORKER, held an important hearing on human trafficking on February 4. On April 22, Congressman CHRIS SMITH of New Jersey held a House subcommittee hearing examining the State Department's Trafficking in Persons Report, emphasizing the need to maintain the integrity of the tier ranking system.

On that same day, April 22, the Senate voted 99 to 0 for the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act, authored by Senator CORNYN. Later that day, in the Committee on Finance, a bipartisan group of 16 Senators voted for my amendment to prohibit fast-track procedures from applying to any trade agreement with a country ranked as tier 3—the worst ranking.

Congress has never before approved a free-trade agreement, much less fast-tracked one, with any country while it was ranked tier 3, and I do not believe we should start now.

I want to be clear. The amendment I offered and which was adopted with a bipartisan vote in the Committee on Finance is not meant to single out Malaysia or any other country. My antitrafficking provision to the fast track bill is a simple bipartisan statement of our American values. Contrary to the administration's comments, my amendment is not a poison pill. I don't know when trying to fight human trafficking becomes a poison pill. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Senator CORNYN, perhaps the Senate's strongest advocate for victims of human trafficking, voted for my amendment. Senator PORTMAN, the former U.S. Trade Representative, voted for my amendment. Senator WYDEN, the ranking member of the Committee on Finance and coauthor of the Bipartisan Congressional Trade Priorities and Accountability Act, also voted for my amendment.

In total, 10 members of the Committee on Finance who voted for my amendment also voted for the fast-track bill. I cannot believe we would have seen such a strong bipartisan vote from so many Senators who support fast track if this amendment were truly a poison pill.

Now, the administration has recently said this amendment would remove our ability to use our trade dialogue to encourage countries to take action on human trafficking. But I want the record to reflect the fact that trade negotiations with the United States have not improved most countries' human trafficking performance. It is clear that years of engagement with Malaysia on this issue, even with the carrot of the TPP negotiations hanging before it, have not been enough to generate action from the Malaysian government.

Of the 17 countries the United States has entered into trade agreements with since 2001—the first year of the Trafficking in Persons Report—eight have not improved their trafficking in persons rankings since their trade deals entered into force. So for almost a decade and a half, eight have not improved their rankings since the trade deals entered into force, and three countries

have actually had their trafficking in persons rankings downgraded after their trade deals entered into force.

The facts are abundantly clear. Free trade negotiations have never been a successful tool in encouraging other countries to improve their performance on combating human trafficking.

Now, I understand the administration's concerns over the effect of my amendment on the current TPP negotiations. But I hope that as the State Department finalizes the 2015 report, there is no undue influence to move countries around in order to benefit the administration's trade agenda. The integrity of the TIP report is at stake. And rest assured the Congress will provide the appropriate oversight to ensure that integrity. After all, in the State Department's own words, the TIP Report ''is the U.S. Government's principal tool to engage foreign governments on human trafficking.''

Furthermore, I now understand the administration is reaching out to human rights groups, seeking compromise language that would address the concerns about human trafficking in our trade partners that I and others have spoken of. So I am pleased the administration recognizes the validity of my position as adopted by the Committee on Finance and agrees that it is appropriate to address human trafficking in this trade bill.

Let me close by saying I want to remind my colleagues that the fast track negotiating authority is precisely the point at which Congress lays down the rules, the conditions, and the principles by which the administration is granted our constitutional prerogative to negotiate international trade deals. Any suggestion that the bipartisan statement of negotiating principles of the Senate Committee on Finance is an interference with the administration's prerogatives gets that constitutional relationship backwards. We set the terms. The administration follows those terms in their negotiations. It is not our job to trim our principles to match the deal they have already negotiated.

This goes to the very heart of our congressional duties and to the heart of our constitutional power over international trade, and I believe it goes to the heart of the debate over fast-track authority itself that we began in the Committee on Finance and will soon engage on here on the Senate Floor as early as tomorrow. Do we set the terms by which our trade powers are delegated to the administration or do they dictate the terms they will accept?

That brings me to the question of the trade bill we may be considering as early as tomorrow. We do not know whether the hard-fought product of the Committee on Finance will be respected. We do not know if a major trade preference package or long-awaited trade enforcement reforms will be included. When we are asked to vote on cloture tomorrow, at least at this point, will we be voting for a blank piece of paper? How can any Member in their right mind vote to move forward when they do not even know what they are moving forward on?

