way, shape or form misstated what her proposal does, which is extend the 3.4 percent which is limited only to subsidized Stafford loans?

If the Senator thinks that is wrong, I would ask her to speak now.

Ms. WARREN. I believe, if I understand this correctly, what we are trying to do is protect the subsidized Stafford loans. What I understand the Republicans have tried to do is protect all the new loans so no one is dealing with all the loans that already have been issued and are at much higher interest rates. This is how I understand it. If the Senator is talking about wanting—

Mr. BURR. Reclaiming my time—

Ms. WARREN. Then I assume the Senator means all the students with student loan debt, and that is not my proposal.

Mr. BURR. Reclaiming my time, clearly, the Senator said her bill only deals with the subsidized Stafford loan. Under current law, let me state it again, unsubsidized Stafford loans, current law, 6.8 percent; parent and graduate PLUS loans, 7.9 percent. Somehow, somebody thinks this is fair.

I, personally, participated in coming up with something that treats everybody the same, that ties it to a 10-year Treasury, that fixes the rate above a 10-year Treasury that sets that number once a year, lets students know exactly what their exposure is going to be, and provides them the certainty of that interest rate for the life of the loan.

Ms. WARREN. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. BURR. Let me finish—which this unanimous consent request doesn’t incorporate.

In essence, the unanimous consent request says we are not going to deal with this 61 percent; we are only going to deal with 39 percent. Because they have received the preferred rate up to this point, we want to protect the preferred rate.

Some people think it is the role of Congress. I don’t think that is the role of Congress.

I yield to the Senator for a question through the Chair.

Ms. WARREN. I wish to make sure I understand. Have the Republicans put any proposal on the table that will deal with all of the outstanding student loan debt?

Mr. BURR. I would be happy to address the Senator’s question.

No, we haven’t. The President’s proposal—and I said there are parts of it I don’t agree with—makes loan forgiveness tax free.

Maybe what we ought to debate is whether we are going to make college tuition free, because this is a race for the backs of the American taxpayer—when we are $1 trillion out of balance, $1 trillion we spend.

Examine, we have new numbers: $646 billion this year, projected to go up next year. We are accruing debt on this country’s books at a rate nobody ever dreamed. We are still talking about constructing programs that financially are unsustainable because we are using somebody else’s checkbook.

This is the definition of insanity. Therefore, I would object to the Senator’s original request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. I just wanted to return to this debate since the Senator has raised it, about the Congressional Budget Office. Let’s all be clear about what the current student loan interest rates produce for the government.

The CBO, the agency in charge of estimating the costs for the government, maintains that this year the government will make $51 billion in profits from the student loans. Their most recent report on this—I read the language earlier—is clear and direct.

We will make $51 billion.

The CBO uses this accounting method because it reflects reality. It is the reality of how these loans affect the Federal budget. The CBO’s method takes into account the cost of lending money from the Treasury and the projected money that will be returned to the Treasury.

It takes into account the risk that some students will default; in other words, it is basic math.

Some people don’t like the idea that the government is profiting from the student loans. Their approach is to try to change the accounting rules to treat the government as if it were a private bank rather than the Federal Government, which it is.

The government is not a bank in a private market. If we want to reduce the profits from student loans, then we should actually reduce the profits from the student loan debt. They will not change the map, not bury our heads in the sand and pretend those profits don’t exist.

Let’s go back to what the Senator has proposed. The Republicans propose that we take $51 billion in profits that will currently go to the backs of our students and add another $16 billion in profits off the backs of our students. This is fundamentally wrong. It is not sustainable.

I think the larger point the Senator makes is one that says we have a big problem. We need to talk about the debt that is outstanding. We need to talk about how we are going to pay for college over time. We can’t do that in the next 2 weeks.

We need to make sure interest rates don’t double, and then we need to address this problem. I am pleased to work with people on both sides of the aisle.

Mr. BURR. Will the Senator yield for a question?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator should be aware we have a previous order to recess.

Mr. BURR. I ask unanimous consent to ask one question of my colleague from Massachusetts.

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

Mr. BURR. Does the Senator from Massachusetts agree that out of the student loan fund $8.7 billion is diverted to the Affordable Care Act?

Ms. WARREN. No.

Mr. BURR. The Senator is not aware of that?

Ms. WARREN. Look, we can go back over the CBO numbers, but what is clear right now is what the CBO has made clear. We will make $51 billion in profits off the backs of our students.

The Republicans propose to make another $16 billion off the backs of our students. We can’t do that. It is unsustainable. Our students are asking for more.

Mr. BURR. I thank my colleague for not answering.

BORDER SECURITY, ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY, AND IMMIGRATION MODERNIZATION ACT—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Madam President, today we mark the 6-month anniversary of a date that none of us will ever forget because it transformed our lives, it transformed America, and it certainly transformed Connecticut and the community of Newtown.

We commemorate the 6-month anniversary of that unspeakable, unimaginable tragedy that cut short the lives of 20 beautiful, innocent children and six dedicated, courageous educators.

It transformed America in so many ways. It changed our lives irrevocably and, I hope, put us on a trajectory toward changes in our laws that will prevent this kind of horrific, unimaginable tragedy from ever happening again. Our challenge right here in this body, on this floor, is to make sure we learn from it, that we act on it, and that we keep faith with those families, as well as the Newtown community and all of our country that lost so much that day.

December 14 began like so many other days for the parents of Newtown, CT. They took their children to school, kissed them goodbye, and went about their day with plans for play dates, Hanukkah and Christmas holiday parties, and presents that they would give to those children for those holidays. They planned snack breaks and holiday parties. They wrapped presents. Just hours later, I stood with them and saw them emerge from the Sandy Hook firehouse and knew that those children would not be coming home that night.

I arrived in Newtown as a public official within hours of that shooting. But
what I saw was through the eyes of a parent—grief-stricken, panicked parents, tears streaming down their faces—who came hoping to reunite with their children. Many parents did reunite. Children were brought to all of the parents who gathered at the firehouse, and back left with their children—until the families who realized that their children would not be coming home.

I saw those families who lost beautiful, young children. Some of them are here, along with adults—dedicated, courageous adults—families of educators who died themselves trying to save their children. I will never forget the cries of grief, anguish, pain, and disbelief.

Every parent in his or her DNA has something fundamental. It is about trust and caring for children, making sure they come home at the end of the day when they go to school; that they are kept safe in some very basic and fundamental ways: that society shared that trust. Society failed in that trust.

We will never forget the loss and heartbeat of that tragic day in Sandy Hook. But we also know that in the face of evil there was tremendous goodness, hope, and healing. There were heroes: the first responders who braved the unknown, hearing gunfire, charging into that school, and stopping the shooting through their courage because the shooter turned that gun on himself. There were educators, teachers, administrators, and school psychologists who threw themselves in front of bullets or tried to save their children and perish themselves. Then members of the community who came together in support of the families and who themselves, along with first responders, are continuing to recover. They exemplify the quintessential values of this quintessential New England town that make us proud to be American.

Thirty-two members of the victims’ families at the massacre wrote to the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee. Through their unspeakable pain and suffering, they asked Congress to honor the memory of their loved ones by supporting measures to stem and stop the epidemic of gun violence. They wrote, “In the midst of our anguish we are compelled to speak out to save others from suffering what we have endured.”

These families have come to Washington to tell their stories. They sat in this very gallery. They met with colleagues. Some of our colleagues refused to meet with them. I urged them to share some of their hurt and meet with them, to hear their stories. We owe them the honed respect and gratitude. They enabled us to come to this point where we are close to making fundamental changes in the law.

But in April, that day of the vote was a day of stark irony. Some of them turned its back on the families of Newtown while some of them watched in this very gallery. How to explain to those families or try to explain how 90 percent of the American people could be in favor of reasonable, common sense measures that we proposed—background checks on all firearms purchases and a ban on illegal traffic and straw purchases, on assault weapons, and on excess capacity magazines—how 90 percent of the American people were in favor of those kinds of common sense measures, most especially the background checks, yet the Senate failed to pass it.

Those families have been resolute and resilient at every turn. Mark Barden, whose son Daniel was killed 6 months ago at Sandy Hook, wrote: “We are not defeated. We will always be here because we have no other choice. Despite their profound and harrowing loss, those parents, husbands, wives, sisters, brothers, grandparents have kept faith and they have inspired us to keep faith. They uplifted us and their determination has meant the world to colleagues who have heard them, and as an example of grace under pressure and courage and strength, they have refused to give up.

They will not give up, nor will we. We are coming back for another vote. We will not allow that vote to be the final one. It may be the first one, but it is not the final one, and we will win the last vote, which is the one that counts.

In the meantime, many of my colleagues have stood up to the special interests and letterheads of the NRA, which was accustomed to having its way and holding sway in this body, in Congress, just as a schoolyard bully would. My colleagues have stood up to that bully once and will do it again. This time we will win.

