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

Mr. McCONNELL. For the information of all of our colleagues, we expect two votes at 4:45 this afternoon. The first vote will be on the passage of H.J. Res. 88, and the second vote will be on the motion to proceed to S.J. Res. 28.

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.

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 Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. AYOTTE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, today Americans have enough to worry about. Questioning the advice they get for their retirement savings accounts should not have to be one of them.

We finally have a new protection on the books that would help protect seniors' retirement savings from biased retirement advice. It is called the fiduciary rule, and it is pretty simple. It says if financial advisers are giving people advice on their retirement accounts, they should put their clients' best interests ahead of their own. But with the resolution that is before us, Republicans want to prevent that rule from ever helping people to save up for retirement. Instead, they are dead set on saving the status quo that has allowed financial advisers to line their own pockets at the expense of people trying to save for their retirement. After a lifetime of hard work, all seniors should have the chance to live out their golden years on firm financial footing and with peace of mind.

Once again, I urge my colleagues to vote no.

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 Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Under the previous order, all time has expired on H.J. Res. 88.

The joint resolution was ordered to a third reading and was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The joint resolution having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the joint resolution pass?

Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, 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 senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 56, nays 41, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 84 Leg.]

YEAS—56

Alexander	Fischer	Paul
Ayotte	Flake	Perdue
Barrasso	Gardner	Portman
Blunt	Graham	Risch
Boozman	Grassley	Roberts
Burr	Hatch	Rounds
Capito	Heitkamp	Rubio
Cassidy	Heller	Sasse
Coats	Hoeven	Scott
Cochran	Inhofe	Sessions
Collins	Isakson	Shelby
Corker	Johnson	Sullivan
Cornyn	Kirk	Tester
Cotton	Lankford	Thune
Crapo	Lee	Tillis
Daines	McCain	Toomey
Donnelly	McConnell	Vitter
Enzi	Moran	Wicker
Ernst	Murkowski	

NAYS—41

Baldwin	Heinrich	Nelson
Bennet	Hirono	Peters
Blumenthal	Kaine	Reed
Booker	King	Reid
Boxer	Klobuchar	Schatz
Brown	Leahy	Schumer
Cantwell	Manchin	Shaheen
Cardin	Markey	Stabenow
Casey	McCaskill	Udall
Coons	Menendez	Warner
Durbin	Merkley	Warren
Feinstein	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Franken	Murphy	Wyden
Gillibrand	Murray	

NOT VOTING—3

Carper	Cruz	Sanders

The joint resolution (H.J. Res. 88) was passed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL OF A RULE SUBMITTED BY THE SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. McCAIN. Madam President, I move to proceed to S.J. Res. 28.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 479, S.J. Res. 28, providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Secretary of Agriculture relating to inspection of fish of the order Siluriformes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion to proceed.

Mr. McCAIN. Madam President, 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 senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 57, nays 40, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 85 Leg.]

YEAS—57

Alexander	Flake	Menendez
Ayotte	Franken	Murray
Baldwin	Gardner	Nelson
Bennet	Grassley	Peters
Blumenthal	Hatch	Reed
Booker	Heinrich	Reid
Burr	Heller	Risch
Cantwell	Hirono	Rubio
Cardin	Isakson	Sasse
Casey	Johnson	Schumer
Coats	Kaine	Shaheen
Coons	King	Sullivan
Corker	Kirk	Tillis
Cornyn	Klobuchar	Toomey
Crapo	Lankford	Udall
Daines	Lee	Warner
Enzi	Markey	Warren
Ernst	McCain	Whitehouse
Feinstein	McCaskill	Wyden

NAYS—40

Barrasso	Graham	Portman
Blunt	Heitkamp	Roberts
Boozman	Hoeven	Rounds
Boxer	Inhofe	Schatz
Brown	Leahy	Scott
Capito	Manchin	Sessions
Cassidy	McConnell	Shelby
Cochran	Merkley	Stabenow
Collins	Mikulski	Tester
Cotton	Moran	Thune
Donnelly	Murkowski	Vitter
Durbin	Murphy	Wicker
Fischer	Paul	
Gillibrand	Perdue	

NOT VOTING—3

Carper	Cruz	Sanders

The motion was agreed to.

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL OF A RULE SUBMITTED BY THE SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the joint resolution.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (S.J. Res. 28) providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Secretary of Agriculture relating to inspection of fish of the order Siluriformes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). Pursuant to the provisions of the Congressional Review Act, 5 USC 801, and following, there will be up to 10 hours of debate, equally divided between those favoring and opposing the resolution.

The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I thank my colleagues for their vote to move to this resolution. I think we can count this, frankly, as a victory for the American taxpayer rather than certain special interests.

I would like to begin by making clear in the RECORD the groups that are supporting this resolution: the National Retail Federation, the Food Marketing Institute, Taxpayers for Protection Alliance, National Taxpayers Union, Taxpayers for Common Sense, the Heritage

Foundation, FreedomWorks, Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council, Citizens Against Government Waste, Center for Individual Freedom, Independent Women's Voice, R Street Institute, Campaign for Liberty, the Retail Industry Leaders Association, the American Frozen Food Institute, and the list goes on and on and on.

Ten times—ten times—the Government Accountability Office has said the same thing over and over, and that is that this program is duplicative and it is unnecessary. It is unfortunate we are spending tens of millions of dollars every year on a program that is duplicative and unnecessary.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a Wall Street Journal editorial entitled ''Ending the Catfish Fight.''

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

[From the Wall Street Journal, May 24, 2016]

ENDING THE CATFISH FIGHT

THE SENATE CAN ROLL BACK A PROTECTIONIST BARRIER TO FREER TRADE WITH ASIA

President Obama is in Vietnam and Japan this week, where he'll probably be getting an earful about America's rising antitrade sentiment and the threat that poses to the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade deal. So here's hoping the U.S. Senate can provide at least some leadership by ending the protectionist treatment of one of Vietnam's most valuable exports: catfish.

Vietnamese exporters have competed with U.S. catfish farmers from the Mississippi Delta since the 1990s. Trouble began in 2002, when Mississippi Republican Thad Cochran and other Southern lawmakers barred foreigners from calling their product ''catfish'' because technically it's pangasius, also called basa or swai, an Asian cousin with similar taste, texture and whiskers.