I have asked to see the text, because I want to see, among other things, whether the amendment that was adopted by the Committee on Finance on human trafficking is in there. I am told we don't have it. It is nearly 7 o'clock the evening before we will vote at 2:30 tomorrow. How do Members of the Senate vote in blank on the most significant trade bill we have had in well over a decade? That is not good enough for me, and it should not be good enough for the Senate.

So I hope as we move forward to consider a fast-track bill, my colleagues will bear in mind the importance of protecting the process of the Senate Committee on Finance, just as we have protected the process of every committee that has a bill brought to the Senate Floor. That is why I am asking my colleagues to keep this amendment in the bill and help fight the scourge of modern slavery in the countries we trade with.

The bill reported by the Committee on Finance puts a strong emphasis on our need to match the actions we take on human trafficking at home to those we take in the international arena. And while we may not agree with the specifics of our trade policy, I hope when the fast-track bill comes to the floor, the Senate will stand together, reaffirming our commitment to holding our trading partners accountable for their lack of action on combating human trafficking.

With that, I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:53 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, May 12, 2015, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

JULIUS LLOYD HORWICH, OF ILLINOIS, TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR LEGISLATION AND CONGRESSIONAL AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, VICE GABRIELLA CECILIA GOMEZ.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

GREGORY GUY NADEAU, OF MAINE, TO BE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION, VICE VICTOR M. MENDEZ, RESIGNED.

UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ANN CALVARESI BARR, OF MARYLAND, TO BE INSPECTOR GENERAL, UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, VICE DONALD A. GAMBATESA, RESIGNED.

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL OF THE NAVY AND FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE SERVING AS THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 5148:

To be vice admiral

REAR ADM. JAMES W. CRAWFORD III

WITHDRAWAL

Executive Message transmitted by the President to the Senate on May 11, 2015 withdrawing from further Senate consideration the following nomination:

KATHERINE SIMONDS DHANANI, OF FLORIDA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF SOMALIA, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON FEBRUARY 25, 2015.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

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 Tuesday, May 12, 2015 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

MAY 13

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Closed business meeting to markup the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2016.

SR–222

10 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2016 for the Bureau of Land Management.

SD–124

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine protecting the constitutional right to counsel for indigents charged with misdemeanors.

SD–226

2 p.m.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine securing the border, focusing on fencing, infrastructure, and technology force multipliers.

SD–342

2:15 p.m.

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine safeguarding American interests in the East and South China Seas.

SD–419

Committee on Indian Affairs

Business meeting to consider S. 986, to require the Secretary of the Interior to take into trust 4 parcels of Federal land for the benefit of certain Indian Pueblos in the State of New Mexico; to be immediately followed by an oversight hearing to examine the Bureau of Indian Education, focusing on organizational challenges in transforming educational opportunities for Indian children.

SD–628

3 p.m.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold hearings to examine pending benefits legislation.

SR–418

MAY 14

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Closed business meeting to continue to markup the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2016.

SR–222

10 a.m.

Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

To hold hearings to examine regulatory issues impacting end-users and market liquidity.

SD–106

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 and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the National Labor Relations Board.