What happened in Newtown could happen anywhere in America. If it happened there, it can happen in any town or city, and it has, in fact, claimed the lives of 4,900 people since Newtown. I am constantly shocked and saddened by the number of people who died in gun violence. I am constantly shocked and saddened by how quickly that number rises each time I speak about this topic. Just last week a man armed with semiautomatic AR-15 assault rifle and more than 1,300 rounds of ammunition opened fire at a Santa Monica college and killed five people.

The stories about Newtown, about all of the massacres since and before—whether Columbine or Virginia Tech or Arizona and Tucson—affirm that these laws can help save lives. These laws can help save lives.

Six months ago I left the firehouse at Sandy Hook to attend a vigil at a church in Newtown. The church was St. Rose of Lima, presided over by Father Bob, Msgr. Robert specially. The church was filled. It was a powerful and moving experience. People listened to the service through the windows and the PA system outside.

I said that among the world is watching Newtown. In fact, for 6 months the world has watched Newtown. It has seen a story of unparalleled and unprecedented courage and fortitude. Now we will continue to watch Newtown. But the world is also watching the Senate. We need to be worthy of the courage and strength that Newtown has demonstrated in moving ahead.

I thank the majority leader Harry Reid and all of my colleagues who have determined that we will bring this bill back, not only to honor the memories of the Newtown victims and keep faith with them but also to make this country better and safer, worthy of these beautiful and innocent children at the time of their passing with all of their future ahead of them. There were educators who worked for their whole professional lives, trying to help children such as these young people.

Out of that grief and pain we can make America safer and stronger. We can make America better. That is the potential legacy of these lost lives, a better and safer America. If we achieve it, they will not have died in vain.

I yield the floor.

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, I join my colleague from Connecticut on the floor of the Senate to commemorate a sad day; 6 months since the shootings in Newtown took the lives of 26 innocent people, including 20 little kids dying at the hands of a mad man with a gun over the course of 5 or 10 minutes doesn’t move this place to action, what would? What visit to your office, what message, what story, what set of facts could possibly make this place change the laws that have allowed for these slaughters—plural—over and over again to happen?

It is 6 months later and we have done nothing. At least on the Senate floor we raised the bill, we put it on for debate, we got 55 votes, and the rules prevented us from getting a vote. The House down the hall has done absolutely nothing. They have not lifted a finger to move legislation for 6 months, 6 months later, and no answer to these families.

I was there with Senator Blumenthal that afternoon in that firehouse. Those are moments I would, a lot of days, love to have never lived—things I did not need to see. But it changed my life and committed me to action.

It commands us to understand that the most shallow argument that has been posed, I would argue the most
backward argument that has been posed over the last 6 months, is that, yes, these terrible things happen—the most terrible of them we are marking the 6-month anniversary of—but there is nothing we could do here that would change that; that very bad things are going to happen to innocent people, to first grade students, but that nothing here is going to truly change any of that.

That is just flat wrong. It should not be necessary to come to this floor to try to rebut that argument. It should be every day. Because in Colorado, the guns that were bought to slaughter those high school students were bought outside of the background check system—intentionally so, because the person who bought them knew if they went into a legitimate gun store they would not be able to purchase the guns that were being requested, so they went to a gun show, around the background check system.

We know different laws would change three things because in Aurora the shooter went in with a 100-round drum and the shooting stopped and people escaped, including a couple of my constituents, because the gun jammed. They had trouble switching these massive ammunition clips.

In Newtown, we know the power of the gun that was used. These assault weapons are all over the place today. They have become commonplace. But it doesn’t matter if the fact that they still have a power to kill that few other guns don’t, so much so that when Lanza walked into that school that day, fired over 150 rounds, shot 20 kids, not a single one of them survived. Every kid he shot died, in part because of the power of that gun. That same day a very sick man walked into a school in China, armed with a weapon, attacked over 20 children and every single one of them lived. That guy had a knife.

We learned if we continue to allow them to ripple throughout our streets, lead to mass slaughters. High-capacity ammunition clips, when somebody chooses to engage in one of these massacres, allow more people to be killed. Our failure, over and over again, to pass comprehensive background checks is unacceptable, given the number of criminals and the number of people with severe mental illness who are still allowed to get guns over the Internet or in gun shows; 6 months after.

I yield back the floor and note the unamendable amendment to the immigration reform that the distinguished chairman of the homeland security committee.

I wish to address a few aspects of comprehensive immigration reform that need to be discussed. First of all, everybody says—and I say it too—we don’t want to return to 1986 because in 1986 we guaranteed the American people we would secure the border, and it would never happen again. Well, the fact is, when we look at what we did in 1986—and I will, first of all, plead guilty for having voted for it—the only mandate in the entire legislation which gave "amnesty" to 3 million people was:

Of the amounts authorized to be appropriated under paragraph one, sufficient funds shall be available to provide for an increase in the Border Patrol personnel of the Immigration and Naturalization Service so that the average level of such personnel in each of the fiscal years 1987 and 1988 is at least 50 percent higher than such level for fiscal year 1986.

Let me translate that. It meant we would increase the Border Patrol. That was the only mention of how we were going to secure the border after we gave amnesty in 1986. And at that time, I say to my colleagues, the cost, as I mentioned, was 50 percent higher. The Border Patrol has to be 50 percent higher.

Well, the number of Border Patrol agents in 1986 was 4,000—4,000. Now we have 21,000. So there was really nothing in the 1986 bill about fencing, about sensors, about other ways to get our borders secure. So we’re better that.

We learned from that, and this legislation that recently passed through the Judiciary Committee and is now on the floor, as compared with 1986 where they said they would increase the numbers of Border Patrol agents by 50 percent—this legislation appropriates $3 billion in funding for the comprehensive southern border strategy security. No one who is in RPI status will be able to purchase a green card until certain requirements are fulfilled, including the following: E-Verify in use by all employers, an entry-exit system in place, $1.5 billion in additional funding for the southern border fencing strategy. It has to be spent in 180 days of passage of this legislation and signed by the President.

It sets the goal of a 90-percent effectiveness rate for all southern border States. If that goal is not reached within 5 years, there will be a bipartisan commission formed and authorized to spend $2 billion in additional funds to secure the border.
It will add an additional 3,500 Customs and Border Patrol agents. Remember, in 1986, there was a total of 4,000.

It will authorize the National Guard to provide assistance along the border if requested. The National Guard has had tremendous success on our border. No, they don’t carry weapons, but they do incredibly important work, and I am glad they don’t carry weapons, to tell the truth.

The bill funds additional Border Patrol stations and forward operating bases.

It increases something called Operation Stonegarden funding, which is vital, in my view, in disincentivizing people to frequently cross the border, and strengthens Border Patrol training.

It authorizes funds to triple the border-crossing prosecutions in the Tucson sector. Why do I mention the Tucson sector? Not because I am from the State of Arizona but because the Tucson sector for years has been a major thoroughfare for both people and drugs.

The bill authorizes funds to help States and localities incarcerate criminal unauthorized illegal immigrants.

It grants the Department of Homeland Security access to Federal lands. That is a problem on our border, where we have an Indian reservation that is right on the border. They are sovereign nations, and this will authorize a greater ability for us to have access to those lands. There are wildlife refuges we need access to as well.

The bill removes the discretion from the Secretary of Homeland Security to develop the southern border strategy and provides the minimum requirements recommended by the Border Patrol. Those are the people on the ground. These are the people who today, in 120-degree heat at the Sonora, AZ, border, are sitting in vehicles and patrolling our border to keep our Nation secure. It is recommended by them and must be included in the strategy that we want to achieve and must achieve, which is 100 percent situational awareness of each and every 1-mile segment of the southern border.

The technology list will include, but is not limited to, sector-by-sector requirements for integrated fixed towers, VADER radar systems. These radar track people back from where they came.

The list includes unmanned aerial systems—what we know as drones—fixed cameras, mobile surveillance systems, ground sensors, handheld thermal imaging systems, infrared cameras, thermal imaging cameras, license plate readers, and radiation detection systems. All of these are part of this legislation and the billions of dollars we are going to spend to improve border security. We all admit the border is more secure, but where I disagree with the Secretary of Homeland Security is that it is not secure enough.

So we want to prevent the adjustment of status RPI, which is registered permanent status, for people who will be granted it once the passage of this bill is achieved until that strategy is deployed and operational—deployed and operational. This is just to achieve a legal status in this country; also, a technology list before anybody can add just RPI to nominations.

It removes the sole discretion from the Department of Homeland Security to certify the strategy is complete. It requires written, third-party certification to the President and Congress that the strategy is operational and capable of achieving effective control of the border.

With these tools in place, we can achieve situational awareness and be guaranteed this technology is deployed and working along the border. So I say to my friends who say we do not have sufficient provisions for border security, we will be glad to do more, but let’s look at this.

