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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BOST).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
January 24, 2017.

I hereby appoint the Honorable MIKE BOST to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 3, 2017, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

BENEFITS OF THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Alabama (Ms. SEWELL) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on the Affordable Care Act and the Trump administration's efforts to repeal the health care of millions of Americans.

Every person in this body has constituents who have health insurance because of the Affordable Care Act. Whether you represent the rural community in Kentucky where the uninsured rate declined 60 percent under the ACA or you represent the most liberal district in the country, you should be committed to working across the aisle to fix what is wrong with the ACA and build upon what is working.

While the law and President Obama may not be popular in many districts, political expediency has no place in this hallowed body, especially when the economy and American lives are at stake. It is not just Democratic districts that benefit from the ACA. Everyone—everyone—has Americans in their districts that benefit from the ACA.

While I am the only Democrat in Alabama, my district has only the fifth highest population of enrollees in Alabama, behind four Republican districts. Alabama's First Congressional District has over 29,000 enrollees, and the Fifth District has over 25,000 enrollees. The Sixth and Fourth Districts of Alabama both have over 23,000 enrollees. My district has 22,000 people who are enrolled in the ACA.

In total, there are 165,000 Alabamians who have coverage through the healthcare marketplace, and over 20 million nationwide. There are many who benefit in Alabama and across this Nation from the ACA. And while we all benefit from not having to have preexisting conditions be a deterrent to getting health care, all of us will not benefit from the repeal. In fact, it should not surprise many of us that the repeal of the ACA will benefit the wealthiest Americans.

According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, ACA repeal will lavish Medicare tax cuts on our Nation's 400 highest income households, while 7 million low- and moderate-income households will lose premium tax credits. The average annual income of those top 400 families is $300 million apiece, and they will benefit from an average annual tax cut of approximately $7 million apiece. What my Republican colleagues do not want Americans to know is that the repeal of the ACA will not benefit the majority of Americans but, rather, only the rich.

An average income of $300 million is more than 6,000 times the average household income in Alabama and nearly 9,000 times the average household in my district. Mr. Speaker, 99.9 percent of my constituents make incomes below $200,000. I know that they will never see the tax breaks that the repeal of the Affordable Care Act will give to the wealthy.

While healthcare costs have been growing nationwide at the slowest rate in over 50 years under the ACA, we cannot ignore the hardworking Americans who are facing outrageous premium hikes in States that have not expanded Medicaid like Alabama. On average, States that have been hostile to the law are facing the largest premium increases for 2017. One study showed that States that fully embraced the ACA will see increases of 18.2 percent, as opposed to States that have fully resisted the law—like Alabama—which saw increases of 29.8 percent.

Mr. Speaker, it is unacceptable to Americans that we have this rise in premiums at any level, but my point is simply this: We should not be looking to repeal the Affordable Care Act without replacing it with something; because the fact of the matter is, in this great country that we live in, no one—no one—should not have access to affordable, quality health care.

Alabamians enrolled in employer-based healthcare insurance are paying more in their employee contributions than those in California, even though Californians have a significantly higher cost of living. This is one of the reasons why I have worked across the aisle to try to make meaningful changes to the ACA that don't compromise the law's benefit.

The American people deserve Representatives that will work together to fix what is wrong with the ACA and build upon what is working. We need to

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work together to increase access, market stabilization, and minimize premium cost rises. We need to work with States that haven't expanded Medicaid to bring down premium costs for the self-insured.

I stand ready to work with my colleagues to achieve these goals and protect the millions of Americans and thousands of Alabamians who are more financially secure today because of the protections of the ACA.

HONORING THE LIFE OF TOM MURRAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. COSTELLO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise today on behalf of myself and all readers of the Daily Local News, a newspaper in my congressional district, Pennsylvania's Sixth Congressional District, to honor the life of Tom Murray, the editor of the Daily Local News, who just passed.

Mike Rellahan, in writing an obituary on Mr. Murray, accurately had this to say:

Tom Murray's personality shone through in the way he dealt with reporters, photographers, other editors, and colleagues on the multiple newspapers and media outlets he worked at over the years. It showed in his passion for helping people get better at their craft, in his own strong work ethic and in his sense of humor and humanity.

He was a hard-core newspaperman who loved a good lead paragraph, a clever headline, and an action-packed photo. He believed the society page was as important in the Main Line papers he worked for as the sports page was to the Gloucester, New Jersey, Daily Times, where he held the post of sports editor for 9 years, because he believed a newspaper at its best reflects its readers.

More than that, however, Murray stayed true to the ideals of old-school print journalism, loving the traditions and storytelling while at the same time embracing and chasing the future with enthusiasm. He began reporting when electronic journalism was in its infancy, but became so involved in the new digital age that one of his happiest moments came when a video screen showing the realtime activity of the Daily Local News' Web site was installed in the newsroom.

Tom Murray, you will be missed. Thank you for your service and your contribution to journalism, to our democracy, and to sharing news with those throughout the tri-county area for so long.

REALIZING FULL POTENTIAL OF ADVANCED NUCLEAR ENERGY

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support H.R. 590, the Advanced Nuclear Technology Development Act, legislation that takes an important step towards developing safer, more reliable clean energy. Nuclear energy accounts for approximately 20 percent of all U.S. electricity and, very importantly, 60 percent of all carbon-free electricity in the U.S.

As our existing nuclear infrastructure moves closer to retirement, advanced nuclear technology offers a modern solution to ensure that American families have a safe, affordable, and reliable source of clean energy for generations to come. However, in order to fully realize the potential of advanced nuclear, we must remove the costly red tape that prevents innovation and streamline existing practices to allow for the safe and effective development of this technology.

I thank Congressman LATTA for his leadership on this bipartisan issue, and I am pleased to support it and see it pass the House.

KEEPING PERSONAL DATA SECURE FROM SPOOFING

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 423, the Anti-Spoofing Act, a bill I also supported last Congress.

Mr. Speaker, call spoofing is a telephone scam used to change the information on a caller ID and pose as a trusted source, such as an official government agency, a medical center, or a bank.

The intention behind call spoofing is to collect valuable personal information, such as banking information, to defraud or cause other harm to an individual or family. Seniors and veterans are frequently targeted in these scams.