SD–124

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold hearings to examine S. 411, to authorize the approval of natural gas pipelines and establish deadlines and expedite permits for certain natural gas gathering lines on Federal land and Indian land, S. 485, to prohibit the use of eminent domain in carrying out certain projects, S. 1017, to amend the Federal Power Act to improve the siting of interstate electric transmission facilities, S. 1037, to expand the provisions for termination of mandatory purchase requirements under the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978, S. 1196, to amend the Mineral Leasing Act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to grant rights-of-ways on Federal land, S. 1201, to advance the integration of clean distributed energy into electric grids, S. 1202, to amend the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 to assist States in adopting updated interconnection procedures and tariff schedules and standards for supplemental, backup, and standby power fees for projects for combined heat and power technology and waste heat to power technology, S. 1207, to direct the Secretary of Energy to establish a grant program under which the Secretary shall make grants to eligible partnerships to provide for the transformation of the electric grid by the year 2030, S. 1210, to provide for the timely consideration of all licenses, permits, and approvals required under Federal law with respect to oil and gas production and distribution, S. 1213, to amend the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 and the Federal Power Act to facilitate the free market for distributed energy resources, S. 1217, to establish an Interagency Rapid Response Team for Transmission, to establish an Office of Transmission Ombudsperson, S. 1219, to amend the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 to provide for the safe and reliable interconnection of distributed resources and to provide for the examination of the effects of net metering, S. 1220, to improve the distribution of energy in the United States, S. 1225, to improve Federal land management, resource conservation, environmental protection, and use of Federal real property, by requiring the Secretary of the Interior to develop a multipurpose cadastre of Federal real property and identifying inaccurate, duplicate, and out-of-date Federal land inventories, S. 1227, to require the Secretary of Energy to develop an implementation strategy to promote the development of hybrid micro-grid systems for isolated communities, S. 1228, to require approval for the construction, connection, operation, or maintenance of oil or natural gas pipelines or electric transmission facilities at the national boundary of the United States for the import or export of oil, natural gas, or electricity to or from Canada or Mexico, S. 1231, to require congressional notification for certain Strategic Petroleum Reserve operations and to determine options available for the continued operation of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, S. 1232, to amend the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 to modify provisions relating to smart grid modernization, S. 1233, to amend the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 to expand the electric rate-setting authority of States, S. 1237, to amend the Natural Gas Act to limit the authority of the Secretary of Energy to approve certain proposals relating to export activities of liquefied natural gas terminals, S. 1242, to amend the Natural Gas Act to require the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to consider regional constraints in natural gas supply and whether a proposed LNG terminal would benefit regional consumers of natural gas before approving or disapproving an application for the LNG terminal, and S. 1243, to facilitate modernizing the electric grid.

SD–366

Committee on Finance

To hold hearings to examine a pathway to improving care for Medicare patients with chronic conditions.

SD–215

Committee on Foreign Relations

Subcommittee on East Asia, the Pacific, and International Cybersecurity Policy

To hold hearings to examine cybersecurity, focusing on setting the rules for responsible global cyber behavior.

SD–419

Committee on the Judiciary

Business meeting to consider pending calendar business.

SD–226

2:30 p.m.

Select Committee on Intelligence

To receive a closed briefing on certain intelligence matters.

SH–219

MAY 15

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Closed business meeting to continue to markup the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2016.

SR–222

MAY 19

10 a.m.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold hearings to examine S. 562, to promote exploration for geothermal resources, S. 822, to expand geothermal production, S. 1026, to amend the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 to repeal a provision prohibiting Federal agencies from procuring alternative fuels, S. 1057, to promote geothermal energy, S. 1058, to promote research, development, and demonstration of marine and hydrokinetic renewable energy technologies, S. 1103, to reinstate and extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project involving Clark Canyon Dam, S. 1104, to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project involving the Gibson Dam, S. 1199, to authorize Federal agencies to provide alternative fuel to Federal employees on a reimbursable basis, S. 1215, to amend the Methane Hydrate Research and Development Act of 2000 to provide for the development of methane hydrate as a commercially viable source of energy, S. 1222, to amend the Federal Power Act to provide for reports relating to electric capacity resources of transmission organizations and the amendment of certain tariffs to address the procurement of electric capacity resources, S. 1224, to reconcile differing Federal approaches to condensate, S. 1226, to amend the Mineral Leasing Act and the Mineral Leasing Act for Acquired Lands to promote a greater domestic helium supply, to establish a Federal helium leasing program for public land, and to secure a helium supply for national defense and Federal researchers, and S. 1236, to amend the Federal Power Act to modify certain requirements relating to trial-type hearings with respect to certain license applications before the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

SD–366

MAY 20

2:15 p.m.

Committee on Indian Affairs

To hold an oversight hearing to examine addressing the needs of Native communities through Indian Water Rights Settlements.

SD–628

MAY 21

10 a.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

Business meeting to markup an original bill entitled, ''The Financial Regulatory Improvement Act of 2015''.

SD–538

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests, and Mining

To hold hearings to examine S. 160, and H.R. 373, to direct the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to expedite access to certain Federal land under the administrative jurisdiction of each Secretary for good Samaritan search-and-recovery missions, S. 365, to improve rangeland conditions and restore grazing levels within the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, Utah, S. 472, to promote conservation, improve public land, and provide for sensible development in Douglas County, Nevada, S. 583, to establish certain wilderness areas in central Idaho and to authorize various land conveyances involving National Forest System land and Bureau of Land Management land in central Idaho, S. 814, to provide for the conveyance of certain Federal land in the State of Oregon to the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians, S. 815, to provide for the conveyance of certain Federal land in the State of Oregon to the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians, and S. 1240, to designate the Cerro del Yuta and Rio San Antonio Wilderness Areas in the State of New Mexico.