Look at what we are doing: billions of dollars of technology as well as additional people, as well as other measures, including the E-Verify. The magnet that draws people to this country is jobs, and if the word is out that unless an E-Verify, no job—unless a person can get a job in this country they are not going to come here unless it is through a legal means and not through illegal means.

We are a nation of immigrants. I would remind my colleagues again, 40 percent of the people who are in this country illegitimately did not cross our border. They came on a visa that expired. So we need to have footprints and other physical evidence of illegal crossings. It is a tool for Border Patrol agents to identify and locate illegal border crossers. But it is imprecise. That is why we need to have this technology, so we can surveil and have situational awareness of the entire border.

The General Accounting Office is an organization all of us over time begin to rely on enormously, and I will quote from them:

In terms of collecting data, Border Patrol officials reported that sectors rely on a different mix of cameras, sign cutting—

That is tracking footprints—credible sources, and visual observation to identify and report the number of turn backs and gotaways.

Turnbacks are those we catch and turn back, and gotaways are those we see cross and do not apprehend.

Again, quoting the GAO:

According to Border Patrol officials, the ability to obtain accurate or consistent data using these identification sources depends on various factors such as terrain and weather. For example, data on turn backs and gotaways may be understated in areas with rugged mountains and steep canyons that hinder detection of illegal entries. In other cases, data may be overstated—for example, in cases where the same turn back identified by a camera is also identified by tracks. Double counting may also occur when agents in one zone record as a gotaway an individual who is apprehended and then reported as an apprehension in another zone. As a result of these data limitations, Border Patrol headquarters officials said that while they consider turn back and gotaway data sufficiently reliable to measure their progress toward border security and to inform sector decisions regarding resource deployment, they do not consider the data sufficiently reliable to report—results across sectors.

That is why we need this technology.

Now, I wish to point out that from the Border Patrol, not from the Department of Homeland Security, I got a document listing what they believe is necessary, using their experience, as to the specific equipment and capabilities they need on each of the nine sectors of the border.

For example, in the Arizona sectors, including Yuma and Tucson, we need 56 towers, 73 fixed camera systems, 28 mobile surveillance systems, 685 unattended ground sensors, and 22 handheld equipment devices.

At points of entry or checkpoints we need one nonintrusive inspection system—imager, which is the list given by the Secretary of Homeland Security. The specific list of what the Border Patrol believes we need in each of the nine sectors on our southern border in order to give us 100 percent situational awareness and put us on the path to a 90-percent effective control of the border. I would argue that the minimum requirements to be included in the southern border security strategy as provided by the Border Patrol should convince anyone of what we need.

I ask unanimous consent that these minimum requirements be printed in the RECORD.

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

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS TO BE INCLUDED IN THE SOUTHERN BORDER SECURITY STRATEGY ARIZONA (YUMA AND TUCSON SECTORS) BETWEEN THE PORTS OF ENTRY

50 Integrated Fixed Towers (with relocation capability)
73 Fixed Camera Systems (with relocation capability), which include Remote Video Surveillance Systems
28 Mobile Surveillance Systems, which include mobile video surveillance systems, agent-portable surveillance systems, and mobile surveillance capability systems
685 Unattended Ground Sensors, including seismic, imaging, and infrared
22 Handheld Equipment Devices, including handheld thermal imaging systems and night vision goggles.

AT POINTS OF ENTRY, CHECKPOINTS
1 Nonintrusive Inspection System
7 Fiber-optic Tank Inspection Scopes
19 License Plate Readers, including mobile, tactical, and fixed
14 Blackscatter
14 Portable Contraband Detectors
2 Radiation Isotope Identification Devices
16 Personal Radiation Detectors
21 Mobile Automated Targeting Systems
BETWEEN THE PORTS OF ENTRY

1 Integrated Fixed Towers (with relocation capability)
2 Fixed Camera Systems (with relocation capability), which include Remote Video Surveillance Systems
3 Mobile Surveillance Systems, which include mobile video surveillance systems, agent-portable surveillance systems, and mobile surveillance capability systems
4 Unattended Ground Sensors, including seismic, imaging, and infrared
5 Handheld Equipment Devices, including handheld thermal imaging systems and night vision goggles
6 Sensor Repeaters
7 Communications Repeaters

AT POINTS OF ENTRY, CHECKPOINTS

1 Improved Surveillance Capabilities for existing aerostat
2 Sensor Repeaters
3 Communications Repeaters
4 Camera Refresh

BETWEEN THE PORTS OF ENTRY

27 Integrated Fixed Towers (with relocation capability)
28 Fixed Camera Systems (with relocation capability), which include Remote Video Surveillance Systems
29 Mobile Surveillance Systems, which include mobile video surveillance systems, agent-portable surveillance systems, and mobile surveillance capability systems
30 Unattended Ground Sensors, including seismic, imaging, and infrared
31 Handheld Equipment Devices, including handheld thermal imaging systems and night vision goggles
32 Mobile/Handheld Inspection Scopes
33 License Plate Readers, including mobile, tactical, and fixed
34 Backscatter
35 Portable Contraband Detectors
36 Radiation Isotope Identification Devices
37 Radiation Isotope Identification Devices updates
38 Communications Repeaters
39 Communications Repeaters

AT POINTS OF ENTRY, CHECKPOINTS

1 Improved Surveillance Capabilities for existing aerostat
2 Sensor Repeaters
3 Communications Repeaters
4 Camera Refresh

BETWEEN THE PORTS OF ENTRY

66 Fixed Camera Systems (with relocation capability), which include Remote Video Surveillance Systems
67 Mobile Surveillance Systems, which include mobile video surveillance systems, agent-portable surveillance systems, and mobile surveillance capability systems
68 Unattended Ground Sensors, including seismic, imaging, and infrared
69 Handheld Equipment Devices, including handheld thermal imaging systems and night vision goggles
70 License Plate Readers, including mobile, tactical, and fixed
71 Backscatter
72 Portable Contraband Detectors
73 Radiation Isotope Identification Devices
74 Radiation Isotope Identification Devices updates
75 Personal Radiation Detectors
76 Mobile Automated Targeting Systems
77 Aerial Receiver Communication Systems
78 Forward Looking Infrared Radar Cameras
79 UAS Radio Systems

DEL RIO

BETWEEN THE PORTS OF ENTRY

3 Integrated Fixed Towers (with relocation capability)
4 Fixed Camera Systems (with relocation capability), which include Remote Video Surveillance Systems
5 Mobile Surveillance Systems, which include mobile video surveillance systems, agent-portable surveillance systems, and mobile surveillance capability systems
6 Unattended Ground Sensors, including seismic, imaging, and infrared
7 Handheld Equipment Devices, including handheld thermal imaging systems and night vision goggles
8 Mobile/Handheld Inspection Scopes
9 License Plate Readers, including mobile, tactical, and fixed
10 Improved Surveillance Capabilities for existing aerostat
11 Sensor Repeaters
12 Communications Repeaters
13 License Plate Readers, including mobile, tactical, and fixed
14 Portable Contraband Detectors
15 Radiation Isotope Identification Devices
16 Radiation Isotope Identification Devices updates
17 Personal Radiation Detectors
18 Mobile Automated Targeting Systems
19 Aerial Receiver Communication Systems
20 Forward Looking Infrared Radar Cameras
21 UAS Radio Systems

AIR AND MARINE

13 Radiation Isotope Identification Devices updates
14 Mobile Automated Targeting Systems
15 Land Automated Targeting Systems
16 Aerial Receiver Communication Systems
17 Portable Contraband Detectors
18 Radiation Isotope Identification Devices
19 Personal Radiation Detectors
20 Mobile Automated Targeting Systems
21 Aerial Receiver Communication Systems

LAREDO

BETWEEN THE PORTS OF ENTRY

69 Fixed Camera Systems (with relocation capability), which include Remote Video Surveillance Systems
70 Mobile Surveillance Systems, which include mobile video surveillance systems, agent-portable surveillance systems, and mobile surveillance capability systems
71 Unattended Ground Sensors, including seismic, imaging, and infrared
72 Handheld Equipment Devices, including handheld thermal imaging systems and night vision goggles
73 License Plate Readers, including mobile, tactical, and fixed
74 Backscatter
75 Portable Contraband Detectors
76 Radiation Isotope Identification Devices
77 Radiation Isotope Identification Devices updates
78 Personal Radiation Detectors
79 Mobile Automated Targeting Systems
80 Aerial Receiver Communication Systems
81 Forward Looking Infrared Radar Cameras
82 Unattended Ground Sensors, including seismic, imaging, and infrared
83 Handheld Equipment Devices, including handheld thermal imaging systems and night vision goggles
84 Mobile/Handheld Inspection Scopes
85 License Plate Readers, including mobile, tactical, and fixed
86 Backscatter
87 Portable Contraband Detectors
88 Radiation Isotope Identification Devices
89 Radiation Isotope Identification Devices updates
90 Personal Radiation Detectors
91 Mobile Automated Targeting Systems
92 Aerial Receiver Communication Systems
93 Forward Looking Infrared Radar Cameras
94 Unattended Ground Sensors, including seismic, imaging, and infrared
95 Handheld Equipment Devices, including handheld thermal imaging systems and night vision goggles
96 Mobile/Handheld Inspection Scopes
97 License Plate Readers, including mobile, tactical, and fixed
98 Improved Surveillance Capabilities for existing aerostat
99 Sensor Repeaters
100 Communications Repeaters
101 Camera Refresh