In an effort to protect your personal information, this bill would close existing loopholes and direct the Federal Communications Commission to ensure those who engage in spoofing face criminal fines and penalties.

Call spoofing is not just limited to voice messages. Those using this tactic also utilize text messages, and H.R. 423 would include text messages in these fines and penalties. This bill would keep personal data secure and protect consumers, and I am pleased to see that it has passed the House.

FEDERAL EMPLOYEE HIRING FREEZE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, yesterday President Trump issued an executive order. He imposed a hiring freeze on the Federal workforce. It was not only a freeze, but an attack on those serving our country and a misguided action that will achieve the opposite of what is intended.

For those who are listening in the Chamber, Mr. Speaker, let me say that I am proud to represent 62,000 Federal employees. Hopefully, all of us refer to them as working people. We all say we want to be supportive of working people. Some people, however, in this body and down the avenue exempt Federal employees as working people.

They are not only working people, but they are working for the American people. Let's not forget that two-thirds of Federal employees live and work outside the Greater Washington area. It is very nice to say ''all of those bureaucrats in Washington,'' but two-thirds of our Federal employees serve in every community around our country, serve in protecting them: FBI agents; agents around the world who work for the Central Intelligence Agency—117 of whom died in service, and the President spoke in front of their memorial the other day—employees of the Centers for Disease Control keeping us healthy as communities and as a country, protecting our children and our families from diseases that would attack us; Federal employees at the National Institutes of Health studying how we prevent and cure cancer, heart disease, lung disease, diabetes, autism, other afflictions that confront our country, both health care from a physical and mental standpoint; and, yes, nurses at our veterans hospitals. A freeze so that if a nurse leaves, you can't replace her or him; a doctor at a veterans hospital leaves, you can't replace that doctor, apparently; even at the IRS where we talk about making sure our tax system is fair and making sure that everybody pays their fair share, we undermine the ability to make that a reality; our Border Patrol to keep our borders safe; homeland security to keep our homeland safe—they serve the public in every State and every congressional district in the country.

This hiring freeze will not save us money or do anything to make the government more efficient. Should we do both? Yes. Will this policy do it? No. Its effect will be a reduction in the level of service benefiting the American people, greater difficulty in recruiting and retaining the most talented Americans to public service, and increased costs as a result of having to hire more expensive private contractors to do the work that still needs to be done.

That is something that the public doesn't understand, that, frankly, we exploded, in the early part of this century, the contracting out, which gave us less control and more cost. It is more expensive to contract out.

□ 1015

Already, our Federal employees have made significant sacrifices toward achieving a greater fiscal sustainability in this country. Now, let me give you the magnitude of that. Federal employees, over the last 10 years, have given up $159 billion in pay and benefits to which they would otherwise have been entitled, but we withdrew those resources from them.

Instead of continuing to vilify Federal civilian employees, as they have done for years—and when I say they, the politicians have done it, mostly on the Republican side of the aisle, but perhaps not exclusively—vilified our Federal employees. Republicans in Congress and in the White House ought to be thanking them for their hard work. I can't imagine any of us would treat our own employees, Mr. Speaker, in a fashion that said we are going to lay you off, we are going to undercut

your pay, we are not going to give you the benefits which we promised you, and think that they were going to keep personnel on board with high morale and highly motivated to do the job, not only for us Members but for the American people. No employer would think that they can mistreat their employees and expect the highest performance out of them. And certainly no employer would think that if I treat my employees the way we have been treating Federal employees that we could recruit and retain the best and the brightest to serve our country.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the President to rescind his order. That is not to say that executives in all of these agencies should not look at making sure that we have the proper number of employees on board and are acting efficiently and effectively and working hard to accomplish the objectives that we as a Congress, on behalf of the American people, have given them. That is the issue.

I urge my Republican friends, in this House and in the Senate, to speak out against it. And I urge all Federal employees and their families to speak up in their communities across our country to remind their fellow Americans of the important work they do and why this hiring freeze would be so harmful to our country.

Giving one another respect in America is not political correctness. It is the way we ought to treat one another. And we ought to treat our public employees who work for us and our country with the same kind of respect that we would want for ourselves. Frankly, respect of one another was a victim in this last campaign, but it should not be and must not be the norm.

PROTECTING THE UNBORN AND DEFENDING LIFE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOONEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on an issue that I care deeply about: protecting the unborn and defending life. This week, I reintroduced the Life at Conception Act.

I am honored to be the lead sponsor of the Life at Conception Act, which simply defines human life as beginning at the moment of conception. As a result, unborn babies are entitled to legal protection under the Constitution. We had a record number of original cosponsors this past Congress, and I pray this bill will pass Congress swiftly.

I believe that we have a moral obligation to protect the unborn at every stage of development. It is something I have always been passionate about. I was president of my college's pro-life group, the Dartmouth Coalition for Life. I can still remember the conversations I had with my fellow students as I discussed the value of human life with them. It was a great feeling to know that I was opening eyes to the value of all human life one student at a time.

Protecting life is one of the issues that compelled me to run for office. When I first asked for the opportunity to serve you as your representative in Congress, I promised I would be a strong defender of the unborn. I am proud to say I have delivered on that promise.

The Life at Conception Act is a crucial part of the long-term battle to protect the unborn. It started 44 years ago to the week, in 1973 in the Roe v. Wade decision when the Supreme Court asserted that, because the beginning of life is not legally defined by Congress, it is up for interpretation by the court. The Life at Conception Act simply fills that gap and defines that human life begins at the moment of conception.

Even Vice President Joe Biden, a Democrat, recently restated publicly his belief that human life begins at conception. There is bipartisan agreement on this issue. It is important for Congress to define human life because the unborn are the most helpless among us. They need us to have enough courage to step up and protect them.

My bill also sets a standard for promoting and encouraging a culture of life. If enacted, it would simply affirm what we all know in our hearts and minds to be true: that unborn babies deserve our protection.

Last year, the Life at Conception Act had 146 cosponsors in the U.S. House of Representatives, including my two colleagues in West Virginia, DAVID MCKINLEY and EVAN JENKINS. I hope that more Representatives will join me in promoting respect and protection for all human life.