SD–366

JUNE 4

10 a.m.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold hearings to examine S. 454, to amend the Department of Energy High-End Computing Revitalization Act of 2004 to improve the high-end computing research and development program of the Department of Energy, S. 784, to direct the Secretary of Energy to establish microlabs to improve regional engagement with national laboratories, S. 1033, to amend the Department of Energy Organization Act to replace the current requirement for a biennial energy policy plan with a Quadrennial Energy Review, S. 1054, to improve the productivity and energy efficiency of the manufacturing sector by directing the Secretary of Energy, in coordination with the National Academies and other appropriate Federal agencies, to develop a national smart manufacturing plan and to provide assistance to small-and medium-sized manufacturers in implementing smart manufacturing programs, S. 1068, to amend the Federal Power Act to protect the bulk-power system from cyber security threats, S. 1181, to expand the Advanced Technology Vehicle Manufacturing Program to include commercial trucks and United States flagged vessels, to return unspent funds and loan proceeds to the United States Treasury to reduce the national debt, S. 1187, to improve management of the National Laboratories, enhance technology commercialization, facilitate public-private partnerships, S. 1216, to amend the Natural Gas Act to modify a provision relating to civil penalties, S. 1218, to establish an interagency coordination committee or subcommittee with the leadership of the Department of Energy and the Department of the Interior, focused on the nexus between energy and water production, use, and efficiency, S. 1221, to amend the Federal Power Act to require periodic reports on electricity reliability and reliability impact statements for rules affecting the reliable operation of the bulk-power system, S. 1223, to amend the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to improve the loan guarantee program for innovative technologies, S. 1229, to require the Secretary of Energy to submit a plan to implement recommendations to improve interactions between the Department of Energy and National Laboratories, S. 1230, to direct the Secretary of the Interior to establish a program under which the Director of the Bureau of Land Management shall enter into memoranda of understanding with States providing for State oversight of oil and gas productions activities, and S. 1241, to provide for the modernization, security, and resiliency of the electric grid, to require the Secretary of Energy to carry out programs for research, development, demonstration, and information-sharing for cybersecurity for the energy sector.

SD–366

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S2743–S2766

Measures Introduced: Twenty-three bills and two resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 1264–1286, and S. Res. 176–177. **Page S2759**

Measures Reported:

S. 184, to amend the Indian Child Protection and Family Violence Prevention Act to require background checks before foster care placements are ordered in tribal court proceedings. (S. Rept. No. 114–37)

S. 230, to provide for the conveyance of certain property to the Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation located in Bethel, Alaska. (S. Rept. No. 114–38)

S. 246, to establish the Alyce Spotted Bear and Walter Soboleff Commission on Native Children, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. (S. Rept. No. 114–39)

S. 321, to revoke the charter of incorporation of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma at the request of that tribe. (S. Rept. No. 114–40)

S. 501, to make technical corrections to the Navajo water rights settlement in the State of New Mexico. (S. Rept. No. 114–41)

S. 995, to establish congressional trade negotiating objectives and enhanced consultation requirements for trade negotiations, to provide for consideration of trade agreements, with amendments.

S. 1267, to extend the African Growth and Opportunity Act, the Generalized System of Preferences, the preferential duty treatment program for Haiti.

S. 1268, to extend the trade adjustment assistance program.

S. 1269, to reauthorize trade facilitation and trade enforcement functions and activities. **Pages S2758–59**

Measures Passed:

United States Citizens in Iran: By a unanimous vote of 90 yeas (Vote No. 175), Senate agreed to S. Con. Res. 16, stating the policy of the United States regarding the release of United States citizens in Iran. **Pages S2749–51**

Gold Star Fathers Act: Senate passed S. 136, to amend chapter 21 of title 5, United States Code, to provide that fathers of certain permanently disabled or deceased veterans shall be included with mothers of such veterans as preference eligibles for treatment in the civil service. **Page S2763**

James L. Oberstar Memorial Post Office Building: Senate passed 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". **Page S2763**

Staff Sergeant Joseph D'Augustine Post Office Building: Senate passed 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". **Page S2763**

Sister Ann Keefe Post Office: Senate passed 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". **Page S2763**

National Police Week: Senate agreed to S. Res. 177, designating the week of May 10 through May 16, 2015, as "National Police Week". **Pages S2763–64**