AT POINTS OF ENTRY, CHECKPOINTS

1 Non-intrusive Inspection System
2 Fiber-optic Tank Inspection Scopes
3 License Plate Readers, including mobile, tactical, and fixed
4 Backscatter
5 Portable Contraband Detectors
6 Radiation Isotope Identification Devices
7 Radiation Isotope Identification Devices updates
8 Personal Radiation Detectors
9 Mobile Automated Targeting Systems
10 Aerial Receiver Communication Systems
11 Forward Looking Infrared Radar Cameras
12 Unattended Ground Sensors, including seismic, imaging, and infrared
13 Handheld Equipment Devices, including handheld thermal imaging systems and night vision goggles
14 License Plate Readers, including mobile, tactical, and fixed
15 Backscatter
16 Portable Contraband Detectors
17 Radiation Isotope Identification Devices
18 Radiation Isotope Identification Devices updates
19 Personal Radiation Detectors
20 Mobile Automated Targeting Systems
21 Aerial Receiver Communication Systems
22 Forward Looking Infrared Radar Cameras
23 Unattended Ground Sensors, including seismic, imaging, and infrared
24 Handheld Equipment Devices, including handheld thermal imaging systems and night vision goggles
25 Mobile/Handheld Inspection Scopes
26 License Plate Readers, including mobile, tactical, and fixed
27 Improved Surveillance Capabilities for existing aerostat
28 Sensor Repeaters
29 Communications Repeaters
30 Camera Refresh

AT POINTS OF ENTRY, CHECKPOINTS

1 Improved Surveillance Capabilities for existing aerostat
2 Sensor Repeaters
3 Communications Repeaters
4 Camera Refresh

SAN DIEGO

BETWEEN THE PORTS OF ENTRY

1 Aerial Downlink Communication Systems
2 Fixed Camera Systems (with relocation capability), which include Remote Video Surveillance Systems
3 Mobile Surveillance Systems, which include mobile video surveillance systems, agent-portable surveillance systems, and mobile surveillance capability systems
4 Unattended Ground Sensors, including seismic, imaging, and infrared
5 Handheld Equipment Devices, including handheld thermal imaging systems and night vision goggles
6 Sensor Repeaters
7 Communications Repeaters

AT POINTS OF ENTRY, CHECKPOINTS

1 Improved Surveillance Capabilities for existing aerostat
2 Sensor Repeaters
3 Communications Repeaters
4 Camera Refresh

DEL RIO

BETWEEN THE PORTS OF ENTRY

13 Radiation Isotope Identification Devices updates
14 Mobile Automated Targeting Systems
15 Land Automated Targeting Systems
16 Aerial Receiver Communication Systems
17 Portable Contraband Detectors
18 Radiation Isotope Identification Devices
19 Personal Radiation Detectors
20 Mobile Automated Targeting Systems
21 Aerial Receiver Communication Systems

AIR AND MARINE

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I wish to share with our colleagues another aspect of this problem that we really have not talked about very much. First is the issue of drugs. Drugs are a problem of enormous proportion in this country. We see the effects of illegal drugs such as methamphetamine and others, and we see it is doing incredible damage to our Nation and particularly to our young people.

This document is called the Arizona High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Threat Assessment of 2013. Now, I am not going to go into a lot of the details, but there are some stark facts about the flow of drugs across our southern border that should disturb all of us. I quote:

The Tucson and Phoenix areas remain the primary distribution hubs for ton quantities of marijuana in the southwest region—out of the decades with marine capabilities and particularly to our young people.

The Phoenix field DEA—Drug Enforcement Agency—Phoenix field division's biannual drug price list for 2012 indicates marijuana in the Tucson and Phoenix areas remained stable during the period January 2011 to 2012.

Why is that important? Because the only real indication as to whether we are reducing a supply is the price of that supply. So when we see the price of marijuana on the street in Phoenix and Tucson is exactly what it was for the entire year, no matter what we see in the papers and on television of these large apprehensions, unless the price is going up, then we are not apprehending these drugs.

So I just want to mention a couple of other facts to my colleagues and why I think we are not addressing the drug problem sufficiently in this legislation.

The assessment continues:

The retail price of methamphetamine decreased in the Phoenix area and now ranges from $500 to $1,000 per ounce. If there is a terrible drug on the market today, it has to be methamphetamine. I am told that one—one—ingestion of methamphetamine makes a person a addict. So what have we been able to do as far as methamphetamine?

The retail price of methamphetamine decreased, which obviously means the supply has certainly not been impacted.

Wholesale black tar heroin prices in Arizona have remained stable or decreased slightly, including market stability. Only 85 percent of the HIDTA.

The high density trafficking area—respondent reported high cocaine availability in their respective jurisdictions. Intelligence indicates cocaine price increases in Mexico and Arizona during the past year may have impeded the supply of cocaine to the Arizona drug market, thus impacting other drug markets.

So that is good news.

Continuing to read from the threat assessment: The price per kilogram of cocaine increased $5,000 to $6,000 per kilogram in the Phoenix area.

My friends, I know my colleagues are very busy, but I would at least have your staff read this threat assessment of 2013 in the State of Arizona. Again, I do not say that because I represent the State of Arizona. But these same people—the Drug Enforcement Agency—will tell you still the bulk of illegal drugs crossing our southern border comes through the Arizona-Tucson sector.

So what is my recipe on this situation? Frankly, I do not know a real good recipe because clearly demand is either stable or on the rise in the United States of America depending on whom you talk. In some places in America the use of drugs is glamorized. In some places, it is kind of the sophisticated thing to do. I do not think there is any doubt that there are influences in the United States of America that increase the attractiveness of drugs to our citizens.

I am not saying I know the answer, but I do think that as we address the issue of border security, we have to understand that if there is a demand for drugs in the streets of every major city in America, they will use submarines, they will use tunnels, they will do whatever is necessary in order to get that supply to where there is a market.

I will never forget being down in Colombia, where the government people there showed me a submarine the drug cartel people had built—a very sophisticated submarine. They had hired engineers to build it. It was one that travels under the water—not far but under the water.

I said: How much did it cost them to build this?

He said: Five million dollars.

I said: Five millions dollars. That is a lot of money.

The guy said: They make $15 million in one load—once of trafficking.

So I am not coming to this floor with a lot of answers, but I am coming to the floor of this Senate and saying that the drug issue in this country is a serious one, and if anybody thinks we are reducing the supply of those drugs, I think we are in for a shock. And it is at the time we started seriously as a society addressing what is killing our young and old Americans.

I strongly support a pathway to citizenship for the 11 million undocumented immigrants in this country. Bringing undocumented workers out of the shadows and giving them legal status will make it much easier to curb the supply of illegal drugs crossing our southern border.

Vermont Senator PAT LEAHY for his support. I commend my colleague from Vermont and the owners of apple orchards in my State have told me that without these provisions who have come here illegally.

As the son of an immigrant—my dad came to this country at the age of 17 from Poland—I strongly support the provisions who are brought into this country by their parents years ago are allowed to become citizens.

I strongly support providing legal status to foreign agricultural workers from family farms. Dairy farmers in Vermont and the owners of apple orchards in my State have told me that without these workers, they would go out of business, and it is obviously true in many parts of this country.

We also need to make sure, as Senator MCCAIN has just elaborated, that our borders are more secure and prevent unscrupulous employers from hiring those who have come here illegally.

All of these provisions are extremely important, are included in the legislation passed out of the Judiciary Committee last week, and are provisions I support. I commend my colleague from Vermont Senator PAT LEAHY for his leadership on those issues. But let me tell you some of what concerns me very much about the bill as it presently stands.

At a time when nearly 14 percent of the American people do not have a full-time job, at a time when the middle class continues to shrink, and at a time when tens of millions of Americans are working longer hours for lower wages, it makes no sense to me...
that the immigration reform bill includes a massive increase in temporary guest worker programs that will allow large corporations to import and bring into this country hundreds of thousands of temporary blue-collar and white-collar guest workers from overseas. They make no sense to me.

I am particularly concerned that at a time when college is becoming increasingly unaffordable—and every parent out there with a high school kid is worried that family is going to have to afford college for their kids—at a time when young people desperately need jobs to help pay for the cost of a college education, this bill will make it more difficult for young Americans to find the jobs they need.