I continue to be guided by my faith and values. I look forward to working with my colleagues to defend the innocent and give voice to the voiceless. I welcome the marchers this week coming for the annual March for Life. I thank them for their participation in defending the unborn.

CONGRATULATING THE NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New Hampshire (Ms. KUSTER) for 5 minutes.

Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the New England Patriots on reaching their NFL record ninth Super Bowl. The very questionable suspension of Tom Brady early in the season could not stop New England or the determination and dedication to excellence that defines the New England Patriots.

Fans throughout New Hampshire and beyond are incredibly proud of their team and the unparalleled success of Tom Brady and Bill Belichick. But they would be the first to tell you that the success of the Patriots lies with not one individual but instead is built upon the core value of team before self. This year, the motto made famous by New England, ''Do Your Job,'' is as true as ever.

When the Patriots face the Atlanta Falcons in Super Bowl LI, I will be joined by everyone across New Hampshire and throughout New England in offering them good luck. Go Pats.

NO ONE IN AMERICA SHOULD GO HUNGRY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the importance of nutrition as it relates to agriculture policy in America. Proudly, I am the vice chairman of the House Agriculture Committee for the 115th Congress and chairman of the Nutrition Subcommittee.

Agriculture policy is near and dear to my heart, as it is the number one industry in Pennsylvania. It brings nearly $6.9 billion annually in cash receipts to the Commonwealth. Almost half a million jobs are tied to the industry, which positively impacts all Pennsylvanians.

Our farmers feed America. Farmers play a pivotal role in the nutrition of families in this country. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, food insecurity has decreased across the Nation in recent years. However, USDA found that 12.7 percent of all households in the United States faced hunger in 2015. Mr. Speaker, no one in America should go hungry.

The Nutrition Subcommittee oversees the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, which used to be referred to as food stamps. Over the past 2 years, under the leadership of Agriculture Committee Chairman MIKE CONAWAY, this subcommittee examined what is working with SNAP and what could be improved. More than 43 million Americans rely on SNAP to put food on the table for themselves and their families.

SNAP has grown from a pilot program that served just 500,000 people in 1964 to a program that served more than 47 million Americans at the height of the recession. SNAP is now the largest program under the Agriculture Committee's jurisdiction, accounting for almost 80 percent of farm bill spending, and is the largest Federal food program serving low-income families in the United States. SNAP is literally a lifeline for many of the least fortunate among us.

During the subcommittee's examination of SNAP, it hosted more than 16 hearings and had 60 witnesses testify. The goals of these hearings were to better understand SNAP and the population it serves, to review how SNAP utilizes cash and noncash benefits to serve that population, and to examine ways the program could be improved.

Four themes emerged from the hearings:

First, serving SNAP recipients through innovation and flexibility in

program delivery. The need for nutrition assistance cannot be addressed by just one program or just one group. It requires more collaboration between governments, charities, businesses, health systems, communities, individuals, and many others.

Second, climbing the economic ladder through work. Mr. Speaker, the number one leading causes of poverty are unemployment and underemployment. We must promote pathways to employment as the best way to help individuals climb the economic ladder out of poverty and into self-sufficiency.

Third, maintaining program integrity. SNAP needs clear program goals and must be evaluated according to metrics aligned with those goals to generate program improvement. While we want to give States flexibility in administering SNAP, it should not jeopardize the overall integrity of the program.

Fourth, improving food access and promoting healthy food. This theme really gets at the heart of the issue: Americans in both urban and rural communities cannot improve their diets without adequate access to healthy food. Offering nutrition education is essential to help SNAP recipients develop healthy lifestyles and healthy eating habits. There is so much at stake when it comes to SNAP. Most SNAP recipients face more challenges than food insecurity. They also face housing, utility, transportation, and child care costs, among others.

Through the subcommittee's thorough investigation, we were able to fully review how to deliver SNAP to those who need it most. We also examined ways to keep the program viable for years to come. The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office currently projects that SNAP will cost an average of $69.75 billion per year over the next 10 years, making it the largest Federal food program serving low-income families in the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I recently volunteered at the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank to help area veterans and their families to ensure they do not go hungry. When we help meet the nutritional needs of military families, it allows them to focus on other pressing issues. The same goes for all families in America.

I am committed to ensuring that SNAP continues to work for those who need it most, and to make certain that the program remains viable for decades to come. I look forward to getting to work on this in the 115th Congress.

HONORING JOHN ALBERT MCNEILL, SR.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize the life of John Albert McNeill, Sr.—a fine American.

John McNeill was born in Whiteville, North Carolina, in 1918. From the time he was born until he graduated from college, John helped his folks run their family pharmacy in Whiteville, which first opened in 1875, and is, to this day, Mr. Speaker, North Carolina's oldest family-owned pharmacy.

When McNeill graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1940 as a pharmacist, he had intentions to return home to Whiteville and work in the drugstore, but that didn't happen. The United States had joined the Allies in World War II, and McNeill found himself at the recruiting station trying to enlist. Much to his dismay, he quickly discovered that he wasn't tall enough to qualify for the Navy.

John McNeill was undeterred. Determined to serve his country, McNeill spent the next 2 months of his life stretching, and he added 2 inches to his height—just enough to qualify for the Navy. Having been accepted to the Navy, John completed his midshipman's training at Columbia University and gained his commission in early 1942.

During the war, McNeill commanded landing craft in the Pacific theater and served with distinction as he participated in hundreds of landings in the Solomon Islands while reinforcing Guadalcanal.

□ 1030

After finishing his time in the Navy, John returned to Whiteville to help run the drugstore. The day after returning home, he opened the family store, walked across the street, and introduced himself to his future wife, Margaret Powell. They were married a year later and raised six children together. Around this time, McNeill got involved in Scouting—first in a Sea Scouting troop at Lake Waccamaw, and then later with the Boy Scouts of America as his children were growing up.

Mr. Speaker, John McNeill's devotion to the Boy Scouts was well known across North Carolina as he took his troops to places as far away as the Arctic Circle and the Yucatan Peninsula. A famous story he told involved his troops hiking across the State of North Carolina and stopping to have breakfast with the Governor one morning along the way. Mr. Speaker, under John's leadership, some 55 Boy Scouts in Whiteville, North Carolina, achieved the rank of Eagle Scout—Scouting's highest rank.