Appointments:

Board of Directors of the Office of Compliance: The Chair, on behalf of the Majority and Democratic Leaders of the Senate and the Speaker and Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, pursuant to Section 301 of Public Law 104–1, as amended by Public Law 108–349, and as further amended by Public Law 114–6, announced the joint re-appointment of the following individuals as members of the Board of Directors of the Office of Compliance: Barbara L. Camens of the District of Columbia, and Roberta L. Holzwarth of Illinois. **Page S2764**

Nominations Received: Senate received the following nominations:

Julius Lloyd Horwich, of Illinois, to be Assistant Secretary for Legislation and Congressional Affairs, Department of Education.

Gregory Guy Nadeau, of Maine, to be Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration.

Ann Calvaresi Barr, of Maryland, to be Inspector General, United States Agency for International Development.

1 Navy nomination in the rank of admiral.

Page S2766

Nomination Withdrawn: Senate received notification of withdrawal of the following nomination:

Katherine Simonds Dhanani, of Florida, to be Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Somalia, which was sent to the Senate on February 25, 2015.

Page S2766

Executive Communications: **Pages S2757–58**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S2759–61**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S2761–62**

Additional Statements: **Pages S2754–57**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Page S2763**

Record Votes: One record vote was taken today. (Total—175) **Pages S2750–51**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 3 p.m. and adjourned at 6:53 p.m., until 10 a.m. on Tuesday, May 12, 2015. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S2764.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

AUTHORIZATION—DEFENSE

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Airland met in closed session and approved for full committee consideration, those provisions which fall within the jurisdiction of the subcommittee, of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2016.

U.S.-CHINA CIVIL NUCLEAR AGREEMENT

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee concluded a closed hearing to examine the commercial, political, and security implications of the United States-China Civil Nuclear Agreement, after receiving testimony from Thomas M. Countryman, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation, and Susan Thornton, Deputy Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, both of the Department of State; Lieutenant General Frank G. Klotz, USAF (Ret.), Under Secretary for Nuclear Security and Administrator, and Admiral John M. Richardson, Deputy Administrator, Office of Naval Reactors, both of the National Nuclear Security Administration, Department of Energy; and Maureen Smith, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Industry and Analysis, International Trade Administration.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

The House was not in session today. The House is scheduled to meet at 12 noon on Tuesday, May 12, 2015.

Committee Meetings

No hearings were held.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR TUESDAY, MAY 12, 2015

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the Federal Communications Commission, 10:30 a.m., SD–138.

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on SeaPower, closed business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2016, 9:30 a.m., SR–222.

Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, closed business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2016, 11 a.m., SR–222.

Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support, business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2016, 2 p.m., SD–106.

Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities, business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2016, 3:30 p.m., SD–106.

Subcommittee on Personnel, business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2016, 5:30 p.m., SD–106.

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, 10 a.m., SD–366.

Committee on Foreign Relations: to hold hearings to examine the civil nuclear agreement with China, focusing on balancing potential risks and rewards, 2:15 p.m., SD–419.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: to hold hearings to examine the implementation and future of the Veterans Choice Program, 2:30 p.m., SR–418.

Select Committee on Intelligence: to receive a closed briefing on certain intelligence matters, 2:30 p.m., SH–219.

House

Committee on Rules, Full Committee, hearing on H.R. 36, the "Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act"; and H.R. 1735, the "National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016" (General Debate), 5 p.m., H–313 Capitol.

CONGRESSIONAL PROGRAM AHEAD

Week of May 11 through May 15, 2015

Senate Chamber

On *Tuesday*, Senate will be in a period of morning business until 12:30 p.m. At 2:30 p.m., Senate will vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to consideration of H.R. 1314, Ensuring Tax Exempt Organizations the Right to Appeal Act.

During the balance of the week, Senate may consider any cleared legislative and executive business.

Senate Committees

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry: May 14, to hold hearings to examine regulatory issues impacting end-users and market liquidity, 10 a.m., SD–106.

Committee on Appropriations: May 12, Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the Federal Communications Commission, 10:30 a.m., SD–138.

May 13, Subcommittee on Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2016 for the Bureau of Land Management, 10 a.m., SD–124.

May 14, Subcommittee on Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the National Labor Relations Board, 10 a.m., SD–124.

Committee on Armed Services: May 11, Subcommittee on Airland, closed business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2016, 2:30 p.m., SR–222.