Today, youth unemployment is over 16 percent, and the teen unemployment rate is over 25 percent. Unfortunately, many of the jobs that used to be performed by young Americans are now being done by foreign college students through the J-1 Summer Work Travel Program and the H-2B guest worker program. Millions of Americans, including myself—and I suspect many Members of Congress—earned money when they were young at summer jobs or anytime jobs when they were in college in order to pay for the cost of college. Some Americans today are working as waiters and waitresses. They are working as lifeguards. They are working as front-desk clerks and room service. They are working as ski instructors, as cooks, chefs, kitchen personnel, chambermaids, landscapers, and many other similar jobs. And there is nothing any American has to be ashamed about doing that kind of work. What I worry about very much is the degree to which those jobs will be available for young Americans as a result of the J-1 program and the H-2B program.

It pains me very deeply that with minority unemployment extraordinarily high—I was just in Detroit last week talking to kids who are working so hard, and they are working for $7.25 an hour at McDonald's or other fast food places—if they are lucky enough to get that much, they would like to go to college but are unable to earn the money they need in order to go to college. There is nothing anybody should be ashamed about doing that kind of work, but I worry about very much is the degree to which those jobs will be available for young Americans as a result of the J-1 program and the H-2B program.

It is one thing for an employer to say: I am prepared to offer these positions, offer jobs to willing and able Americans first, or to pay prevailing wages. In other words, if there are jobs out there that our young people would like to get in order to put aside a few bucks to help pay for the cost of college education, the employer is not obliged to reach out to these young Americans.

It is one thing for an employer to say: Look, I reached out, tried to get some young people to do this job, could not find them, and I had to go abroad. I can understand that. But that is not the requirement of this J-1 program.

Let me read from a Web site of a foreign labor recruiter touting the benefits of using the J-1 Summer Work Travel Program to employers in the United States. This Web site is called jobofer.org. This is one, as I understand it, of many. But here is what it says. I quote from the Web site jobofer.org. This is going to bring skilled, unskilled workers for the summer.

Whether you are running an amusement park, a water park, a concessions stand, a golf club, a circus, a zoo, or anything else where people look like them, there is a great idea not to miss the opportunities of the season and hire international seasonal workers to cover your growing staffing needs.

International seasonal workers. Jobofer.org has experience in matching candidates from foreign exchange students with amusement firms all over the USA, covering every type of entry level position you may want to cover with seasonal staffing.

The Work And Travel USA program allows employers to sponsor foreign college students to work in the US for up to 4 months during the busy season under a J-1 visa.

Jobofer.org is committed to understanding your needs as an amusement business and handling all the seasonal staffing procedures for you, at absolutely no cost. Check out the list of positions typically filled with international exchange visitors.

Now, what this Web site is doing is telling employers—in this case, they are just focusing on amusement parks, but obviously it goes much beyond that into all kinds of resorts, many other areas—what they are saying is that we need unskilled labor.

One knows that historically in this country that is what young people did. When you were in high school, when you were in college, you would try to make a few bucks. You go out and you get a summer job, every summer. Maybe you could earn a couple of thousand dollars. Maybe it starts you on a career or something. It is believable put to use to go to college. I did it. Many Members of the Senate did it. Millions of young people in this country want to do it.

What these companies are saying is: You do not need to hire kids in your community anymore. You do not have to reach out to minority kids who desperately need a job, to kids in Vermont who want to put away a few bucks to go to college. You do not have to do that anymore. We will help you bring international seasonal workers from all over the world to do those jobs.

One of the arguments we hear on the floor is we need highly skilled workers because high-tech companies cannot attract the scientists and the engineers and the physicians and the mathematicians they need. When we bring them in, these guys are going to help create jobs in America. Maybe. That is a whole other issue for discussion. But there is no way that the jobs that used to be done by young people from all over the world at work at entry-level jobs because there are not young Americans who want to do that job, when the unemployment rate of young people in this country is extraordinarily high. Nobody with a straight face can make that claim.

Here are some of the jobs being advertised on this very same Web site. There are many Web sites like this. This one focuses on jobs within the amusement industry: Ride operators/attendants, game operators, food service—flipping hamburgers—lifeguards. I guess we have no young people in America who are capable of being lifeguards. Nobody in America can swim and get a job as a lifeguard. Nobody is going to need to bring people from all over the world to be lifeguards. Guest relations, admissions, security, games and attractions, merchandise, grounds quality, season pass processer, entertainment wardens, warehouse, food service—chefs, cooks, food workers and wardens, parking lot attendant. I guess nobody in America could be a parking lot attendant. Landscape, cash control.

This is the interesting point. The Web site, after mentioning all of those jobs specific to the amusement industry, asks the following questions: What happens—interesting question. What happens when you use seasonal employment for your theme or amusement park? Here is the answer this foreign labor recruiter gives on its Web site:

You cover your seasonal staffing needs with young, highly motivated, English-speaking international staff from 18 to 26 years old and cut costs by paying fewer taxes.

Got that? You can bring in international seasonal workers from abroad, and one of the advantages you have is you pay lower taxes on that foreign worker than you do for an American worker.

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In fact, under the J-1 Summer Work Travel Program, employers do not have to pay Medicare, Social Security, and unemployment taxes, which amounts to a payroll savings of about 8.45 percent per employee. What a bargain. So we are enticing—we are giving an incentive to businesses to bring in workers into this country and saving them money by hiring foreign workers at the expense of young Americans who certainly can do those jobs.

Unemployed American youth and employers do not have to pay Social Security and Medicare payroll taxes. They do not have to pay unemployment taxes. They do not have to offer jobs to Americans first. They do not have to pay wages that are comparable to what American workers make. What employer in America would want to hire a young American as a lifeguard or a ski instructor or a waiter or a waitress, or any other low-skilled job, when they can hire a foreign college student instead at a significant reduction in cost?

I understand the immigration reform bill we are debating reforms this program by requiring foreign labor recruiters to pay a $300 fee for every foreign guest worker they have to bring into this country. Right now, foreign college students bear all of these costs. But in my opinion, that is not good enough. This program is a real disservice to the young people in this country.

I believe in cultural exchanges. I would put a lot more money into cultural exchanges so our young people can go abroad, so young people from all over the world could attend our high schools. That would be a great thing. But that is not what this J-1 program is. It is a program which is displacing young American workers at a time of double-digit unemployment among youth, and it is putting downward pressure on wages. At a time when a lot of the American people are in many cases working longer hours for lower wages.

In my opinion, this particular program should be abolished. Cultural program, yes; but bringing in young people to take jobs from young Americans, no. At the very least, if we are not going to abolish this program, we need to make sure we have a comparable summer and year-round jobs program for our young people in order to help them pay for college and to move up the economic ladder. At the very least, that is what should be in this bill.

That is why I will be filing an amendment today to the immigration reform bill to create a youth jobs program. My amendment would provide States with $1.5 billion in immediate funding to support a 2-year summer and year-round jobs program for low-income youth and economically disadvantaged young adults. This amendment is modeled on the summer and year-round youth jobs program included in President Obama’s American Jobs Act.

This amendment would build on the success from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which provided $1.2 billion in funding for the WIA Youth Jobs Program. This program created over 374,000 summer job opportunities during 2009 and 2010 for young Americans who desperately needed those jobs. This amendment, in fact, could be supportive of.

Let me be very clear. The same corporations and businesses that support a massive expansion in guest worker programs are opposed to raising the minimum wage. They have long supported the outsourcing of American jobs. They have reduced wages and benefits of American workers at a time when corporate profits are at an all-time high. In too many cases, the H-2B program for lower skilled guest workers and the H-1B for high-skilled guest workers are being used by employers to drive down the wages and benefits of American workers and to replace American workers with cheap labor from abroad.

The immigration reform bill that passed the Senate Committee could increase the number of low-skilled guest workers by as much as 800 percent over the next 5 years and could more than triple the number of temporary white-collar guest workers in the world. That is the basic issue. That is my basic concern. At a time when unemployment is so high, does it make a whole lot of sense to be bringing hundreds of thousands of workers from all over the world into this country to replace American workers desperately need?

The high-tech industry tells us they need the H-1B program so they can hire the best and the brightest science, technology, engineering, and math workers in the world, and that there are not enough qualified American workers in these fields. In some cases—let me be very honest—I think that is true. I think there are some companies in some parts of the country that are not able to get American workers to do the jobs that are needed. I believe in those instances, corporations should have the right to bring in foreign workers so the corporation can do the business it is supposed to be doing.

But having said that, let me also tell you some facts: In 2010, 54 percent of the H-1B guest workers were employed in entry-level jobs and performed "routine tasks requiring limited judgment," according to the Government Accountability Office. Routine tasks.