While John's legacy as a Scoutmaster is near legend, thousands in Columbus County will remember his hospitality, too. Every Fourth of July, at his pier—his dock—on Lake Waccamaw, John and his family gathered to celebrate the signing of the Declaration of Independence, an event thousands have attended. All the while, John continued running his family's drugstore; and, for many years, he held the distinction of being North Carolina's oldest licensed pharmacist. Sadly, John passed away in September, at the age of 98.

Mr. Speaker, John Albert McNeill, Sr., lived an extraordinary life, and the difference he made in the lives of countless others in his community will be remembered for years and generations to come.

STAFF SERGEANT JAMES ''JIMMY'' MORIARTY—TEXAS GREEN BERET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, November 4, 2016, a military base in Jafr, Jordan, was attacked. A hail of violent gunfire suddenly rang out while three Americans were returning to base. They were ambushed. After the smoke cleared, three Green Berets from the 5th Special Forces Group were killed in support of Operation Inherent Resolve. One of those heroic men was 27-year-old Staff Sergeant James ''Jimmy'' Moriarty.

To be clear, neither the family nor I is satisfied that we have received all of the facts about the deaths of those three Green Berets, but we do know the facts about Staff Sergeant Moriarty of the United States Army.

Staff Sergeant Moriarty was a Texas native—one of Houston's own. He was a proud Green Beret. He was scheduled to come home in 2 weeks to spend the holidays with his family. Jimmy was, unquestionably, one of the best. Growing up in Houston, he earned a bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Texas. He spoke fluent Arabic—maybe with a Texas accent, Mr. Speaker. As part of the 5th Special Forces Group, he was 3 months into his third tour of duty in Jordan. Upon graduation from the University of Texas, Jimmy made the choice to serve his Nation in the United States Army. He was a volunteer. He was a proud member of the United States Army Special Forces. During his service to America, he earned the Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the NCO Professional Development ribbon, and an Army Service Ribbon.

The brave men of the Green Berets are our Nation's warriors. They are sent to take on the toughest missions that our Nation faces. From the jungles of Vietnam to the desert sands of the Middle East, they are, as John Wayne once said, America's best. These men are the warriors our enemies fear. They respond to terrorists and other outlaws to keep America safe throughout the globe. Proudly wearing silver wings on their chests, they are, without question, America's finest warriors.

Mr. Speaker, in the words of Navy SEAL Marcus Luttrell, another Texan:

In times of uncertainty, there is a special breed of warrior ready to answer our Nation's call—a common man with an uncommon desire to succeed. Forged by adversity,

the Green Beret stands alongside America's finest special operations forces to serve our country and the American people and to protect their way of life.

Jimmy Moriarty was one of those men.

Moriarty was loved by his two sisters, who incessantly saw to it that their younger brother would be a well-rounded man. It is without a doubt that this distinguished soldier will be missed by his family, his friends, and his community.

We grieve the loss of this American warrior, but we celebrate and honor his life and his service. We are fortunate to have Green Berets like Moriarty standing in support of our country. We are fortunate that a man like Jimmy served this Nation as a volunteer. He stood for the best of those American ideals and values that the Special Forces represent. He was a son of freedom and a son of liberty and a son of Texas. He epitomized everything that is good and right about America.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to him and his family and friends and to the other two Green Berets who were killed in Jordan.

On December 5, 2016, taps was played for the last time as Staff Sergeant James Moriarty was buried in the deafening silence of Arlington National Cemetery—next to thousands of other Americans who gave their lives for this great Nation. Jimmy Moriarty was a rare breed. He was the American breed.

During World War II, General George Patton said:

> While we mourn the loss of such men, we should thank God that such men ever lived.

And that is just the way it is.

NEW LIFE REFUGE MINISTRIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FARENTHOLD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, January is Human Trafficking Awareness Month, and I would like to highlight a great organization that is fighting to end this modern day slavery.

The New Life Refuge Ministries is working to bring an end to the domestic sex trafficking of children. In 2015, in my hometown of Corpus Christi, Texas, we had 29 cases of child sex trafficking. The youngest victim was only 8 years old.

Founder and executive director Minta Moore has been working since 2010 to build a home for survivors so that they will have a safe place to heal and a safe place from which to transition back to a healthy lifestyle. This all-volunteer organization has cleared land, has laid a road, has poured a foundation, and is now in the construction phase of opening its first cottage. It is its hope to open its doors this May.

I applaud this organization and others like it that fight to eradicate human trafficking and that work to protect innocent children who have been victimized.

SCHOOL CHOICE

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, as the father of two daughters, I understand the importance of giving a high-quality education to our children. That is why I am here today to bring awareness to National School Choice Week.

School choice is a straightforward concept in that parents should have the choice about where to send their children to school and about picking the best educational environment for their children. This includes many options: traditional public schools, charter schools, magnet schools, private schools, homeschooling, and more. By choosing the appropriate educational options for their children, parents enable them to succeed.

Nationwide, approximately 2.6 million students are currently enrolled in more than 3,200 public magnet schools; more than 3 million are enrolled in charter schools; and 2.3 million are homeschooled. According to the National School Choice Week's organizers, 70 percent of Americans support school choice, and those numbers are even higher among growing demographic groups.

Some would say that school choice hurts public schools. I beg to differ. Studies have shown that student outcome in public schools actually improves with the more choices there are. I believe in competition in education and in giving control back to parents, teachers, and locally elected officials so that these groups can pursue initiatives that best help our children.

CONGRATULATING PRESIDENT TRUMP

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, I congratulate President Donald Trump on his inauguration last week. I look forward to working with him to accomplish many of our shared goals.

One of the first goals we must accomplish is the repeal and replacement of ObamaCare, which has been hurting people nationwide with its increasingly high premiums and deductibles. I am confident we will have a better system in place that will provide great health care to all Americans.

I also look forward to working with the President to improve our Nation's infrastructure, including ports like the Port of Corpus Christi and the Port of Victoria. By widening and deepening our Nation's ports and waterways, we will allow the United States not only to remain competitive, but to increase our exports to other nations, which will create jobs and make America great again.