This didn't stop Americans from buying the tasty, cheaper imports, and neither did a round of spurious antidumping tariffs imposed on the Vietnamese fish in 2003.

So Mr. Cochran went further, using the 2008 farm bill to transfer oversight of catfish to the Department of Agriculture from the Food and Drug Administration, even though the meat and poultry experts at the USDA regulate no other fish. This required classifying pangasius as catfish after all, and claiming that there was a public-health risk where none existed. The true motive was to impose high new compliance costs on Vietnamese exporters, who might then be priced out of the U.S. market.

The Government Accountability Office has slammed the new inspection regime 10 times, estimating its cost at $30 million to start and $14 million annually to operate, as compared with $700,000 a year for the original program. Repeal would ''save taxpayers millions of dollars annually without affecting the safety of catfish intended for human consumption,'' says the GAO. It would also let Americans keep buying the fish they prefer, while eliminating the likelihood that Vietnam and others will sue at the World Trade Organization and retaliate against U.S. exports of beef, soybeans and other products.

Yet multiple bipartisan efforts at repeal have failed, so the wasteful program took effect in March, beginning an 18–month phase-in period. Exporters in Vietnam are already feeling squeezed, and our sources say that Vietnam's top leader planned to raise the issue with Mr. Obama in Hanoi, echoing years of complaints from lower-level officials.

The good news is that more than 30 Senators from both parties introduced a measure Monday to repeal the program in a straight up-or-down vote under the Congressional Review Act. That may be easier than attaching it to larger bills, as in the past, that Mr. Cochran and his allies could block. A vote could come before Mr. Obama leaves Asia. Repeal would boost U.S. credibility in a region that needs trade leadership.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, quoting from that article:

President Obama is in Vietnam and Japan this week, where he'll probably be getting an earful about America's rising antitrade sentiment and the threat that poses to the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade deal. So here's hoping the U.S. Senate can provide at least some leadership by ending the protectionist treatment of one of Vietnam's most valuable exports: catfish.

This is from the Wall Street Journal. Most of us—at least on this side of the aisle—have a great deal of respect for the opinions that are on the editorial page of the Wall Street Journal.

The article goes on to say:

Vietnamese exporters have competed with U.S. catfish farmers from the Mississippi delta since the 1990s. Trouble began in 2002, when Mississippi Republican Thad Cochran and other southern lawmakers barred foreigners from calling their product ''catfish'' because technically it's pangasius, also called basa or swai, an Asian cousin with similar taste, texture and whiskers. This didn't stop Americans from buying the tasty, cheaper imports, and neither did a round of spurious antidumping tariffs imposed on the Vietnamese fish in 2003.

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It is pretty clear that we have the highest regard for the Government Accountability Office. Now, sometimes we don't always agree, but this is why 10 times the Government Accountability Office has found this program duplicative and a waste of tax dollars. This is why the Citizens Against Government Waste, the Taxpayers for Common Sense, the National Taxpayers Union, Heritage Foundation, FreedomWorks, and the Center for Individual Freedom—literally every watchdog organization in this town and in America—support this resolution.

The disapproval resolution is the means to stop this wasteful rule because all efforts to work within the normal procedures have been blocked. Whether it be the farm bill or TPA, efforts for the Senate to debate this issue have been shut off. The sole time the Senate voted on this program, it voted overwhelmingly to eliminate the program.

I think at least on this side of the aisle there is an organization we are pretty respectful of, and it is the Heritage Foundation.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a statement from Heritage Action for America, which weighs in regularly, as we know, on this issue.

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

[From Heritage Action for America, May 24, 2016]

''YES'' ON CRA TO BLOCK THE CATFISH PROGRAM (S.J. RES. 28)

(By Dan Holler)

On Tuesday, the Senate is expected to vote on S.J. Res. 28, a resolution offered by Sen. John McCain under the Congressional Review Act (CRA) that would block the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) catfish inspection rule.

For over a century, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has been responsible for inspecting and regulating the nation's food supply, including both domestic and imported seafood. That was, however, until the 2008 Farm Bill carved out catfish to instead be regulated by the USDA. As a result, facilities that process seafood will now have to comply with both USDA (for catfish) and FDA (for all other seafood) regulations. These overlapping, duplicative, and possibly conflicting regulatory regimes will cost taxpayers an unnecessary $140 million.

There is no policy justification for carving out catfish from the broader seafood regulatory structure. To wit, the Government Accountability Office (GAO), a non-partisan group generally reserved and measured in its conclusions, entitled its report on the program: ''Responsibility for Inspecting Catfish Should Not Be Assigned to USDA.'' GAO has elsewhere concluded (as part of it's ''High Risk'' of waste series) that the catfish program results in duplication and wasted spending while in no way enhancing food safety.

The duplicative regulatory requirements also have trade implications, as foreign exporters selling catfish would also have to abide by both the FDA and USDA's regulatory structures, and specifically would require imports alone to abide by a new ''equivalency'' test that would effectively block out foreign catfish for years. This could harm consumers by limiting competition and choice in the catfish market. In

fact, this appears to be precisely the motivation: To use a non-tariff trade barrier to burden foreign competitors in an attempt to help domestic providers corner the market. As the New York Times reported, Vietnam has taken particular offense to the new rule, and rightly so:

''Vietnam, a large exporter of catfish and one of the nations in the trade talks, says it is nothing more than a trade barrier in disguise.

'And it's not even a good disguise; it's clearly a thinly veiled attempt designed to keep out fish from countries like Vietnam,' said Le Chi Dzung, who heads the economics section at the Vietnamese Embassy in Washington.''

While this $140 million program may appear small relative to the overall budget picture, it nevertheless looms large as a poster child of government cronyism, with special interests benefiting at the expense of everyone else. It is difficult to state it better than former FDA seafood inspection chief, Bryon Truglio, who stated:

''[A] group of lobbyists and a trade association representing elements of the American catfish producers . . . has bullied Congress into moving catfish regulation to the USDA, making it harder for their foreign competitors to enter the US market. This move is a win for US catfish producers, but ultimately, a loss for American taxpayers and consumers.''

