

smallholder farmers, most of whom are women, and for whom coffee is a significant source of income.

Today a consortium, including the Eastern Congo Initiative, the Howard Buffett Foundation, and Starbucks Coffee Company, are trying to help Congolese farmers by revitalizing the industry. Needed infrastructure has been built, a supply chain is in place, and America's largest coffee company has provided a reliable buyer. This is a welcome and worthwhile effort to improve the lives of people in rural Congolese communities that should have the support of the Congolese Government.

Despite this collective effort, Congolese coffee farmers are being crippled by oppressive taxes that make their coffee uncompetitive in the global marketplace. While Congo's official export tax rate is 0.25 percent, many export officials reportedly continue to levy taxes of 7.5 percent, which is the previous rate. In addition, there are often informal tax levies that charge another 3 to 8 percent. These excessive taxes force exporters to pay smallholder farmers less for their coffee, with the result that farmers smuggle their crop into neighboring countries. The livelihoods of these farmers and the success of the Eastern Congo Initiative-Buffett-Starbucks joint venture are put at risk by the Congolese Government's actions.

I want to yield to Senator GRAHAM, who has traveled to Africa and observed the challenges facing small farmers like those I have mentioned.

Mr. GRAHAM. I want to thank my friend from Vermont with whom I have worked for years to help improve the lives of small farmers in Africa and elsewhere. The situation facing coffee farmers in the Eastern Congo should concern all Senators, as there is an opportunity, thanks to the Eastern Congo Initiative, the Buffett Foundation, and Starbucks, to significantly increase the income of people who have long struggled to get out of poverty. The Congolese Government should take immediate steps to eliminate this unofficial tax rate and other specious financial charges that are jeopardizing the livelihoods of their own people. The government must be part of the solution—and not the problem—to Congo's myriad challenges.

Mr. LEAHY. I thank the Senator from South Carolina, the chairman of the Subcommittee on State and Foreign Operations, who chaired a hearing earlier this year when we heard compelling testimony about this subject.

I ask my friend from Delaware, the former chairman of the Subcommittee on Africa, who has traveled to Africa many times, including this year with President Obama, to discuss how this situation in the Eastern Congo relates to the requirements of the African Growth and Opportunity Act.

Mr. COONS. I thank the Senator from Vermont for calling the Senate's attention to the challenges facing cof-

fee producers in the Eastern Congo. The Congress passed the African Growth and Opportunity Act, AGOA, to advance economic growth and political stability in sub-Saharan Africa. AGOA furthers these objectives by offering trade benefits to countries that meet certain requirements, including commitments to policies that alleviate poverty and reflect market based economic principles. Moreover, as part of this year's AGOA renewal, we included provisions to enhance industries where African women are making strong contributions. Since its inception, exports from AGOA countries to the United States have grown 300 percent. Agriculture is the largest employer in Africa, and in the years to come, farming can play a key role in accelerating exports even further and realizing the vision of AGOA.

To meet the standards of AGOA and gain eligibility, the Congolese Government must do away with the excessive export and other taxes currently being levied on its coffee farmers. Impeding the growth of their coffee industry and lowering the standard of living of their own farmers is inconsistent with the language, intent, and spirit of AGOA. Lowering this tax burden should be required before the Democratic Republic of the Congo is granted AGOA benefits.

Ms. STABENOW. I thank the senior Senator from Vermont for his leadership on this issue. Last year, I had the privilege of leading the first all-women Senate delegation to sub-Saharan Africa to examine food, agriculture, and the critical role women play in local economies. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, nearly 50 percent of all the agricultural work in the region is done by women.

Yet, too often, women are not afforded equal opportunities to own property, earn an education, or participate in the political process. That is why I was eager to lead two bipartisan provisions included in the recent AGOA renewal. The first makes clear that we expect our African trading partners to make progress toward establishing policies that support men and women. And the second expands existing agricultural trade technical assistance programs at USDA and USAID and prioritizes outreach to organizations and sectors that support women.

At its core, AGOA is about creating the building blocks of an improved trading relationship with sub-Saharan African nations. For the Democratic Republic of the Congo, coffee production presents a critical export opportunity. That is why we must insist that the Congolese Government addresses its inconsistent and burdensome export taxes on coffee producers—most of whom are women—before regaining eligibility for AGOA benefits. We have an opportunity to send a strong message to our African trading partners that we expect them to recognize how vital women are to the development of those nations' economies.