May 12, Subcommittee on SeaPower, closed business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2016, 9:30 a.m., SR–222.

May 12, Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, closed business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2016, 11 a.m., SR–222.

May 12, Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support, business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2016, 2 p.m., SD–106.

May 12, Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities, business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2016, 3:30 p.m., SD–106.

May 12, Subcommittee on Personnel, business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2016, 5:30 p.m., SD–106.

May 13, Full Committee, closed business meeting to markup the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2016, 9:30 a.m., SR–222.

May 14, Full Committee, closed business meeting to continue to markup the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2016, 9:30 a.m., SR–222.

May 15, Full Committee, closed business meeting to continue to markup the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2016, 9:30 a.m., SR–222.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: May 12, 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, 10 a.m., SD–366.

May 14, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine S. 411, to authorize the approval of natural gas pipelines and establish deadlines and expedite permits for certain natural gas gathering lines on Federal land and Indian land, S. 485, to prohibit the use of eminent domain in

carrying out certain projects, S. 1017, to amend the Federal Power Act to improve the siting of interstate electric transmission facilities, S. 1037, to expand the provisions for termination of mandatory purchase requirements under the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978, S. 1196, to amend the Mineral Leasing Act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to grant rights-of-ways on Federal land, S. 1201, to advance the integration of clean distributed energy into electric grids, S. 1202, to amend the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 to assist States in adopting updated interconnection procedures and tariff schedules and standards for supplemental, backup, and standby power fees for projects for combined heat and power technology and waste heat to power technology, S. 1207, to direct the Secretary of Energy to establish a grant program under which the Secretary shall make grants to eligible partnerships to provide for the transformation of the electric grid by the year 2030, S. 1210, to provide for the timely consideration of all licenses, permits, and approvals required under Federal law with respect to oil and gas production and distribution, S. 1213, to amend the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 and the Federal Power Act to facilitate the free market for distributed energy resources, S. 1217, to establish an Interagency Rapid Response Team for Transmission, to establish an Office of Transmission Ombudsperson, S. 1219, to amend the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 to provide for the safe and reliable interconnection of distributed resources and to provide for the examination of the effects of net metering, S. 1220, to improve the distribution of energy in the United States, S. 1225, to improve Federal land management, resource conservation, environmental protection, and use of Federal real property, by requiring the Secretary of the Interior to develop a multipurpose cadastre of Federal real property and identifying inaccurate, duplicate, and out-of-date Federal land inventories, S. 1227, to require the Secretary of Energy to develop an implementation strategy to promote the development of hybrid micro-grid systems for isolated communities, S. 1228, to require approval for the construction, connection, operation, or maintenance of oil or natural gas pipelines or electric transmission facilities at the national boundary of the United States for the import or export of oil, natural gas, or electricity to or from Canada or Mexico, S. 1231, to require congressional notification for certain Strategic Petroleum Reserve operations and to determine options available for the continued operation of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, S. 1232, to amend the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 to modify provisions relating to smart grid modernization, S. 1233, to amend the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 to expand the electric rate-setting authority of States, S. 1237, to amend the Natural Gas Act to limit the authority of the Secretary of Energy to approve certain proposals relating to export activities of liquefied natural gas terminals, S. 1242, to amend the Natural Gas Act to require the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to consider regional constraints in natural gas supply and whether a proposed LNG terminal would benefit regional consumers of natural gas before approving or disapproving an application for the LNG terminal, and S. 1243, to facilitate modernizing the electric grid, 10 a.m., SD–366.

Committee on Finance: May 14, to hold hearings to examine a pathway to improving care for Medicare patients with chronic conditions, 10 a.m., SD–215.

Committee on Foreign Relations: May 11, to hold closed hearings to examine the commercial, political, and security implications of the U.S.-China Civil Nuclear Agreement, 6 p.m., SH–219.

May 12, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the civil nuclear agreement with China, focusing on balancing potential risks and rewards, 2:15 p.m., SD–419.

May 13, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine safeguarding American interests in the East and South China Seas, 2:15 p.m., SD–419.

May 14, Subcommittee on East Asia, the Pacific, and International Cybersecurity Policy, to hold hearings to examine cybersecurity, focusing on setting the rules for responsible global cyber behavior, 10 a.m., SD–419.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: May 13, to hold hearings to examine securing the border, focusing on fencing, infrastructure, and technology force multipliers, 2 p.m., SD–342.