Fortunately, Congress may actually have the chance to block the catfish rule this year. The Obama Administration acknowledges the duplication inherent in the USDA's catfish inspection program, and proposed eliminating it in a recent budget. Despite having advanced the rule—apparently agreeing (for once) it must abide by clear congressional statute and intent—Obama Administration opposes the rule. By sending the President this CRA for him to sign, Congress will allow this duplicative and wasteful catfish inspection rule to be blocked consistent with the rule of law.

Heritage Action supports S.J. Res. 28 and will include it as a key vote on our legislative scorecard.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, quoting from the statement of Heritage Action for America, they say:

There is no policy justification for carving out catfish from the broader seafood regulatory structure.

The statement goes on to say:

While this $140 million program may appear small relative to the overall budget picture, it nevertheless looms large as a poster child of government cronyism, with special interests benefiting at the expense of everyone else. It is difficult to state it better than former FDA seafood inspection chief Bryon Truglio, who stated: ''[A] group of lobbyists and a trade association representing elements of the American catfish producers . . . has bullied Congress into moving catfish regulation to the USDA, making it harder for their foreign competitors to enter the U.S. market. This move is a win for U.S. catfish producers, but ultimately, a loss for American taxpayers and consumers.''

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That is from the Heritage Foundation.

Now, this is FreedomWorks:

As one of our over 5.7 million FreedomWorks activists nationwide, I urge you to contact your Senators and ask them to vote YES on S.J. Res. 28, a resolution that would repeal the U.S. Department of Agriculture's catfish inspection rule.

The FreedomWorks statement goes on to say:

The program was developed to assess the risks associated with catfish consumption.

And it goes on as to how they want it overruled.

Also, I have a statement from the Taxpayers Protection Union, the Campaign for Liberty, the Center for Individual Freedom, Independent Women's Forum, the National Taxpayers Union, R Street Institute, Taxpayers for Common Sense, and the list goes on and on.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a letter to Senator AYOTTE which is signed by David Williams, president, Taxpayers Protection Alliance; Norm Singleton, president, Campaign For Liberty; Jeff Mazzella, president, Center for Individual Freedom; Tom Schatz, president, Council for Citizens Against Government Waste; Sabrina Schaffer, executive director, Independent Women's Forum; Heather R. Higgins, president and CEO, Independent Women's Voice; Brandon Arnold, executive vice president, National Taxpayers Union; Andrew Moylan, executive director, R Street Institute; Karen Kerrigan, president and CEO, Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council; and Steve Ellis, vice president, Taxpayers for Common Sense.

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

MAY 23, 2016.

Hon. KELLY AYOTTE,
Russell Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR AYOTTE, As organizations that represent millions of taxpayers across the country, we write to support your efforts to repeal the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) catfish inspection program. We are pleased to see you and your cosponsors, Sens. John McCain (R–Ariz.) and Jeanne Shaheen (D–N.H.), using the Congressional Review Act to repeal one of the most demonstrably wasteful and duplicative programs ever enacted.

The unnecessary and duplicative bureaucracy created by this program has now been targeted by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) a record ten times: February 2011, March 2011, May 2012, February 2013, April 2013, April 2014, December 2014, February 2015, April 2015, and April 2016.

The USDA spent $19.9 million to develop and study the catfish inspection program, then told GAO it would cost the federal government an additional ''$14 million annually'' to run the program. This after GAO found the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) currently spends ''less than $700,000 annually to inspect catfish.'' If the cost of other, similar regulatory programs is any guide, the USDA program will cost far more than the estimated $14 million.

The GAO also notes that it not only wastes taxpayer dollars and duplicates work already being done by the FDA, it actually weakens, rather than strengthens, our food safety systems:

''. . . the agency's proposed catfish inspection program further fragments the federal oversight system for food safety without demonstrating that there is a problem with catfish or a need for a new federal program.''

Eliminating wasteful federal spending and burdensome regulation is a very difficult task, especially when proceeding one program at a time. But the value to taxpayers of doing so is undeniable. Thus, as you gather support for S.J. Res 28, please know we strongly support this effort to close the book on this now infamous and embarrassing example of government waste.

The USDA catfish work is an embarrassing waste of tax dollars and so overtly duplicative a program it belongs in the annals of Washington waste history.

Sincerely,

David Williams, President, Taxpayers Protection Alliance; Norm Singleton, President, Campaign for Liberty; Jeff Mazzella, President, Center for Individual Freedom; Tom Schatz, President, Council for Citizens Against Government Waste; Sabrina Schaffer, Executive Director, Independent Women's Forum; Heather R. Higgins, President & CEO, Independent Women's Voice; Brandon Arnold, Executive Vice President, National Taxpayers Union; Andrew Moylan, Executive Director & Senior Fellow, R Street Institute; Karen Kerrigan, President & CEO, Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council; Steve Ellis, Vice President, Taxpayers for Common Sense.

Mr. MCCAIN. In other words, literally every watchdog organization has supported what we are trying to do here.

Here is one from the National Retail Federation. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that this letter be printed in the RECORD.

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

MAY 23, 2016.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.
Hon. HARRY REID
Minority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATORS MCCONNELL AND REID: We understand the Senate may soon consider a resolution of disapproval of the United States Department of Agriculture (''USDA'') catfish inspection program. We support this resolution and write to explain the negative impacts this program will have if fully implemented by the USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service (''FSIS'').

The USDA program was created in 2008 and shifts food safety regulatory authority over certain domestic and imported seafood from the Food and Drug Administration (''FDA'') to FSIS. The program applies to imported pangasius, a mild white fish that is today the sixth most popular seafood item in the United States. FSIS issued a final rule in December 2015, and a resolution of disapproval was filed in the Senate soon thereafter.

The USDA program is of great concern to our member companies. The shift of food safety oversight from FDA to FSIS for this specific product establishes a nontariff trade barrier against imported pangasius. Exporting countries will have to obtain an ''equivalency'' determination from FSIS if they wish to preserve their producers'' ability to export to the United States. Because the FSIS equivalency process routinely takes five years and sometimes over a decade to complete, this will create for those producers an insurmountable barrier to the U.S. market.

Thus in a single stroke more than a fifth of the ''value white fish'' supply in the United States—about 250 million pounds a year—

will disappear. This reduction in supply will cause a dramatic increase in prices for our companies and our customers who rely on an affordable product for fish sticks in the freezer aisle and popular fish and chips menu items in restaurants. In addition, we are aware of persistent calls for expansion of the program to even more popular tilapia and shrimp. Such calls suggest that the existing USDA program is just the beginning.