So I ask today is with Senator Grassley and Harkin, that amendment would prohibit companies that have announced mass layoffs over the past year from hiring guest workers unless these companies can prove their overall employment will not be reduced as a result of these mass layoffs. In other words, what we are seeing is a very clear trend. Large corporations are throwing American workers out on the street, and they are bringing in foreign workers to do those exact jobs. Many of those very same companies have moved parts of their corporate world away from the United States into Third World countries. So this continues the attack on American workers. We must stop it.

Let me give you a few examples as I conclude my remarks. In 2012, Hewlett-Packard, one of the large American corporations, announced it was laying off 30,000 workers at the same time it had more than 600 H-1B guest workers. In 2012, Cisco laid off 1,300 employees at the same time it hired more than 330 H-1B guest workers. In 2012, Yahoo hired more than 135 H-1B guest workers at the same time it announced it was laying off over 2,000 workers. Research in Motion hired 24 H-1B guest workers at the same time it laid off over 5,000 people.

I think it makes no sense at all that corporations that are laying off American workers are now reaching into the H-1B program to bring in foreign workers.

Let me conclude by saying there is much in this legislation I support and that I believe the American people support. But problems remain. Problems remain. The main problem to me is this guest worker concept which is being widely abused by employers throughout this country. At the very least, I want to see a summer jobs program for our kids who are now losing jobs because of the J-1 program. But we need to do even more than that.

I look forward to working with my colleagues who have worked so hard on this bill to make it a bill that all Americans and all working people can be supportive of.

I yield the floor.
Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, in a couple of minutes the President of the United States will be announcing it is now conclusive that Bashar al-Assad and the Syrian butchers have used chemical weapons and massacring their own people. I applaud the President's decision to provide additional air assets to the Free Syrian Army.

I thank the President for acknowledging the Syrians are using chemical weapons and massacring their own people. I applaud his decision to provide additional air assets to the Free Syrian Army.

Every ounce, every bone in my body knows that simply providing weapons will not change the battlefield equation, and we must change the battlefield equation; otherwise, we are going to see a regional conflict, the consequences of which we will be paying for a long time.

I yield to my colleague from South Carolina.

Mr. GRAHAM. I wish to add my voice to the President's decision to act, because I think action by the United States and the international community is required.

As Senator McCAIN said, Mr. President, the goal is to end the war. The President's decision to intervene comes from an escalation of the use of chemical weapons by Assad. As Senator McCAIN has indicated, the threats to our country are not just from the chemical weapons but from a regional deterioration.

I say to the sitting President of the Senate today, we were in Jordan. The Jordanian Government has to accommodate over 550,000 Syrian refugees. The Syrian National Army is not enough. We see that Jordan is overwhelmed with refugees. Lebanon is experiencing sectarian violence. Iraq is unraveling and the entire region is bordering on chaos, not to mention the massacre and genocide that is taking place in Syria.

I applaud the President's decision, and I appreciate it. The President of the United States had better understand that just supplying weapons is not going to change the equation on the ground of the balance of power. These people, the Free Syrian Army, need weapons and heavy weapons to counter tanks and aircraft. They need a no-fly air zone. Bashar Assad's air assets have to be taken out and neutralized. We can do that without risking a single American airplane. We can do it by cratering the runways with cruise missiles—numbers in the hundreds of thousands of weapons—could be used to be deployed to kill thousands of Americans or Israelis or people who are aligned with us.

The President's decision to intervene comes from an escalation of the use of chemical weapons by Assad. As Senator McCAIN said, the threats to our country are not just from the chemical weapons but from a regional deterioration.

I say to the sitting President of the Senate today, we were in Jordan. The Jordanian Government has to accommodate over 550,000 Syrian refugees. Sixty thousand Syrian children are attending regional schools. The economy in Jordan is about to collapse. If we lose the King of Jordan, we have lost one of the last moderate voices in the Middle East.

This war has a ripple effect. It is affecting Turkey; it is affecting Iraq. Radical Islamists are flowing into the hands of radical Islamists. They are closer today than they have ever been in achieving that goal.

As Senator McCAIN's point, the longer this war goes on, the more damage to our allies, and the more likely the chemical weapons can be used not just against Syrians but against us and others. My biggest fear about the war is that the chemical weapons are falling into the hands of radical Islamists. They are closer today than they have ever been in achieving that goal.

Mr. President, you made the right call today. We need to follow up to end this war with neutralizing Assad's air power and having a no-fly zone so the rebels can reorganize. When we supply arms to the rebels, we will look long and hard at who to give the arms to.

The good news is we don't need to give them a bunch of anti-aircraft capability if we crater the runways through the international community using our assets. If we neutralize the air power and having a no-fly zone, you don't have to provide the rebels with a bunch of anti-aircraft capability.

If we will provide a no-fly zone using PATRIOT missile batteries, you can protect the people without interjecting massive weapons into the conflict.

Senator McCAIN has been right about this for a couple of years. This is a big day.

I will conclude with this. Assad is the reason the Russians are supplying him more weapons. The reason is Hezbollah is in Syria. The reason the Iranians are so bold is he is clearly winning. It is not in our national interests for him to win because the Israelis cannot allow the technology being sold to Assad by the Russians being present, because it will hurt their national security.

I hope with this intervention today to get involved, after chemical weapons have been used, the tide of the battle will turn. If it doesn't turn, it will have catastrophic results for national security and the region as a whole.

The President chose wisely today to get involved. We support him. The goal is not to help the rebels, the goal is to end this war before chemical weapons can be used against us, we lose the King of Jordan, and the entire Middle East goes up in flames.

Mr. McCAIN. May I ask my colleague if he remembers when the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff appeared before our committee well over a year ago and said, unsolicited, it is inevitable, it is inevitable that Bashar Asad will fall? Does the Senator remember that?

Mr. GRAHAM. Yes.

Mr. McCAIN. This is from our highest-ranking official and from our highest-defense official, the Secretary of Defense.

The Senator previously said: What makes you so sure? How can you be so sure with the help from Hezbollah, with the help from the Russians at the time, the technology being sold to Assad by the Russians being present, because it will hurt their national security.

I will ask the Senator again: Is there anybody today who believes he is going to fall? I don't think so. Because the facts on the ground are he is
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winning and the slaughter continues. The latest is 93,000 people have been massacred. As the Senator from South Carolina indicated, there are well over 1 million refugees overwhelming the neighboring countries.

If I understand the President has not made the final decision on arming, but he has made the decision that chemical weapons are being used. I think it is obvious they will be providing weapons. They need a no-fly zone. There are military officials in the Pentagon who will say we can’t do it, and we have to have total mobilization of every single Reserve in the world and the United States, and it is hard.

We spend tens of billions of dollars a year on defense. If our military can’t establish a no-fly zone, then, by God, American taxpayer dollars have been terribly wasted and we ought to have an investigation as to why we can’t handle a situation in a third-rate country. I believe we can. I know we can. I know, because I talked to people, such as the head of our Central Command, a former head of our Central Command, our former General in NATO, and others, such as General Keane, the architect of the surge. We can go in and establish a no-fly zone, and we can change this equation on the battlefield.

Finally, I would ask my colleagues, we understand the American people are war weary. They are war weary because of what happened in Iraq. We remain in Afghanistan. Iraq is unraveling, by the way, but Americans are weary. They are tired of reading the casualty lists, of the funerals, and the terrible tragedies that have befallen American families. That is why neither I nor the Senator from South Carolina is saying we want boots on the ground. In fact, we don’t want boots on the ground. We know it would not lead to victory. We know it would not lead to victory. We can change this equation on the battlefield.

Finally, because a lot of Americans haven’t paid perhaps as much attention as some of us, and maybe because they are war weary, I think it would be wise for the President of the United States to go on national television to explain to the American people why we are stopping this genocide, explain why we are assisting these people who are struggling for the same things we stand for and believe in, why the United States of America went to Bosnia where we put boots on the ground, and why we went to Kosovo and didn’t put boots on the ground. Explain how we can help these people while alleviating the unspeakable misery of the Syrian people.

Does my colleague from South Carolina agree with that?

Mr. GRAHAM. I would recommend the President educate the American people about what is going on in the Middle East, because it is scary. It is really scary.

The Iranians are marching toward a nuclear weapon. Israel is becoming more surrounded by radical Islamic nations, not less. The King of Jordan is teetering. If we lose him, God knows what is going to happen in the Middle East.

I would suggest that the President take the courageous step to tell the American people what happens to us if these chemical weapons Asad has used against his own people fall into the hands of radical Islamists who want to do more than just take care of Syria. My big fear is weapons of mass destruction are not only in the hands of radical Islamists either in Iran or Syria if we don’t act quickly.

The only reason thousands of Americans have been killed in the war on terror—and not millions—is they can’t get the weapons to kill millions of us. If they could, they would.

I would argue very strongly it is in our national security interests to make sure the war in Syria ends and Asad is dispatched.