Another goal President Trump and I share is increasing border security and stemming the surge of illegal immigrants through our Southern border. As a Texan, every day I see the disastrous impact that illegal drugs, human trafficking, and other illicit activities have on our children, border communities, and the Nation as a whole. Together, we can work to secure our borders and make America safer.

Finally, regulatory review and tax reform will put people in good-paying jobs.

The next few weeks are going to be busy for those of us here in Washington, D.C., but that is why people like me decided to come here—to make a difference, to help people, and to restore American exceptionalism.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 40 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Thank You, God, for giving us another day.

As the difficult work of governing now resumes, bless the Members of this assembly with wisdom, patience, and goodwill as they tackle the ongoing issues challenging our Nation.

We thank You again for the inspiration of our Nation's Founders and the legacy they left us with. May the Members of this assembly, and all Americans, be worthy of that legacy.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Florida (Mr. LAWSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. LAWSON of Florida led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

> I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESIGNATION FROM THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The SPEAKER laid before the House the following resignation from the House of Representatives:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 24, 2017.

Re Resignation from the United States Congress.

House Speaker PAUL RYAN,
U.S. Capitol,
Washington DC.

DEAR SPEAKER RYAN: I write to inform you officially that, effective January 24, 2017,

ahead of being sworn in as California's Attorney General, I will resign from my office as the Representative of the 34th Congressional District of California in the U.S. House of Representatives.

It has been a distinct honor to serve the people of Los Angeles and my country in Congress for more than 24 years. I am eternally grateful to my constituents for their tremendous counsel and support over those two decades.

I leave my work in Congress with mixed emotions. The People's House has been home to some of America's greatest patriots and talent. I have learned from them and been fortunate to have had a chance to add my grains of sand—as we say in Spanish—to build a better America.

In service to my country I will always look for the best way to make the biggest difference for our people. Working as Attorney General on behalf of the more than 39 million Americans in California—the sixth most vibrant economy in the world—will give me that chance to fight for all Americans to share in the forward-leaning values and opportunities that have made California so great.

I hereby submit my resignation from the House of Representatives. I look forward to working with all of my colleagues in Congress in the future for the betterment of our great nation.

Sincerely,

XAVIER BECERRA,
Member of Congress.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 24, 2017.

Re Resignation from the United States Congress.

Governor JERRY BROWN,
State Capitol,
Sacramento, CA.

DEAR GOVERNOR BROWN: I write to inform you officially that, effective January 24, 2017, ahead of being sworn in as California's Attorney General, I will resign from my office as the Representative of the 34th Congressional District of California in the U.S. House of Representatives.

It has been a distinct honor to serve the people of Los Angeles and my country in Congress for more than 24 years. I am eternally grateful to my constituents for their tremendous counsel and support over those two decades.

I will do my utmost to uphold your faith in me to serve as our great state's next chief law enforcement officer and legal advocate. And while I leave Congress with mixed emotions, I am ready to begin my work as Attorney General. California's hard-working families are counting on us, and we won't let them down.

Sincerely,

XAVIER BECERRA.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. Under clause 5(d) of rule XX, the Chair announces to the House that, in light of the resignation of the gentleman from California (Mr. BECERRA), the whole number of the House is 433.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

MOVE PAST POLITICAL DIVISION

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

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, our Nation is clearly divided. The division was displayed when a group of students from Marion High School in my district came to Washington for the inauguration weekend.

On the way back to their hotel on Saturday night, a group of protesters surrounded their bus, threw projectiles through the windows, and painted the bus. Imagine that. A group of history students coming 13 hours across this great Nation and wanting to participate in the peaceful transfer of power only to be intimidated.

Free speech is essential to our democracy. However, acts of violence and intimidation have no place. Now is the time for both parties to move to get past this political division that is going through this country.

TAKE AWAY ANTITRUST EXEMPTION FROM HEALTH INSURERS

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Madam Speaker, I remember the bad old days of health insurance before the Affordable Care Act. They could refuse to sell you a policy if you had ever been sick. They could refuse to renew your policy if you got sick. Oh, and they had another thing called rescission, where they could put a group of examiners on you and try and take away your policy if you got sick, and this happened numerous times due to technicalities.

They can't do those things anymore.

They had a cap on your benefits. If you had a really expensive disease: Oh, sorry, your benefits are exhausted. You just go die now.

So those things are gone; but if they totally repeal the Affordable Care Act, they are likely to come roaring back.

The Republicans say competition will take care of that. The problem is there is no competition in the insurance industry. They are exempt from antitrust law. They can and they do collude to set rates, to redline people, to decide what States they will sell policies in.

Therefore, today, I am introducing the Health Insurance Fair Competition Act. It would subject the health insurance industry to the same laws that apply to every other industry in America—except for professional sports are exempt from antitrust law. This is a commonsense solution.

If they can rely on competition, we need competition. There wouldn't be any unless we take away their antitrust exemption.

REPEAL MANDATES AND TAXES OF OBAMACARE AND REFORM TAX CODE

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

Mr. GIBBS. Madam Speaker, this Congress must keep our promises to the American people. Our first responsibility is to institute policies that will grow our economy and create jobs.

For 8 years, Americans looking for work have suffered while the regulatory state sucked nearly $2 trillion out of our economy. We must rescind these burdensome regulations and enact a commonsense approach to regulations.

ObamaCare has failed, and it is time to repeal or replace it with a patient-driven plan that incorporates free market-based principles. We have to repeal the mandates and taxes of ObamaCare and make sure no one falls through the cracks.

Finally, we have to reform our Tax Code. It is far too long and complicated. We have to cut the tax rate from a maximum of 15 to 20 percent.

These policies will jump-start the American economy from a stagnant growth rate to more than 4 percent GNP growth rate. Only a vibrant economy can provide for a strong national security and robust infrastructure capable of supporting jobs.

OPPOSE REPEAL OF THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

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

Mr. LAWSON of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise to voice my strong opposition to the current efforts to repeal the Affordable Care Act.

Nearly 20 million Americans have gained access to health care because of the Affordable Care Act, including nearly 1.5 million Floridians. Because of the ACA, over 278,000 children in Florida have gained healthcare coverage, and 132,000 young adults in Florida have been able to remain on their parents' health insurance plan until they reach age 26. Women in Florida and across this Nation can now purchase health insurance for the same price as men because of the ACA's ban on gender rating.