Nor is the program justified on a food safety basis. USDA concedes that not a single case of Salmonella has been attributed to pangasius (or, for that matter, to domestic catfish) since establishment of the current FDA seafood regulatory approach in 1998. The Government Accountability Office has concluded that the USDA program will harm Federal food safety oversight by fracturing seafood regulation between two different regulatory agencies. For that and other reasons, GAO on ten different occasions has identified the program as a waste of tens of millions of taxpayer dollars and has urged the Congress to eliminate it.

The United States must have a rigorous, effective food safety system. That system, however, should not prevent retailers and restaurants from sourcing the seafood that meets the demand of middle class American families for affordable, accessible protein. We urge you to support the resolution of disapproval of the USDA catfish inspection program, under the Congressional Review Act.

Sincerely,

JENNIFER HATCHER,
Senior Vice President, Food Marketing Institute.

DAVID FRENCH,
Senior Vice President, National Retail Federation.

JENNIFER SAFAVIAN,
Executive Vice President, Retail Industry Leaders Association.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, the National Restaurant Association strongly supports what we are trying to do, and the list goes on and on.

I know there are my colleagues who want to speak on this issue, but this is more than a vote on catfish, I would say to my colleagues. What this is all about is government overriding the taxpayers of America, which is why we are seeing so many of these watchdog organizations supporting what we are trying to do.

Some of us, including this Member, have been surprised—been surprised by the American people's votes recently for both parties, both for Mr. Trump, who has never stood for public office before and has based his campaign, to a large degree, on campaigning against Washington, DC, and those of us who serve here, and of course on the other side is Senator SANDERS, a Member of this body, but clearly one who is running his campaign against the status quo. So we have been surprised to see this uprising of the American voter, and I don't believe there is a Member of this body on either side of the aisle who would have predicted 6 months ago that we would be where we are today.

This kind of program is exactly what our hard-working citizenry who work hard and pay their taxes—they don't get it. They don't get it, when the GAO 10 times—10 times—said that this program is wasteful and duplicative, and tens of millions of dollars are being wasted on behalf of one industry, and that is the catfish industry—and it has been done by powerful appropriators, powerful members of the Appropriations Committee. There was never a debate. There was never a bill before this body. There was never amendments proposed. It was put in a large omnibus appropriations bill and kept there.

So sometimes we wonder why the American people have had it, why they are fed up. This is the best example I can come up with recently, $30 million per year being wasted on a duplicative—10 times—10 times that the GAO has said it is not only unneeded but unnecessary: a special catfish office, $14 million a year.

I don't know how many low-income taxpayers make $14 million, but I know this; that when I go back to Arizona and tell my constituents that we have a program GAO 10 times has said is totally unnecessary and duplicative and the government is spending $14 million of their tax dollars on it, they don't get it. They don't get it.

Then, after they don't get it for a while, they say: We have had it. They say: We have had it. We have had it with programs that nobody ever debated, nobody ever discussed. There was never a vote. It has been in existence since 2012, but it began in 2002.

So this is why Americans are fed up. This is why our hard-working citizenry does not understand why we would ever have such a program that wastes $12 million per year and, I believe, was $30 million to set up. That is chickenfeed to us. It is in the margins. To them, it is something. It means, to them, that we are not taking care of them. It means we are taking care of a powerful interest called the catfish industry, which happens to be in a number of Southern States.

There was a large number of Republican votes against this proposal—as I recall, a majority of Republican votes, Republicans who say: We are watchdogs of the Treasury. We don't waste money the way the Democrats do. But on the resolution just taken, if it had been only up to Republican Members, we wouldn't be debating this right now. Isn't that a little embarrassing? Isn't that a little embarrassing that a majority of Members on this side would not even vote to at least debate this?

All I can say is I have been fighting this issue for about 12 or 13 years. We finally now have a chance to get rid of it. Does it make the debt and the deficit any less? Is it a huge undertaking that somehow is going to save the taxpayers billions of dollars? I will tell you what. If we keep this program in, with a majority vote of the United States Senate, I tell my colleagues on this side of the aisle: Just don't go back and say you are a fiscal conservative. Say you take care of the fat catfish industry. Maybe some people like that. But don't go back and call yourself a fiscal conservative.

I know others want to speak. They are going to raise problems; that there could be contamination, there could be all these kinds of things, that it is the end of Western civilization as we know it, it is going to be worse than Ebola; that it means we don't trust the Food and Drug Administration, the people who are supposed to be inspecting all seafood—and if that is true of catfish, don't we have to worry about all the other seafood that the Food and Drug Administration inspects? Of course not.

So we are going to hear that it is the end of Western civilization, that there has been some pollution detected, et cetera. All we have to do is have the Food and Drug Administration do their job and inspect all seafood, just as they do today, including catfish. We don't have to have a new $30 million bureaucracy set up at a cost of $14 million per year.

I have a lot more to say, but the hour grows late. I just hope we will show the American taxpayer that we are at least willing, in a small way, to eliminate some government duplication and waste. I say that there is a lot of symbolic aspects of this vote that far exceed $14 million per year. It is now going to be a vote on how we do business in the United States Senate. If we don't succeed in eliminating this program, I then think we would be embarrassed.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business and have my time charged for the proponents of the bill.

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

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I agree completely with my fellow Senator from Arizona on this catfish issue. We have a lot of fiscal challenges ahead. If we hope to tackle the immense fiscal challenges ahead, we have to vote right on issues like this. Where there is duplication and waste going on, we have to tackle it. So I commend those who are sponsoring this initiative.

TRIBUTE TO MATTHEW SPECHT

Mr. President, I rise to recognize Matthew Specht as the longest serving member of my staff. He has dedicated the past 15 years of his life in service to the people of Arizona.

In that time, Matt has established himself as both a top-tier political strategist and one of my most trusted advisers. He has done so without fanfare and without self-promotion. That kind of modesty is refreshing in this line of work. So I obviously had to write this speech about him without telling him about it.