Senator MCCAIN is right, he is winning. He was supposed to be gone last year. He is never going to be displaced until the tide of battle changes. The way we change the tide of battle is neutralize his air power. We can do that by neutralizing every Reservist, including me. It can be done, it should be done, and it is in our interests to do it.

One last thought. If we do not address and remove the promise in Syria and end this war before these chemical weapons flow out of Syria, not only will Israel be in the crosshairs of radical Islamists with a weapons-of-mass-destruction capability, it is only a matter of time before they come here. The next bomb that goes off in a place like Boston could have more than nails and glass in it.

The people who want these weapons in Syria, trying to develop nuclear capability in Iran, if we don’t think they are coming after us, we are naive. I know we are war weary, but I hope we are not too weary to protect our children, grandchildren, and ourselves from a threat that is real. I wish it would go away, but we don’t make these things go away by wishing, we confront them. The sooner we confront it, the better off we will be.

Mr. MCCAIN. I would mention one other thing, as I know one of my colleagues waiting on the floor. There is no other experience that I think anyone can have to see the terrible ravage of war than to go to a refugee camp. The Senator from South Carolina and I have been to refugee camps on both sides of the Israeli/Palestinian border to see thousands of people living in terribly primitive conditions; to see, as I did in one camp we visited—there had been a rainstorm the night before and people were literally living in water—the desperation on the faces of the people and the children.

I have had many moving experiences while visiting these refugee camps, but I also think there is an aspect we ought to understand and appreciate as Americans. They are angry and they are bitter because we wouldn’t come to their assistance.

I will never forget a woman who was a schoolteacher escorting me around refugee camps. She said, Senator MCCAIN, do you see all these children here? Do you see all these children?

She said: These children are going to take revenge on those who refused to help them stop this slaughter by Bashar Asad.

So there are long-term implications both on the humanitarian side as well as other aspects of this issue. Believe me, it is the greatest blow to Iran in 25 years if Bashar Asad fell. So it is not just a humanitarian issue. If Bashar Asad goes, Hezbollah is disconnected from Iran, and the whole equation in the Middle East dramatically changes. If Iran and Bashar Asad succeed, we will see a direct threat of the State of Israel, which the Israelis understand, coming from the Golan Heights.

So this is not only a humanitarian issue, it is a national security issue. If Iran succeeds, keeping Bashar Asad in power, that will send a message throughout the Middle East about Iran’s power, Iranian ability, and the Iranian ability to change governments throughout the Middle East. So there is a lot at stake.

I hope the President will go to a no-fly zone and give these people the weapons with which to defend themselves, as Russian arms and Iranian arms pour into the country on the side of Bashar Asad. My friends, it is not a fair fight, and we know, in that kind of climate and terrain, air power is the deciding factor.

I thank my colleague from South Carolina, and I appreciate the patience of the Senator from Texas.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COWAN). The Senator from Texas.

IRAN ELECTION

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, on Friday, the people of Iran head to the polls to make a false choice. Ostensibly participating in a democratic process to select a new President, they are really affirming their existing extremistocracy. They will be forced to select not the candidate of their choice but the candidates that have been chosen for them by the Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei—candidates guaranteed to continue the Supreme Leader’s policies of political and religious oppression in pursuit of nuclear capability at all costs.

In the United States we are now engaged in a national dialog about how we can best preserve our God-given rights guaranteed to us by our Constitution. We are taking a serious look at the role of government in our lives and revisiting the balance government is striking between security and privacy even with vital issues at home, we should remember those who are denied their liberty in Iran.
Today, in Iran, the economic picture is grim. Forty percent of Iranian citizens now live below the poverty line, almost double the rate in 2005. The industrial sector is considerably smaller. The real rate of unemployment is 11.2 percent, and it is as high as 20 percent in certain regions.

Basic freedoms—political, religious, speech, and the Internet—are under systematic attack by the regime. Satellite television, persecution, and oppression are the norm in Iran. Iran's political opposition has been effectively silenced. Key 2009 opposition leaders, such as Mir Hossein Mousavi and Mehdi Karroubi have been imprisoned without charge in their own homes for 2 years with locked doors and windows. The list of Presidential candidates has been hand-selected by the Supreme Leader, not by the Iranian people. American-Iranian Pastor Saeed Abedini is right now serving an 8-year sentence in Iran's brutal Evin prison simply for professing his faith.

In January, I was proud to sign a letter, along with 11 other Senators, to Secretary Clinton advocating for Pastor Abedini and to Secretary Kerry on February 12, thanking him for his statement in support of Pastor Abedini.

There has been a crackdown on Christians in the lead-up to this election. Including the closing of the Central Assemblies of God Church in Tehran and the detention of Pastor Robert Asserian. Iranian Pastor Behnam Irani may face the death penalty for organizing a 300-strong congregation of the Church of Iran. Iran's 100,000-plus Evangelical Christians are suffering brutal oppression right now.

In an imitation of China, Iran is attempting to create a sort of internal Internet that will block access to internal email and social media. Since the 2009 uprising, the Supreme Leader has instituted four new entities to restrict Internet freedom: The Supreme Council on Cyberspace, the Committee Charged with Determining Offensive Content, the Cyber Police, and the Cyber Army.

Iran has continued to aggressively expand its influence in the region and beyond. Iran remains a leading state sponsor of terrorism and is increasing its activities in the Middle East so as to support the nation of Israel that Prime Minister Netanyahu recently expressed fears of “another Holocaust” from Tehran, regardless of any election that may take place. Iran's proxy army, Hezbollah, is supporting Assad's murderous attacks on his own people in Syria.

Today, the United Nations estimated that 93,000 people have been slaughtered in Syria since the uprising began in 2011. Iran's fingerprints are on those murders. Iran is not only expanding its own influence in the region through closer ties with the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, but it is also expanding its influence in Latin America. Most troubling, Iran is proceeding undeterred in its pursuit of nuclear weapons capability.

In my judgment, there is no greater threat to the national security of the United States than the prospect of a nuclear Iran. And we need to be unequivocal and speak with absolute clarity that the United States will do whatever it takes to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons capability.

The purpose of this legislation is to restrict Internet freedom: The Supreme Leader has instituted four new entities.

The resolution also condemns the widespread human rights violations of the Government of Iran, calls on the Government of Iran to respect its people's freedom of expression and association, and expresses our ongoing support to the people of Iran for their calls for a democratic government that upholds freedom, civil liberties, and the rule of law.

The Iranian people may well be confused about where the United States stands, especially after we stood silently by when they took to the streets 4 years ago during the Green Revolution. But it was not always this way. Twenty-six years ago this week, President Ronald Reagan stood in front of the Wall that divided East and West Berlin and challenged Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbatchev to tear down the wall that divided the eastern and western halves of the city. No more important words have been spoken by a leader in modern times.

Today, I ask all Americans to join me in likewise urging the regime in Iran to tear down the walls of political and religious persecution, to relieve the pain of the unnecessary economic hardship, and to renounce the isolation caused by Tehran's aggressive and beligerent policies.

To those right now imprisoned and being persecuted in Iran, I would repeat the words of encouragement President Reagan gave them: “We know that people who are represented by the Berlin Wall would not stand. As President Reagan observed: "For it cannot withstand faith; it cannot withstand truth; it cannot withstand freedom." That is the same message we should convey to the people of Iran for they suffer under tyrannical oppression.

To the Supreme Leader I would say: Stop oppressing your people. Stop persecuting Christians. Stop pursuing nuclear weapons capability. Stop stifling freedom of speech and allow real and free elections. Free the Iranian people.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

DEFENSE CONTRACTING

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I appreciate the power of the free enterprise system. It is one of the reasons for America's greatness. I know from experience that private businesses do some things better than the government ever could. But over the last couple of decades, the United States has increasingly relied on private contractors to do the work the men and women in our Armed Forces used to do, and they are getting exorbitant salaries to do the same work—in some cases, almost twice the salary of the President of the United States.

To the people of West Virginia and to me it doesn’t make any sense to pay a defense contractor up to $768,000 a year. That is almost twice as much as our Commander in Chief and almost four times as much as our Secretary of Defense. If we do nothing about this, this figure will automatically rise to $851,000 next year—$851,000. That is almost $1 million a year right in the middle of sequestration when we are cutting everything.

With the war in Afghanistan winding down, it is only natural for defense contractors to be looking for new opportunities, and the southern border of our country is one of the places they are eyeing. In fact, the New York Times says some of them are getting ready to demonstrate military grade drone cameras this summer in an effort to secure billion-dollar contracts with Homeland Security.

I understand we need the expertise of a private industry to secure our borders, but taxpayers should not be responsible for the exorbitant salaries these contractors are demanding. So I am offering an amendment that would cap compensation for private contractors employed for border security. The $230,000 top cap—which is the most a government civilian can be paid in a given year. So it is in line with what we are doing.