Ms. CANTWELL. I thank the senior Senator from Vermont for his leadership on this issue. Last year, I travelled to sub-Saharan Africa with Senator STABENOW. In Africa, we saw firsthand that empowering women and girls as leaders in agriculture is important to promoting economic development. When we returned, we fought to make sure promoting economic opportunities for women was an important aspect of renewal of the African Growth and Opportunity Act.

Investing in women produces a good return on investment. According to the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization, if women had the same access to economic resources as men, this could increase agricultural productivity by 20–30 percent.

The Congolese Government's export taxes on coffee producers have the opposite effect. It unfairly burdens women. It should be repealed before the Democratic Republic of the Congo receives any additional AGOA benefits.

Mr. ISAKSON. I want to thank the Senator from South Carolina and the Senator from Vermont for their important work in improving United States foreign assistance. I thank Senator LEAHY for bringing this issue to our attention today. The Senator from Delaware and I have worked for years on the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on African Affairs, and I look forward to continuing that work. Throughout our travels on the African continent, we have seen the beneficial effects of increased agriculture productivity and better access to markets, facilitated by U.S. economic development and trade preference programs.

I am proud of our work to reauthorize the African Growth and Opportunity Act. We made it stronger, more accountable, and hopefully more accessible to sub-Saharan African countries and their people. Unfortunately, Congo's ineligibility makes export opportunities more difficult for Congolese businessmen and farmers. I echo my colleagues' call on the Congolese Government to become more transparent and responsive to the needs of its people.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, as you can see, there is bipartisan support for these coffee farmers who face oppressive economic constraints that limit their ability to be competitive in the marketplace and earn a decent living. I join my colleagues who have spoken on this issue today in urging the Congolese Government to address these concerns for the benefit of its people.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, due to a prior commitment, I regret I was not present to vote on six amendments to H.R. 3762, the Budget Reconciliation Act. Had I been present, I would have voted yes on amendment No. 2908, Manchin-Toomey expanded background checks, and amendment No. 2910, denying firearms to suspected terrorists. I

strongly support these commonsense gun safety proposals.

In addition, I would have supported amendment No. 2892, Senator SHAHEEN's funding for mental illness and substance abuse services, and amendment No. 2907, Senator BENNET's proposal to improving access to care at the Veterans Administration. However, I would have voted no on amendment No. 2912, Cornyn side-by-side to No. 2910; amendment No. 2914, Grassley side-by-side to No. 2908; and amendment No. 2899, Paul refugee resettlement.

BUDGETARY REVISIONS

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, section 4305 of S. Con. Res. 11, the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2016, allows the chairman of the Senate Budget Committee to revise the allocations, aggregates, and levels in the budget resolution for legislation related to health care reform. The authority to adjust is contingent on the legislation not increasing the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2016–2020 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2016–2025.

I find that Senate amendment 2916 fulfills the conditions of deficit neutrality found in section 4305 of S. Con. Res. 11. Accordingly, I am revising the allocations to the Committee on Finance, the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, HELP, and the budgetary aggregates to account for the budget effects of the amendment. I am also adjusting the unassigned to committee savings levels in the budget resolution to reflect that, while there are savings in the amendment attributable to both the HELP and Finance committees, the Congressional Budget Office and Joint Committee on Taxation are unable to produce unique estimates for each provision due to interactions and other effects that are estimated simultaneously.

The adjustments that I filed on Tuesday, December 2, 2015, are now void and replaced by these new adjustments.

I ask unanimous consent that the accompanying tables, which provide details about the adjustment, be printed in the RECORD.

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

**BUDGET AGGREGATES
BUDGET AUTHORITY AND OUTLAYS**

(Pursuant to Section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and Section 4305 of S. Con. Res. 11, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2016)

	\$ Millions	2016
Current Aggregates:*		
Spending:		
Budget Authority		3,033,488
Outlays		3,091,974
Adjustments:		
Spending:		
Budget Authority		- 32,200
Outlays		- 32,300
Revised Aggregates:		
Spending:		
Budget Authority		3,001,288
Outlays		3,059,674

BUDGET AGGREGATE REVENUES

(Pursuant to Section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and Section 4305 of S. Con. Res. 11, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2016)

	\$ Millions	2016	2016–2020	2016–2025
Current Aggregates:				
Revenue		2,675,967	14,415,914	32,233,099
Adjustments:				
Revenue		- 65,400	- 438,000	- 1,103,600
Revised Aggregates:				
Revenue		2,610,567	13,977,914	31,129,499

REVISION TO ALLOCATION TO THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

(Pursuant to Section 302 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and Section 4305 of S. Con. Res. 11, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2016)