I first met Matt back in the year 2000, when he volunteered for my first campaign. Now, at that time, the main area of advertising for us was the 4-by-8 big signs that we put by the side of the road. Trying to get them to stay by the side of the road was difficult. Arizona is dry, the ground is hard, and we

had to get big post pounders and pound big stakes, big posts in the ground. Matt was out there with the post pounder, lifted a little too high over the post, and it came down on his head, creating a large wound that bled profusely. Another campaign staffer ran over to help him and immediately fainted at the sight of blood. So there we had two campaign workers on the side of the road. It looked like a crime scene, when it was just a campaign activity, but Matt gratefully recovered—a few stitches and he was back on the job.

After helping me win that race, Matt came to Washington as my first legislative correspondent and systems administrator. Now, if you want to test someone under pressure, put them in charge of troubleshooting BlackBerrys in the early time of BlackBerrys. It was a tough thing, but Matt handled it like a pro. To his relief and our great benefit, he was soon promoted to press secretary.

It was in communications that Matt really came into his own. In the early days of the fight against congressional earmarks, Matt's foresight and creativity played a big role in raising awareness in the media. You can thank or blame Matt for many of the gut-wrenching bad puns that were part of my ''Egregious Earmark of the Week'' series. Of course, I claim all the good puns as mine and all the bad ones were his, but he knows that is not the case.

Let me just say, as a press secretary, if you can handle doing a segment on the ''Daily Show,'' you can handle just about anything, and Matt did it well.

He would eventually rise to the top of my staff, serving as chief of staff during my final years in the House and through my election to the Senate.

When I took this seat in the Senate, Matt—who never intended to stay in Washington for more than a couple years—returned home to Arizona after 10 years in Washington.

Being director of my State office in Arizona is no easy task. There are countless veterans issues, loads of immigration casework, endless border issues, and a myriad of public lands disputes, but Matt has handled it all in stride.

Truly a man of few words, Matt has long been a steady and calming leader on my staff. He is well known on my staff for his amazing quick wit as well. His pranks have become the stuff of legend among my staff. Fortunately, for Matt, none of the pranks are appropriate to detail in a setting like this. Suffice it to say that birthdays in my office are celebrated with a mixture of fear and trepidation.

Matt is truly a staffer's staffer, it goes without saying, but his calm, steady leadership, his wealth of knowledge, his informed, dispassionate advice, and his sense of humor will be dearly missed as he moves to the private sector.

The only consolation with Matt leaving is that he will have more time to spend with his beloved cats. He is a proud cat guy, something I will never understand. I am glad I will still be able to call on Matt for his wise counsel.

Thank you, Matt, for your 15 years of honorable service. You will be missed.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I rise in opposition to S.J. Res. 28, and I have to comment on a number of allegations made by my friend from Arizona and by other people who support the resolution.

I have in my hand a statement from the Budget Committee that is required for resolutions of this sort.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that this statement be printed in the RECORD.

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

FROM BUDGET COMMITTEE: CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW ACT ON MANDATORY SILURIFORMES (CATFISH) INSPECTION

S.J. Res. 28, A joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Secretary of Agriculture relating to inspection of fish of the order Siluriformes (Senator McCain).

The Republican staff of the Senate Budget Committee concludes that S.J. Res. 28 (Senator John McCain, R–AZ), a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval of a rule submitted by the Department of Agriculture relating to mandatory Siluriformes (catfish) inspection, is not subject to a budgetary point of order.

S.J. Res. 28 disapproves of the rule submitted by the Department of Agriculture on ''Mandatory Inspection of Fish of the Order Siluriformes and Products Derived From Such Fish'' that was published in the Federal Register on December 2, 2015. The rule implements Siluriformes inspection under the jurisdiction of the Agriculture Department's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS). Enactment of the resolution means such rule shall have no force or effect and may not be reissued in substantially the same form.

This memo is for informational purposes only. The Congressional Review Act, which provides for expedited consideration of a resolution of disapproval in the Senate, waives all points of order against such a resolution, which includes any potential budget points of order (5 U.S.C. 802(d)(1)).

POINTS OF ORDER

Under the Congressional Review Act, budget points of order are waived against resolutions of disapproval. Based on staff analysis of the direct spending estimate provided by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), S.J. Res. 28 would not trigger any budget points of order. A revenue estimate is not available at this time.

COST

CBO has determined that S.J. Res. 28 would not have any impact on direct spending, but has not produced a complete estimate of the budgetary effects of this resolution at this time.

PROCEDURAL STATUS

The Senate is expected to consider S.J. Res. 28 this week, possibly as early as Tuesday, May 24, 2016.

Mr. WICKER. From the Budget Committee, with regard to S.J. Res. 28, we get down to the place where it says ''COST,'' and it says that ''CBO has determined that S.J. Res. 28 would not have any impact on direct spending. . . . ''

So I would submit to my colleagues that they can say as many times as they want to, they can say until they are blue in the face that this program at USDA is costly and we are saving money, but it doesn't square with the information we have from the Budget Committee, quoting CBO that says you don't save any money by passing S.J. Res. 28. There may be other reasons, but certainly it doesn't save money, according to the Budget Committee information, which I have now entered into the RECORD.

Why do we inspect catfish at all? We inspect it for the consumer. We want to make sure that at restaurants, in grocery stores, and in our homes, we are not consuming contaminated and adulterated product. Every bit of domestically raised, American farm-raised catfish is inspected by USDA. It is inspected just as other farm-raised meats are inspected by the USDA.

Until this new procedure went into effect in April, FDA inspected imported catfish. So you had the strange situation of 100 percent of farm-raised American catfish being inspected by USDA, but our foreign competitors—Vietnam sending in catfish and FDA inspecting only 2 percent of that. Only 2 percent of imported Vietnamese catfish was inspected by the U.S. Government until this new inspection procedure went into effect April 15. Since it has gone into effect, 100 percent of imported catfish has been inspected, just like 100 percent of American-raised catfish. Isn't that fair? If we are going to inspect all American-produced catfish, isn't it fair to inspect our competitors'?

What has USDA found? This is what my colleagues seem to be missing. In the short time USDA has been inspecting 100 percent of Vietnamese catfish, they have found contaminated substances that would have been consumed by Americans at restaurants and in homes, catfish purchased in supermarkets. On May 12, USDA found crystal violet. Crystal violet causes bladder cancer. Because USDA inspected the catfish coming in from Vietnam, American consumers were protected from this cancer-causing substance. I think we ought to be grateful for the new law because it protected us from crystal violet, which causes bladder cancer.