That is significantly more than what we pay Defense Secretary Hagel or our Homeland Security Secretary Napolitano.

There is nothing in my amendment that would prevent contractors from making more than $230,000. We are not saying they can’t make more than that. But in our system we don’t pass that through to the taxpayers of America. They have to pay it out of the profits of their company. The only thing I
am preventing is the taxpayers from having to foot the bill. I have heard some proposals to bring that figure down to $487,000. That is an improvement. But, frankly, I can’t look West Virginians in the eye, and I am sure they would have had time looking his constituents in Massachusetts in the eye, and justify paying government contractors that much money because it is just hard to justify. It can’t be justified.

We want to pass our fiscal house in order. We can’t do that if we allow private contractors to charge the taxpayers exorbitant salaries of almost $1 million. It is time for common sense controls on contractors’ salaries. So I am asking for the support of this amendment when it comes to the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER, The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I appreciate the opportunity to share some remarks, and I appreciate the eloquence of my friend and colleague from West Virginia on the issue he just mentioned.

The committee did reduce almost by half the amount that contractors could bill, and we may see further changes in that regard. But when we are talking about money, real money, there is a problem we have with the bill that came out of committee. It is such a grim, serious matter that we have to talk about it, we have to be up front about it, and nobody can be confused about it.

I was pleased with Chairman LEVIN. He is a wonderful chairman of our committee. We have consistently had bipartisan votes. I wanted it to be a bipartisan vote for the bill and voted for it today, but I am not sure that was the right vote because I said during the committee that we have a serious problem in the amount of money that was appropriated for the bill, $52 billion over the current law.

There is a hope and belief that we can fix that gap between now and the time it comes to the floor. Secretary Hagel was before the Budget Committee. He indicated he is working on a plan to help us be within the law. He also indicated that to Chairman LEVIN and Ranking Member INHOFE on the Armed Services Committee. But let’s be sure what that means.

August 2011 we had run up huge debt. We had hit our debt ceiling again. The administration and the President wanted to raise the debt ceiling $2.1 trillion, one of the largest—or maybe the largest—of the debt ceiling in history. That was supposed to take us 2 or 3 years.

Well, we have already hit that debt ceiling again now it appears. Soon we will be having to pass legislation. All the little extensions and maneuvering to extend the debt ceiling a little longer are being exercised, and we will soon have to vote again to raise the debt ceiling.

But in August of 2011, after much intensity of effort, legislation passed. I opposed it. One of my biggest concerns was what it was doing to the defense budget. But the bill passed. It set up a committee, and the committee was to work with future cuts and long-term entitlement programs and other programs. That was their goal. They were given that challenge.

Fundamentally, the bill that passed raised the debt ceiling $2.1 trillion, but it reduced the growth of spending over the next 10 years. Unfortunately, those reductions in the growth of spending fell disproportionately on the Defense Department. I will mention that in a minute.

But the agreement was clear. There were no tax increases. There were no gimmicks to it other than the spending level would be reduced over 10 years by $2.1 trillion. We were then spending at the level of $3.7 trillion a year, which would mean $37 trillion over 10 years. The committee said to spend $47 trillion over 10 years—a substantial increase from the current level. So the agreement was that it would reduce the growth to $45 trillion instead of $47 trillion.

The committee knew that the committee would reach an even more historic agreement in which entitlements—Social Security and Medicare—would be put on a firm foundation, and we would get the country on the right track.

The committee failed. They did not reach an agreement. So in law there remains the BCA, and within the Budget Control Act there was the sequester, and the sequester would take another $500 billion. The BCA took about $500 billion out of the defense budget, and the sequester part of the BCA took another. When the committee didn’t reach an agreement, that was another $500 billion to be taken out of the Defense Department, $1 trillion.

The committee was supposed to represent one-sixth of the Federal budget, almost $1 trillion out of the defense, one-sixth of the government. That is one-half of the cuts that were to be taken from our entire government.

When we look at the numbers over 10 years, the defense budget adjusted for inflation would take a 14-percent reduction in its funding, whereas the remaining five-sixths of the Federal Government would have a 44-percent increase in its funding, and in the U.S. Government for 11 days, furloughed without pay, and done other things to try to stay within the financial constraints they are now under because the cuts are beginning to bite.

So that is the situation. I want to say to my colleagues, I do not believe the Defense bill that came out of committee—and we had a nice discussion today on multiple issues that are important to America’s defense, and we had a good collegial feeling. I don’t believe the Senate will pass the Senate— I don’t believe it will pass the Senate— if it violates the spending limits we voted on just 2 years ago.
Just think of it. We agreed to reduce the growth of spending from $37 billion now at that rate 2 years ago. We were going to let it grow to 47, we reduced the growth to 45, and we come back to the American people and say we can't affect that now? We can't reduce the growth? And doing just that little bit? We promised you that we would raise the debt ceiling, but I know it made you angry, American people. You were mad at us because we mismanaged your money. But we promise, we will reduce the growth of spending by $2.1 trillion. Trust us, We will do it. And here we are. President Obama, 6 months later, produced a budget that wiped out all those cuts and increased taxes, taxes and spending. This has been the pattern we have been in. I have to say, we do not need to have this happen.

So I am prepared to meet with the President. I am prepared to meet with the Secretary of Defense, the Office of Management and Budget, and talk about where we can find other reductions in spending and reduce some of the reductions on the Defense Department. We need to reduce a good many of those, frankly. Then the Defense Department can look towards some reductions in spending over the outyears. They can do that. But too much too fast is destabilizing. No business would do that. So we have to figure out a way to make this system work.

I would like to work with Senator LEVIN and Senator INHOFE today. I want to be cooperative and be positive in our efforts. I like much of what we did with the authorization bill in the Armed Services Committee, but we just didn't talk about the elephant in the room; that is, the sequester, the real danger we have there. We are going to have to discuss it now. It will be part of the floor discussion and debate if it is not fixed.

It is my hope we think we are all prepared to work for it. I don't believe this country will sink into the ocean. I don't believe this country is going to have to close its ports. I don't believe this country is going to have to end tours at the White House to reduce the growth of spending by $2 trillion. It took the country $47 trillion to $45 trillion over the next 10 years. I don't believe that is going to bankrupt us. But we ought to do it in a smart way. We should have every agency and department of government tighten their belts, not just some.

We slipped into this when the sequester was written to try to effect some political result that didn't occur, and now, as a responsible Senate, we have to consider what is right for America. The right thing is to have all agencies and departments tighten their belts and reduce the pressure that is now falling on our Defense Department.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that Senators proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators being permitted to speak for 10 minutes each.

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

B. TODD JONES NOMINATION

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, on Tuesday, the Senate Judiciary Committee held a hearing on the nomination of B. Todd Jones to serve as the director of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, ATF. I thank Senator KLOBUCHAR for the exceptional job she did in chairing this hearing and setting the record straight with respect to distortion of the nominee's record.

Todd Jones continues to serve this country honorably. He volunteered for the U.S. Marine Corps in 1983, serving on active duty as a judge advocate and infantry officer until 1989. In 1991, he was recalled to active duty to command the 4th Marine Division's Military Police Company in Iraq. He also served as commanding officer of the Twin Cities Marine Reserve Unit. He has twice been considered for the important law enforcement position of U.S. attorney and twice unanimously reported out of the Judiciary Committee and unanimously confirmed by the Senate. In 1998 he was first appointed to be the U.S. attorney for the District of Minnesota and became the first African American U.S. attorney in Minnesota's history. In 2009, when that office was at a low point and needed a strong hand to lead it back, he answered the call, again. He was called upon to clear up the mess and deserves our thanks for having made great progress in doing so. He has done so while all the while continuing to serve as the U.S. attorney for the District of Minnesota and has had to reduce leadership and effectiveness in two important law enforcement agencies.

We have received numerous letters of support for Todd Jones' nomination from law enforcement, respected legal professionals, and the U.S. Marine Corps. He has critiqued; he has taken on difficult assignments. As he noted at his hearing, sometimes you have to take action to make a change and change is not always something that everyone is going to favor. A fair evaluation of what he has accomplished leads me to support his nomination to be confirmed as the director of ATF.

The ATF has been without a permanent director since that position was made a confirmable position in 2006. We lean heavily on the expertise of the ATF. For example, under the leadership of Todd Jones, since September 2013, the ATF has been able to analyze the bombs left near the finish line at the Boston Marathon, to sift through burned debris at the chemical plant explosion in West, TX, and to trace the weapons used in the Newtown and Aurora mass killings. Agents of the ATF have played a major role in investigating some of our Nation's worst tragedies. The agency needs a confirmed head. Todd Jones is the ATF's fifth acting director since 2006. The Senate should be doing everything it can to ensure that the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives has the tools it needs to keep Americans safe, and that starts with a Senate-confirmed director.