Committee on Indian Affairs: May 13, business meeting to consider S. 986, to require the Secretary of the Interior to take into trust 4 parcels of Federal land for the benefit of certain Indian Pueblos in the State of New Mexico; to be immediately followed by an oversight hearing to examine the Bureau of Indian Education, focusing on organizational challenges in transforming educational opportunities for Indian children, 2:15 p.m., SD–628.

Committee on the Judiciary: May 13, to hold hearings to examine protecting the constitutional right to counsel for indigents charged with misdemeanors, 10 a.m., SD–226.

May 14, Full Committee, business meeting to consider pending calendar business, 10 a.m., SD–226.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: May 12, to hold hearings to examine the implementation and future of the Veterans Choice Program, 2:30 p.m., SR–418.

May 13, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine pending benefits legislation, 3 p.m., SR–418.

Select Committee on Intelligence: May 12, to receive a closed briefing on certain intelligence matters, 2:30 p.m., SH–219.

May 14, Full Committee, to receive a closed briefing on certain intelligence matters, 2:30 p.m., SH–219.

House Committees

Committee on Agriculture, May 13, Subcommittee on Biotechnology, Horticulture, and Research, hearing to review the federal coordination and response regarding pollinator health, 1:30 p.m., 1300 Longworth.

May 14, Full Committee, markup on a bill to reauthorize the CFTC, 10 a.m., 1300 Longworth.

Committee on Appropriations, May 13, Full Committee, markup on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill for FY 2016, 10:15 a.m., 2359 Rayburn.

May 14, Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies, markup on Commerce, Justice,

Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, FY 2016, 10:30 a.m., H–140 Capitol.

Committee on Education and the Workforce, May 14, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Examining the Federal Government's Mismanagement of Native American Schools'', 10:30 a.m., 2175 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, May 13, Subcommittee on Energy and Power, hearing entitled ''Discussion Drafts Addressing Hydropower Regulatory Modernization and FERC Process Coordination under the Natural Gas Act'', 10 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

May 13, Subcommittee on Communications and Technology, hearing entitled ''Stakeholder Perspectives on the IANA Transition'', 2 p.m., 2322 Rayburn.

May 15, Subcommittee on Environment and the Economy, hearing entitled ''Update on the Current State of Nuclear Waste Management Policy'', 9 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

May 15, Subcommittee on Communications and Technology, hearing entitled ''FCC Reauthorization: Improving Commission Transparency Part II'', 9:15 a.m., 2322 Rayburn.

Committee on Financial Services, May 13, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, hearing entitled ''The Dodd-Frank Act and Regulatory Overreach'', 9:30 a.m., HVC–210.

May 13, Subcommittee on Capital Markets and Government Sponsored Enterprises, hearing entitled ''Legislative Proposals to Enhance Capital Formation and Reduce Regulatory Burdens, Part II'', 2 p.m., HVC–210.

May 14, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Protecting Consumers: Financial Data Security in the Age of Computer Hackers'', 10 a.m., 2128 Rayburn.

May 14, Subcommittee on Housing and Insurance, hearing entitled ''TILA-RESPA Integrated Disclosure: Examining the Costs and Benefits of Changes to the Real Estate Settlement Process'', 2 p.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, May 13, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Ancient Communities Under Attack: ISIS's War on Religious Minorities'', 10 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

May 14, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Advancing U.S. Economic Interests in Asia'', 10 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

May 14, Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, hearing entitled ''Energy Revolution in the Western Hemisphere: Opportunities and Challenges for the U.S.'', 2 p.m., 2200 Rayburn.

May 14, Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations, markup on H.R. 2140, to promote freedom, human rights, and the rule of law as part of United States-Vietnam relations; and H. Res. 213, condemning the April 2015 terrorist attack at the Garissa University College in Garissa, Kenya, and reaffirming the United States support for the people and Government of Kenya, and for other purposes, 2 p.m., 2172 Rayburn.

May 14, Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations, hearing entitled ''A Pathway to Freedom: Rescue and Refuge for Sex Trafficking Victims'', 2:30 p.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Committee on Homeland Security, May 13, Subcommittee on Oversight and Management Efficiency, markup on H.R. 1615, the ''DHS FOIA Efficiency Act of 2015''; H.R. 1626, the ''DHS IT Duplication Reduction Act of 2015''; H.R. 1633, the ''DHS Paid Administrative Leave Accountability Act of 2015''; H.R. 1640, the ''Department of Homeland Security Headquarters Consolidation Accountability Act of 2015''; and H.R. 1646, the ''Homeland Security Drone Assessment and Analysis Act'', 10 a.m., 311 Cannon.