A week later, on May 19, the USDA—once again inspecting, as they have been required to do under the last two farm bills—found malachite green in Vietnamese catfish. Malachite green causes thyroid cancer, it causes liver cancer, and it causes mammary gland cancer.

I would say to my colleagues who are so pleased we might go back to the old regime, shouldn't we be proud of USDA for protecting Americans from cancer-

causing substances—bladder cancer, thyroid cancer, liver cancer, mammary gland cancer? I take this seriously. I think Americans take this seriously.

Since we find that this Vietnamese catfish comes in in contaminated form, aren't we glad we are inspecting more than 2 percent of it? No one contends that I am wrong on this. FDA only inspected 2 percent. Now we are inspecting the vast majority, if not all of it.

Again, my friends can say this is a duplicative program, but it simply is not a duplicative program. FDA formerly did the inspections. They ceased inspecting at the end of February of this year and USDA took it over. That is not duplicative. According to the last two farm bills, FDA quit; USDA picked it up. Where is the duplication there?

We are told that the rule is a violation of trade policy, a WTO violation. In fact, USDA has pointed out that equivalent standards are applied both to imported and domestic fish. There is no different treatment. If we are going to look at all American catfish, we need to look at all Vietnamese catfish. For the life of me, I cannot understand why we would want to do otherwise, particularly when you have crystal violet and malachite green coming in.

Also, my friends on the other side of this issue say over and over again that this is costly. As a matter of fact, USDA—which will implement the program, is prepared to implement the program—says it will cost $1.1 million annually to implement this new inspection program. That is a reasonable amount, and it is far different from the figures that other agencies that are not going to actually be doing this are talking about. USDA is going to do it, and they said we can do it for $1.1 million a year. That is not costly.

Once again, I would go back to what the Budget Committee said. There are no savings. There is no difference in direct spending if we pass this rule or not. But there is a great deal of protection from not only crystal violet, not only from malachite, but from enrofloxacin and fluoroquinolone. A 2009 draft version of the catfish inspection rule said the rule would yield ''a reduction of roughly 175,000 lifetime cancers.'' They are talking about saving Americans from contracting cancer, to the tune of 175,000 Americans, a reduction of 91.8 million exposures to antimicrobials and 23.2 million heavy metal exposures. So we are not talking about something theoretical. We are not talking about something that has to do with trade or good government. We are talking about adulterated, contaminated catfish coming in and threatening the consuming public.

Now that we have an inspection procedure that is working, we are told that somehow it is good government to go back to the old way of only looking at 2 percent of this suspect product coming in. I would hope that, upon reflection, my colleagues would conclude that the farm bill was right in 2008, that the farm bill was right in 2012, and that the Ag Department was correct to follow the congressional dictates.

This is not an example of an agency—as we have seen so many times in the Obama administration, this is not an example of the agency coming up with something they would like to do. They were following a House and Senate directive based on legislation passed here, passed down at the other end of the building, and signed by the President on two occasions. This is not USDA overreach; this is USDA doing what has been required under law.

Let's prevent cancer-causing substances from coming into the United States, let's vote no on this rule, and let's keep this new program, which is already working to protect the consuming public from very harsh chemicals that cause cancer.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

If no one yields time, the time will be charged equally to each side.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, I rise today in support of what, frankly, is an egregious example of why folks get very frustrated with Washington and what happens here; that is, what has been described as one of Washington's most wasteful programs—the duplicative USDA catfish inspection program, which was slipped in the farm bill in 2008.

All other fish species are inspected not by USDA but are inspected in this country by the FDA. Yet, added to the 2008 farm bill was a provision to create a special office within the USDA for the one species of catfish. We know they are bottom dwellers, but this was something that was done to protect domestic catfish producers, and it was something that is wasting taxpayer dollars.

There have been 10 GAO reports, each finding that this inspection regime—set up especially for catfish but no other species—is duplicative and is a waste of taxpayer dollars.

The good-government groups, such as Citizens Against Government Waste, Taxpayers for Common Sense, the National Taxpayers Union, and many of the other groups that my colleague Senator MCCAIN cited on the floor that are supporting the resolution to disapprove this duplicative rule, have called this program one of the most demonstrably wasteful and duplicative programs ever created. Boy, in Washington, that says a lot, to call something one of the most demonstrably wasteful and duplicative programs ever created. These groups have written that the GAO also notes that it not only wastes taxpayer dollars and duplicates work already done by the FDA, but it actually weakens rather than strengthens our food safety systems.

The agency's proposed catfish inspection program further fragments Federal oversight over our system for food safety without demonstrating that there is a problem with catfish or a need for a new Federal program.

With all respect, I heard my colleague from Mississippi on the floor citing the most recent findings by the newly stood up USDA office for the inspection of catfish talking about harmful contaminants in catfish that the USDA intercepted. There are some facts that are conveniently missing from this argument. First of all, when the FDA was inspecting catfish—like they inspect all other fish in the country—at times, they were also able to intercept contaminants found not only in catfish but in other fish species. So the notion that the FDA couldn't find these very same contaminants—well, guess what, folks, they did, just as they do every day when they are looking at ensuring that all of our fish species are appropriate for our public health and for us to consume.

One of the interesting things about it is that not only would the FDA find this in the catfish coming from overseas, but they have actually intercepted contaminants in the domestic catfish supply at times as well. I think that is important for people to understand.

This notion that somehow we need to set up a special program within the USDA for just catfish because that is the only way we can find contaminants and protect the public health—apparently the FDA is able to do it for every other fish species, was able to do it before 2008, and yet we now have a separate office for the catfish, and the GAO found that it cost us nearly $20 million extra to set up this special office to inspect catfish for the one species.

In fact, my colleague from Mississippi serves on the Budget Committee, as I do, and he mentioned on the floor the fact that the CBO said that there will not be additional spending on this program. One thing that is important for people to understand—and those of us who serve on the Budget Committee understand this—is that the Budget Committee said that there is no additional mandatory spending. That means mandatory spending that has already been set aside in the budget. We separate spending in the Federal Government—mandatory versus discretionary spending. Guess what? Yes, there isn't mandatory spending on this, but, conveniently, what has been left out is that there is absolutely discretionary spending on this program.