Repealing the law could endanger the health and welfare of hundreds of thousands of Floridians and their families. Repealing the ACA would not only make America sick again, but it would threaten the economic security of every American. I will not stand by and allow my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to dismantle the ACA and threaten the health and economic security of millions of hardworking Americans.

REMEMBERING A PILLAR OF ST. CLOUD, DICK BERNICK

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

Mr. EMMER. Madam Speaker, this past week our community lost a dedicated leader and a friend. Dick Bernick, the patriarch of the third generation to run family-owned Bernick's Companies, passed away after an incredible life.

Bernick's Companies is a Minnesota success story. This past year, Bernick's and the Bernick family reached an amazing milestone with the 100th anniversary celebration of the business. Dick played a huge role in that success by guiding and growing the family business through good and financially difficult times.

Dick Bernick's life was an American success not just because of his business, but because his life was filled with family, friends, and service to the community he so loved. Dick gave so much to the St. Cloud community. In fact, his company continues to donate a percentage of its profits back to different charities and organizations in the communities that Bernick serves.

We send our sincere condolences to Dick's wife, Lila; his children; and the rest of his family. We hope that you will find comfort in the fact that Dick's life and his legacy of generosity have left an indelible mark on the community that he loved, and that he will always be remembered.

PRESIDENT TRUMP'S FAILURE TO DIVEST OWNERSHIP INTERESTS

(Mr. DEUTCH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DEUTCH. Madam Speaker, it doesn't take a law degree. It doesn't take imagination. All it takes is common sense to see that President Trump's ownership and his family's operation of hotels and golf courses and rental properties is ripe for corruption.

President Trump's failure to completely divest his ownership interest not only violates tradition followed by every other modern President, it is unconstitutional. The Constitution prohibits any U.S. official—including President Trump—from taking payments from foreign governments.

His ongoing involvement in The Trump Organization will let foreign governments funnel payments to his businesses. Foreign operatives will try to curry favor with the administration with no accountability to the American people.

When he took the oath of office last week, President Trump swore to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States. Sadly, his refusal to cut his business ties has broken that vow in these very first days of his administration.

HONORING RUTH SAMUELSON

(Mr. PITTENGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTENGER. Madam Speaker, I rise today in memory of Ruth Samuelson, a long-time leader in the North Carolina House of Representatives and a former member of the Mecklenburg County Commission. Ruth is now in Heaven following a courageous battle with ovarian cancer.

Ruth infused her faith in God in all aspects of her family, political, personal, and civic life. Because of her vibrant faith and commitment to focusing on what truly matters, Ruth was known as a thoughtful mediator throughout her tenure in the North Carolina House, someone who approached tense, partisan issues with grace, yet never backed away from her convictions.

In 2013, Ruth was in line for a top leadership role, but instead, she walked away, choosing instead to focus on her passions for family, faith, and philanthropy. Ruth's last public statement was: ''I want people to know that God is my good friend.''

May the Lord bring comfort to her husband, Ken; to her children, Bobby, David, Joy, and Alex; her four grandchildren; and the countless lives that she touched.

WOMEN'S RIGHT TO MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS ABOUT HEALTH

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

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of every woman's right to make her own informed decisions about her health, including access to family planning and reproductive health care.

While the rest of the world moves forward, we are turning the tide clock back to the era of ''Mad Men.'' However, unlike President Trump and my Republican colleagues, I have heard the voices of hundreds of thousands of people I marched with last Saturday.

I accept the overwhelming research opposing the outrageous policies that President Trump and the Republicans in Congress have placed at the center of their agenda, policies like the global gag rule and H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act. These dangerous and irresponsible policies are a disgraceful attack on women's rights domestically and throughout the world.

Let's get this straight, Madam Speaker. What this is about is keeping low-income women from accessing the health care they so rightfully deserve.

□ 1215

SUPPORT FOR H.R. 7

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

Mr. WILLIAMS. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act.

Madam Speaker, barring the use of certain Federal funding for abortion is not a new concept. The Hyde amendment has, more or less, called for this ban for 40 years, but the Hyde amendment is not permanent and must be reintroduced every year for it to go into effect. As such, it has been reformed from time to time, and, sooner or later, I believe it will cease to be implemented; so it is time to make the Hyde amendment permanent law. It is long overdue.

Madam Speaker, this bill we are debating is not about man versus woman; it is not about liberal versus conservative; H.R. 7 is not about taking away the rights of a woman. It is about protecting the rights of the unborn because, at the end of the day, this is what this comes down to. Who knew something so obviously and so morally right would be so controversial?

I ask my colleagues to support this bill as we protect the lives of those who cannot speak for themselves.

In God we trust.

H.R. 7 AND GAG RULE

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

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 7, the latest attack on women's reproductive rights.

Today's bill comes on the coattails of the new administration's yesterday reinstating the global gag rule, which limits women's reproductive health care outside the U.S.—and all of this after 3.2 million women and men across the country participated in the women's march last Saturday. The march sent a clear message that this administration should not undermine women's rights and women's health care.

And this is the response—to undermine women's reproductive health care?

Madam Speaker, the people of our country are watching; they are showing up; they are paying attention; and they will not back down in the face of attempts to move this country backwards.

I urge my colleagues to oppose H.R. 7.

SITES RESERVOIR IS OVERDUE

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Madam Speaker, while it might be raining lately in California, we still need additional water supply infrastructure to meet the needs of agriculture and a growing population. The Sites Reservoir is the only project in California that will improve the water supply for cities, farms, as well as for the environment.

If the Sites Reservoir were in place today, California would have an estimated additional 600,000 acre-feet of water stored so far this winter in addition to similar amounts from last year and even water that could have been impounded during the high flows during the drought years. Had we had this infrastructure in place, we would have had enough water to supply 4.8 million Californians for an entire year just on this winter's flows, and the winter is not even over yet. The Sites Reservoir will not only capture enough high winter flow, but it will also allow for the reuse of water released from Lake Shasta so that human and environmental water use are no longer mutually exclusive.

Madam Speaker, let's not lose this opportunity to conserve water and to not be delayed again and again.

IN OPPOSITION TO H.R. 7

(Ms. CLARKE of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act.