	\$ Millions	2016	2016–2020	2016–2025
Current Allocation:				
Budget Authority		2,179,749	12,342,551	29,428,176
Outlays		2,169,759	12,322,705	29,403,199
Adjustments:				
Budget Authority		- 2,000	- 4,600	16,200
Outlays		- 2,000	- 4,600	16,200
Revised Allocation:				
Budget Authority		2,177,749	12,337,951	29,444,376
Outlays		2,167,759	12,318,105	29,419,399

REVISION TO ALLOCATION TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

(Pursuant to Section 302 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and Section 4305 of S. Con. Res. 11, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2016)

	\$ Millions	2016	2016–2020	2016–2025
Current Allocation:				
Budget Authority		12,137	87,301	174,372
Outlays		14,271	87,783	182,631
Adjustments:				
Budget Authority		0	- 4,200	- 13,700
Outlays		0	- 2,400	- 10,900
Revised Allocation:				
Budget Authority		12,137	83,101	160,672
Outlays		14,271	85,383	171,731

REVISION TO ALLOCATION TO THE UNASSIGNED COMMITTEE

(Pursuant to Section 302 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and Section 4305 of S. Con. Res. 11, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2016)

	\$ Millions	2016	2016–2020	2016–2025
Current Allocation:				
Budget Authority		- 930,099	- 6,014,283	- 15,268,775
Outlays		- 884,618	- 5,887,158	- 14,949,026
Adjustments:				
Budget Authority		- 30,200	- 517,500	- 1,489,900
Outlays		- 30,200	- 517,500	- 1,489,900
Revised Allocation:				
Budget Authority		- 960,299	- 6,531,783	- 16,758,675
Outlays		- 914,818	- 6,404,658	- 16,438,926

**TRIBUTE TO PATRICIA
GEADELMANN**

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I would like to take a moment to pay tribute to a friend of mine, Patricia Geadelmann. Pat serves as special assistant to the president for board and governmental relations at the University of Northern Iowa, my alma mater. Pat is retiring in January after more than 43 years at the university.

She began her career teaching physical education and health at the Malcolm Price Laboratory School and achieved the rank of professor. Since 1984, she has served in the UNI administration under four different presidents. In fact, in total, Pat has worked at UNI under 5 of the 10 presidents the university has had. Before that, she was an undergraduate student at the university.

Her experience and her knowledge of the University of Northern Iowa is un-

matched. Needless to say, she has been an invaluable resource for each of the presidents she has served with and to the university as a whole. In fact, it is hard to imagine UNI without her. I have worked with Pat in her capacity as the head of government relations for the University of Northern Iowa for most of my time in the Senate. With someone who has her level of knowledge and experience, you would be tempted to wonder whether she reports to the president or the president reports to her. But, if you know her, you know she is as unassuming as she is dogged in her dedication to the university's best interests.

The University of Northern Iowa was lucky to have her, and on behalf of the UNI family, we are sorry to lose her. We wish her well in her new "retired" career as minister of care and visitation at First Presbyterian Church in Waterloo.

**TRIBUTE TO MAYOR JIM
HAGGERTON**

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, today with my colleague Senator CANTWELL, I wish to commemorate Mayor Jim Haggerton for his 30 years of public service. Mr. Haggerton first served the people of Tukwila, WA as a member of the planning commission from 1985 to 1994 and thereafter as a member of the city council from 1994 to 2007. Since 2008, Mr. Haggerton has served as mayor of Tukwila. On December 31, Mr. Haggerton will retire after 30 years of service to Tukwila.

During his tenure, Mr. Haggerton has consistently provided outstanding leadership, kept the interests of the public at the forefront of his work, celebrated the city's diversity, and supported its neighborhoods, businesses, and residents. Mr. Haggerton successfully spearheaded dozens of major development and public infrastructure projects including the new Klickitat interchange, the Tukwila South Development Agreement, opening the LINK Light Rail Station in Tukwila, the South Park Bridge, a permanent Tukwila Commuter Rail and Amtrak Station, the Southcenter Parkway, and the redevelopment of Interurban Avenue. Mayor Haggerton fought to redevelop neglected and crime-ridden property along Tukwila International Boulevard, which culminated in the Tukwila Village Development Agreement. Additionally, Mr. Haggerton fiercely advocated to fund new crimefighting initiatives and led efforts to build sports and recreational facilities in Tukwila. Throughout his career, I was consistently impressed with Mayor Haggerton's commitment and contributions to the local community.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I join my colleague Senator MURRAY in commemorating Mayor Haggerton's 30 years of public service. As mayor, Mr. Haggerton led the effort to develop and adopt Tukwila's first strategic plan,