In fact, GAO has found that it not only cost $20 million to set up this new inspection regime, but they have estimated that it costs $14 million a year in discretionary spending to run this new inspection regime for catfish.

I just want to make sure that people understand, for the record, that this budget opinion that is being cited is really meaningless because it is saying there is no mandatory spending. Well, guess what? I could come to the floor on almost any kind of domestic spending, whether it is on an issue of DOD,

a weapons system, or anything we are talking about here, and tell you that there is no mandatory spending on this, and the Budget Committee would issue the same opinion.

What really matters is this: Are we spending any taxpayer dollars? The answer at the end of the day is absolutely, because the dollars that go to the USDA or the FDA are actually discretionary spending.

I hope my colleagues who are listening to this understand that this budget opinion really means nothing. We are still spending taxpayer dollars that matter to you and me, and we could spend these millions of dollars much more effectively elsewhere than on a duplicative program for catfish.

In fact, former FDA Safety Chief David Acheson commented that this duplicative program is ''everything that's wrong about the food-safety system. . . . It's food politics. It's not public health.'' For all the claims that have been made on this floor about somehow needing to set up a separate inspection regime for catfish, the USDA itself said: ''The true effectiveness of FSIS inspection for reducing catfish-associated human illnesses is unknown.'' This is the USDA itself: ''unknown.'' ''Also, the rate at which FSIS inspection will achieve its ultimate reductions is unknown. . . . There is substantial uncertainty regarding the actual effectiveness of an FSIS''—meaning the USDA inspection regime—''catfish inspection program.''

That is not very promising. We already had an inspection regime in place, as we do for every other fish species under the FDA, and that costs us roughly $700,000 a year, according to the GAO reports, and now, under what we have done with the duplicative inspection regime with the USDA, it costs roughly $20 million to build a new inspection regime with new infrastructure in a different agency, and then roughly $14 million, according to the GAO. We just asked them again if they could confirm the numbers that are being cited of it only costing $1.5 million. No, they can't confirm those numbers. There were 10 GAO reports defining duplicative and wasteful spending, yet here we are.

I was really shocked by the vote on the Senate floor. I was very shocked that my colleagues would have 10 GAO reports in front of them that say this is a duplicative and wasteful program, and we already have every other fish species inspected by the FDA. Yet we are going to set up a separate office for catfish. Almost every good government group that focuses on addressing wasteful spending in Washington has called this duplicative program egregious and really cited this as an example of what is wrong when we are worried about taxpayer dollars and what happens in Washington.

I hope, as I look at the votes on the Senate floor, that as we proceed to this measure, my colleagues will look at these GAO reports, listen to these good government organizations that have basically said that this program is really a waste of taxpayer dollars, and that they will support the resolution to disapprove this duplicative inspection program.

Before 2008, the FDA was inspecting catfish, and they were doing their job just like they do with every other fish species. They can continue to do that rather than have an entire separate program just to inspect one fish species under the USDA. By the way, the focus of the USDA is actually on meat and poultry. They don't regulate any other fish. They don't have fish experts like the FDA, and that is one of the reasons it costs so much more to set up this new program.

There is a lot of talk about why people are frustrated with Washington; right? They are very frustrated. They want to make sure their taxpayer dollars are spent wisely. My constituents complain to me about wasteful spending and duplicative programs. Yet here we have such an obvious example. As I look at what we have pending on the Senate floor—if we don't pass this resolution of disapproval for this duplicative program after so many groups have said that they have looked at this and concluded that it is wasteful and duplicative—and 10 years of GAO reports saying the same thing, that we don't need a separate inspection regime for catfish, I don't know how we are ever going to address $19 trillion in debt. I don't know how we are ever going to take on the big burning issues that the American people want us to address.

I know a lot of bad things have been said about Congress. I personally think we might be called bottom dwellers if we don't pass this legislation. I am hoping that as we look at the duplicative program of catfish inspections, we will understand that one fish species does not deserve a separate office just to look at the catfish, that the FDA can handle this inspection as it does for every other fish species, that we could save millions of taxpayer dollars by doing this, and that we can let the American people know that we get it and we want to wisely spend their money wisely, we want to eliminate wasteful spending, we want to get our fiscal house in order, and we want good government. We don't want protectionist government that is just trying to protect one industry, crony capitalism, and all the bad things. What we want is common sense.

I hope my colleagues will join me. I thank Senator MCCAIN and Senator SHAHEEN for their efforts in helping us bring this important resolution for disapproval forward, and I hope we can take a small step forward in this body for good government, eliminating wasteful spending, eliminating duplicative programs, and tell the American people: We are not bottom dwellers. We really get it, and we want to make sure we do the right thing by them.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

PUERTO RICO

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I rise to speak about the ongoing crisis affecting the 3.5 million citizens who call Puerto Rico their home and to comment on the legislation that is pending in the House of Representatives.

We are facing a critical moment in the history of Puerto Rico. The island is sinking under a mountain of debt. I said it before, but it bears repeating. Just servicing the government's $72 billion debt swallows 36 percent of all of the island's revenue. That means that for every dollar Puerto Rico takes in, they immediately send over one-third to bondholders. This is not sustainable for any government, especially one that has been mired in a decade-long recession. Congress is faced with an immediate and serious choice. Indeed, the decisions we make in the next month will have profound consequences on the people of Puerto Rico for over a generation, and the stakes are high. We simply have to get it right.

I said from the beginning that any fix needs to provide a clear path to restructuring with an oversight board that represents the people of Puerto Rico and their democratic rights. If we truly want to help the economic situation on the island, we also need to provide parity for health care funds and worker tax credits that all 3.5 million American citizens living in Puerto Rico have access to once they move to the American mainland.

I must say I have been encouraged by Speaker RYAN and Chairman BISHOP's acknowledgement that Congress needs to act to prevent this fiscal crisis from becoming a full-blown humanitarian catastrophe, but, unfortunately, the legislation that is being marked up tomorrow falls far short on several fronts. Instead of offering a clear path to restructuring, the legislation creates a number of obstacles that could derail the island's attempt to achieve sustainable debt payments. Most strikingly, it requires a 5-to-2 supermajority vote by the control board to access this necessary restructuring authority—an authority that Puerto Rico had years ago and somehow—in the dark of night, in some legislation several years ago—was eliminated. Nobody seems to understand why. But it had the authority to restructure its debt. Now, restructuring its debt isn't a bailout because no one gives them money. They ultimately have to restructure the debt they have.