I speak for my constituents of the Ninth Congressional District of New York and for women across the Nation when I say that H.R. 7 is not only dangerous, but it is misleading and would be detrimental to women's health everywhere.

This bill not only creates barriers for women who want to access abortion care, but it unfairly targets low-income women with there being a particularly disproportionate effect on women of color, who are more likely to live below the poverty level and become eligible for Medicaid. Additionally, it penalizes small businesses that want to provide comprehensive healthcare coverage to their employees, including reproductive health care.

Let's not punish the single mother who recently left her abusive husband and who has no money, no job, and no health insurance—except for Medicaid—in making her unable to receive the abortion care and services she desperately needs. Let's not punish the young woman who is suffering from cancer, whose life will be in danger if she cannot access an abortion.

This past weekend, millions of women and men across the country, including me, marched with one goal in mind: to let the world know that our rights must be respected and protected. A woman's right to an abortion should be a personal choice that she makes, not a decision that government makes for her.

SUPPORT FOR H.R. 7

(Mr. SHIMKUS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to support H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act.

H.R. 7 codifies policies that have been enacted for more than 30 years, on a case-by-case basis, that prohibit the Federal funding of abortion, including the Hyde amendment, which prohibits funding for elective abortion coverage through any program funded through the annual Labor, Health, and Human Services Appropriations Act; the Smith FEHBP amendment, which prohibits funding for health plans that include elective abortion coverage for Federal employees; the Dornan amendment, which prohibits the use of congressionally appropriated funds for abortion in the District of Columbia; and the restrictions on elective abortion funding through the Peace Corps and Federal prisons.

GLOBAL GAG RULE

(Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, look at this picture. Where are the women?

Yesterday, the President signed an executive order affecting and restricting health care for millions of women across the world while no woman was present. Clearly, he did not hear the voices of the millions of women who marched for their rights and for their health care this past weekend. Reinstating the global gag rule will cut off funding for global healthcare organizations that offer reproductive health care for women from some of the poorest and neediest countries in the world.

I urge my colleagues to join me in opposing the global gag rule and any other assault on women's rights in America or around the world.

LA ROSA BLANCA'S 58TH ANNIVERSARY

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, January 28 marks the 58th anniversary of the founding of La Rosa Blanca, or as it is known in English, The White Rose.

Founded by Rafael Diaz-Balart, The White Rose is an important organization that is dedicated to opposing Castro's Communist tyranny and to offering a blueprint for Cuba's future reconstruction. It promotes democracy and freedom and prepares for the day that Cuba will finally be returned to the people of Cuba.

These ideas are embodied in The White Rose Institute, which is a nonprofit that was started by Rafael's son, my dear friend and legislative brother, Lincoln Diaz-Balart. The White Rose Institute will honor two Cuban leaders who have come to embody Rafael's ideas: Jorge Luis Garcia Perez ''Antunez'' and Felicia Guillen Amador.

Bravely fighting the Castro dictatorship for even the most basic of human rights, Antunez, Felicia, and those like them are the real future of Cuba, which is a future without the Castros' dictatorship, without the brutal repression. It is a future as Rafael and The White Rose envisioned—of freedom, sacred freedom.

HOMEOWNERSHIP FOR THE WORKING AND MIDDLE CLASS

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

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI. Mr. Speaker, for millions of Americans, homeownership stands as a source of personal and economic security and is a defining part of the middle class life.

Earlier this month, under President Obama, the Federal Housing Administration announced a plan to make mortgages more affordable for nearly 1 million working and middle class families who are buying their first homes. In his first hours in office, President Trump reversed President Obama's plan with an executive action that will cost Americans an average of $500 more per year to get a mortgage. Experts project that 40,000 families who would have bought homes will no longer be able to do so.

The Trump administration's order to make mortgages more expensive will not strengthen our economy; it will not create jobs; it will not make America great again—but it will make life harder for working families.

NATIONAL SCHOOL CHOICE WEEK

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

Mr. BIGGS. Madam Speaker, I rise to celebrate National School Choice Week. Allowing parents to choose the best educational outcomes for their children gives every child a better chance to succeed and prepares students for their futures.

School choice has greatly benefited Arizona—from charter schools to vocational schools, to private school scholarships, to education savings accounts. I am grateful that my State is a national leader in diverse school choice programs.

Arizona's scholarship tax credit program gives taxpayers a dollar-for-dollar tax credit to enable low-income and disabled children to attend private schools. In Arizona, more children per capita attend exemplary charter schools, and, indeed, they are some of the best charter schools in the country. We have significantly expanded the education savings account model so students can receive the best education possible that meets their unique needs, including those of tribal families who live in reservation communities.

Arizona recognizes that all children are unique, that they learn differently, and that each child should have the opportunity to attend the school that will help him learn to love learning and succeed. I hope other States will look at Arizona's example as they expand school choice. I am pleased President Trump has made school choice a priority by nominating Betsy DeVos to lead the Department of Education.

IN SUPPORT OF THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

(Mr. KEATING asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KEATING. Madam Speaker, let me share with you and the Members an Affordable Care Act story from Gwyneth Packard, from my hometown of Bourne, Massachusetts. Gwyneth contacted me to tell me about her uncle, Wayne Dickason.

It was Thanksgiving 2015, and Wayne went to see his doctor because he was not feeling well. His doctor ran some tests. The next day, Wayne received an unnerving call asking him to come back in. Before he could make the next appointment, Wayne's insurance provider called his employer to inform the company that its rates would be going up because one of its employees had cancer. Wayne had been a computer technician at his company for 18 years. His boss knew he had not been feeling well, so it was not hard for him to figure out which employee was the cause since Wayne was the only one who was sick. At work the next day, Wayne's boss called him into the office and said he was laying him off because his company couldn't afford the new premium.

Thankfully, Wayne was able to purchase coverage through the insurance exchange. Wayne saw his doctor, got his official diagnosis, and began formulating a plan. Because he was able to purchase health care, even with his having preexisting conditions, Wayne got the lifesaving surgery he needed.

IN SUPPORT OF THE SECOND AMENDMENT

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

Mr. DUNN. Madam Speaker, when I ran for Congress, I made a promise to hang my family's Revolutionary War musket in my office as a steadfast reminder of the reason I am here in Washington: to support and defend the Constitution and to honor those who have fought for the Constitution and those who continue to fight for our freedom. We must never forget how precious our constitutional rights are, and the right to bear arms is one of the most important because that right ensures our ability to defend all of our rights.