May 14, Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications, markup on H.R. 1300, the ''First Responder Anthrax Preparedness Act''; H.R. 2200, the ''CBRN Intelligence and Information Sharing Act of 2015''; and H.R. 2206, the ''State Wide Interoperable Communications Enhancement Act'' or the ''SWIC Enhancement Act'', 10 a.m., 311 Cannon.

Committee on the Judiciary, May 13, Subcommittee on Courts, Intellectual Property, and the Internet, hearing entitled ''Stakeholder Perspectives on ICANN: The .Sucks Domain and Essential Steps to Guarantee Trust and Accountability in the Internet's Operation'', 10 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

May 15, Subcommittee on Regulatory Reform, Commercial and Antitrust Law, hearing entitled ''Oversight of the Antitrust Enforcement Agencies'', 9 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Natural Resources, May 13, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''The Obama Administration's CEQ Recently Revised Draft Guidance for GHG Emissions and the Effects of Climate Change'', 10 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

May 14, Subcommittee on Federal Lands, hearing entitled ''Litigation and Increased Planning's Impact on Our Nation's Overgrown, Fire-Prone National Forests'', 9:30 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

May 14, Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources, hearing on H.R. 1644, the ''Supporting Transparent Regulatory and Environmental Actions in Mining Act'', 10 a.m., 1334 Longworth.

May 14, Subcommittee on Indian, Insular and Alaska Native Affairs, hearing entitled ''Inadequate Standards for Trust Land Acquisition in the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934'', 2 p.m., 1334 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, May 13, Full Committee, markup on a bill to clarify the effective date of the Border Patrol Agent Pay Reform Act of 2014; and hearing entitled ''Transportation Security: Are Our Airports Safe?'', 10 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

May 13, Subcommittee on National Security; and Subcommittee on the Interior, joint hearing entitled ''The EMP Threat: The State of Preparedness Against the Threat of an Electromagnetic Pulse (EMP) Event'', 2 p.m., 2154 Rayburn.

May 14, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''U.S. Secret Service: Accountability for March 4, 2015 Misconduct'', 2 p.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Rules, May 13, Full Committee, hearing on H.R. 1735, the ''National Defense Authorization Act

for Fiscal Year 2016'' (Amendment Consideration); and H.R. 1806, the ''America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2015'', 3 p.m., H–313 Capitol.

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, May 13, Subcommittee on Energy, hearing entitled ''Nuclear Energy Innovation and the National Labs'', 10 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

May 13, Full Committee, markup on the ''Spurring Private Aerospace Competitiveness and Entrepreneurship Act of 2015''; H.R. 1508, the ''Space Resource Exploration and Utilization Act of 2015''; the ''Commercial Remote Sensing Act of 2015''; and the ''Office of Space Commerce Act'', 2 p.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Small Business, May 13, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Bridging the Small Business Capital Gap: Peer-to-Peer Lending'', 11 a.m., 2360 Rayburn.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, May 13, Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials, hearing entitled ''The 35th Anniversary of the Staggers Rail Act: Railroad Deregulation Past, Present, and Future'', 10 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

May 14, Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation, hearing entitled ''Coast Guard Major Acquisitions'', 10:30 a.m., 2253 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs, May 13, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Assessing the Promise and Progress of the Choice Program'', 10 a.m., 334 Cannon.

May 14, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, hearing entitled ''Waste, Fraud, and Abuse in VA's Purchase Card Program'', 10:30 a.m., 334 Cannon.

May 14, Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs, markup on pending legislation, 2 p.m., 334 Cannon.

May 15, Subcommittee on Health, markup on pending legislation; hearing entitled ''Overcoming Barriers to More Efficient and Effective VA Staffing'', 9:45 a.m., 334 Cannon.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

10 a.m., Tuesday, May 12

Senate Chamber

Program for Tuesday: Senate will be in a period of morning business until 12:30 p.m. At 2:30 p.m., Senate will vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to consideration of H.R. 1314, Ensuring Tax Exempt Organizations the Right to Appeal Act.

(Senate will recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. for their respective party conferences.)

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

12 noon, Tuesday, May 12

House Chamber

Program for Tuesday: To be announced.

Congressional Record

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