While most reasonable people agree it is absolutely vital for Puerto Rico to be able to restructure its debt, this authority can be blocked by a simple minority on the board. That is right. A simple minority on the board could block the pathway to restructure. Without the authority to restructure its debt, this legislation does virtually nothing to help Puerto Rico dig out of the hole they are in.

Exacerbating this concern is the composition and scope of power endowed to the control board. The fact that the people of Puerto Rico will have absolutely no say over who is appointed or what action they decide to take is blatant neocolonialism. It is OK to say to Puerto Ricans: Yes, please, wear the uniform of the United States, as they have done in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. If you went with me to the Mall, you would see a disproportionate number of names of Puerto Ricans who gave their lives on behalf of the United States. Recently, the Speaker awarded the Congressional Gold Medal to the Borinqueneers, the 65th Infantry Division, which was one of the most decorated in U.S. military history. Yes, it is OK. Please put on the uniform of the United States and go fight for your country. Die for America. But it is not OK for you to have a voice in your future. It is not OK for you to have self-governance.

If that control board—with no Puerto Rican representation—uses its superpowers under the bill as drafted and decides to close more schools and hospitals than have been closed, cut pensions to the bone, sell Puerto Rico's natural assets without any say by the elected representatives of the 3.5 million U.S. citizens in Puerto Rico, I am sure some would suggest we look the other way and say Puerto Ricans are worth less than any other U.S. citizen.

While there is some fancy language to pretend that the President will get to pick the board members, this is all a figleaf to hide the real levers of power. The board will be composed of four Republican appointees and three Democratic appointees, and in addition to being the gatekeeper to restructuring, it will have the power to veto laws and regulations, override budgets, determine the level of debt payments, and make in essence what is the governing body of any State, any municipality, or of the people Puerto Rico totally obsolete. They will decide—unelected, they will decide. To me, it is simply wrong and un-American to take away the basic democratic rights of the people of Puerto Rico.

The bill even puts speculating hedge funds above pensioners, including language to ensure that in any restructuring deal, the people who worked their entire lives—their entire lives—to help the island are put at the back of the line behind Wall Street.

I remind my colleagues that each and every Puerto Rican is an American citizen, many of whom have fought and died, as I said, for our country in every war over the past century. They deserve the same rights and respect as citizens in New Jersey or Wisconsin or Utah or any other State in the Nation. If they can do this in Puerto Rico, why not see any other State that sees a crisis have it become a reality as well.

Finally, the proposed legislation sensibly cuts minimum wage rules and new overtime protections that would apply to workers in Puerto Rico. At a time when cities and States across the Nation are moving toward increasing the minimum wage, I cannot fathom why anyone would support decreasing it for Puerto Rico. With the poverty rate of approximately 45 percent, lowering people's wages is not a pro-growth strategy, as some have called it. It is a pro-migration strategy. We already see an incredible migration from Puerto Rico to places in the United States—most particularly Florida, New Jersey, New York, and other places in the country. Why? Because as an American citizen they have every right to reside anywhere in the United States. They also have a right to receive any right or privilege that any citizen has in the United States. So there is a brain drain leaving Puerto Rico coming to the mainland, which only exacerbates the problem in Puerto Rico. These unrelated riders are counterproductive and will only drive more Puerto Ricans to migrate to the mainland, where they will not have to work for subminimum wages.

I am afraid this bill provides little more than a bandaid on a bullet hole with regard to Puerto Rico's unsustainable debt. Mark my words, if we don't seize this opportunity to address the crisis in a meaningful way and in the right way, we will be back here a year from now, but we will be picking up the pieces because there will not be much left. So while it is absolutely clear that we need to act and act decisively and expediently to help our fellow citizens in Puerto Rico, just as important, we also need to get it right.

Working together and helping each other in a time of need is what this country is all about. When a hurricane hits the gulf coast or a tornado ravages the Midwest, I don't ask how many of my constituents in New Jersey were affected. Rather, I stand with my fellow Americans and fight to provide relief regardless of what State or territory they are from. That is why we call this country the United States of America.

Let's continue to honor that timeless American tradition. Let's honor our country's motto of ''e pluribus unum,'' out of many, one. Let us provide our fellow Americans in Puerto Rico with the tools they need to help themselves. It is not a bailout. We are not going to give them any money. They are going to have to restructure and figure out themselves how they will get out of the mess, without taking away their self-governance. You can't preach democracy and human rights and then deny it to the American citizens of Puerto Rico.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

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.

TRIBUTE TO LYUSHUN SHEN

Mr. REID. Mr. President, in the coming weeks, Representative Lyushun Shen from the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office will be leaving his post and returning to Taiwan. Having worked with Representative Shen during his tenure in Washington DC, I would like to express my gratitude to him for his service.

As West Africa battled the ravages of Ebola and the world united to help address the epidemic in 2014, Representative Shen and the Taiwanese rose to the occasion. On behalf of the Taiwanese, Representative Shen pledged $1 million to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to help the U.S. combat the Ebola virus and stabilize the region. This act of generosity came at a critical time and further demonstrated Taiwan's solidarity with the United States.

During his post in Washington, Representative Shen made important contributions to the Global Cooperation and Training Framework, GCTF. Representative Shen is a valued friend of the United States, and I thank him for his work and wish him well in all his future endeavors.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR FIDUCIARY RULE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, retirement savings are crucial for our economic security, but too many Americans have little to no retirement savings because of low wages and the need to provide for their families.

Those who have been able to save for retirement are often confused by the unknowns of retirement planning and investing and depend on financial advisers to provide advice that is in their best interest.

However, loopholes in the retirement advice rules have allowed some advisers to recommend products that put profits ahead of their clients' best interest, hurting workers and their families, and jeopardizing our economic security.

The Department of Labor set out to update these decades-old rules to address conflicts of interest and require that financial advisers put their clients first, which is just plain common sense. Unfortunately, my Republican colleagues have voted to roll back this important consumer protection and voted