As a veteran of the United States Army and as a life member of the NRA, I will fight in Congress to defend our right to bear arms. It is a special honor to represent the great people of the Second District of Florida and to fight for their conservative values in Congress.

□ 1230

STOP THE CRADLE-TO-GRAVE NEGLECT

(Ms. WILSON of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Madam Speaker, as the House begins consideration of H.R. 7, I rise in solidarity with the women of the world. I rise in outrage at yet another attempt to control our bodies and our access to quality care.

Madam Speaker, it is my body. It doesn't belong to this House. I alone bear the burden, pain, and joy that it brings. Please stop trying to regulate my reproductive organs. They belong to me.

Have you ever had a menstrual period? Have you ever felt the unbearable pain in every bone of your body during childbirth?

Madam Speaker, there are millions of mothers living in inadequate public housing and trailer parks, raising their children alone. And we are here to consider anti-choice bills that restrict access to women's care?

If the Republican House passes H.R. 7, will it support universal pre-K and Head Start? Will this House reform foster care and stop greasing the prison pipeline with unwanted children?

It seems to me that this Republican House cares about babies right up until the minute they are born into the world, and then they disappear and desert the children forever. It is time to stop the cradle-to-grave neglect.

How many more anti-choice bills do we need to put on the floor before we do what is important to build a society?

Madam Speaker, we need to give women and their families and their doctors the ability to make decisions for their bodies. Leave my body alone.

HONORING RUTH SAMUELSON

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

Mr. BUDD. Madam Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I stand here to share with you a few words about North Carolina's dear friend, Ruth Samuelson.

Ruth was only 57 when she went to glory yesterday morning. Her grace in the fight against cancer was a trait that was seen in her life as a wife of 35 years to Ken, as a mom, and as a public servant.

It was this strength rooted in her Christian faith that provided her with the grace to lead and to champion causes that she held dear. Although Ruth worked in the often divided world of politics, she garnered respect from all sides.

This week we will discuss an issue that was very dear to Ruth: the right to life. She fought hard for the lives of the unborn with heart and compassion that earned admiration from all.

Her grace and leadership will forever continue to inspire all she encountered.

I would like to end with a passage of significance to Ruth and her husband, Ken. It is from Matthew 6:33:

''But seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.''

We will miss you, Ruth, but we know that you have been added to the Kingdom of God.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN). The Chair will remind all persons in the gallery that they are here as guests of the House and that any manifestation of approval or disapproval of proceedings is in violation of the rules of the House.

A WOMAN'S RIGHT AND LIBERTY TO MAKE OWN HEALTH DECISIONS

(Mrs. LAWRENCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak against H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion and Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act.

We are here to represent all of our constituents, even the ones we don't agree with. It should be the woman alone who makes the decision, not Republicans, not Democrats, not the Trump administration, no one but the woman and her doctor.

I support choice so every woman in America could make the decision that is right for her, her family, her God, her health, and her reproduction.

Creating access issues and removing coverage does not stop abortions; it drives them underground. H.R. 7 essentially creates a disparity between poor women and rich women.

For women, children, foster youth, for the LGBT community, for the middle class, working class, poor people, people of color, undocumented residents, and people who see health care as a right and not as a privilege for those who can afford it, they should have the right and liberty to make their own health decisions.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SCHOOL CHOICE

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, this week marks National School Choice Week, an opportunity to recognize the importance of providing families choice in education.

As the husband of a retired schoolteacher and the grateful father of four sons and eight grandchildren, I know firsthand the benefit of school choice. We should strive for education that recognizes the individual needs of our students.

Last week, I was appreciative to visit schools to experience school choice at work. I visited a charter school, a public school, and a homeschool group. Thank you to Mark Brown, principal of Horse Creek Academy in Aiken; to Dr. Bill Coon, principal of Meadow Glen Middle School in Lexington; and Wendy Hoyle, the president of the Aiken Area Home Educators. You make a remarkable difference for students.

I believe that Education Secretary Betsy DeVos will make a very positive difference in the tradition of Education Superintendent Molly Spearman of South Carolina.

In conclusion, God bless our troops and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

INFRINGING UPON WOMEN'S RIGHTS

(Ms. ADAMS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. ADAMS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my opposition to H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion and Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act.

A woman's right to choose shouldn't depend on her location, income, or insurance. It is just 2 days since the 44th anniversary of Roe v. Wade, and Republicans are, once again, attacking women's health care.

This legislation would prevent Federal funds from being spent on health benefits that include abortion coverage, causing women and families who depend on ACA to lose their coverage.

A woman who can't afford an abortion and needs one should not be stripped of her constitutionally protected right to one because of her insurance.

We have to stand up and fight for our sister's right to choose and her right to control her own body. It is not the Federal Government's business. It is personal. It is my business.

I will continue to challenge any attempt to infringe upon women's rights and strongly encourage my colleagues to join me in protecting that right.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 7, NO TAXPAYER FUNDING FOR ABORTION AND ABORTION INSURANCE FULL DISCLOSURE ACT OF 2017

Ms. CHENEY. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 55 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 55

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 7) to prohibit taxpayer funded abortions. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and on any amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the Majority Leader and the Minority Leader or their respective designees; and (2) one motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from Wyoming is recognized for 1 hour.

Ms. CHENEY. Madam Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. CHENEY. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Wyoming?

There was no objection.

Ms. CHENEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 55, which provides a closed rule for consideration of H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion and Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act. This bipartisan bill will codify and make permanent what is commonly referred to as the Hyde amendment and expand Hyde amendment restrictions to all Federal agencies.

First offered in 1976, the Hyde amendment prevents taxpayer dollars from being used to fund abortions through government programs like Medicaid. These restrictions have been maintained for more than 40 years through the annual appropriations process, including the most recent continuing resolution passed last December. It is time that these important protections against the use of taxpayer funding to pay for abortion be made permanent.

A GAO report in 2014 found that, under ObamaCare, over 1,000 insurance plans covered elective abortion. Those plans are purchased with taxpayer subsidies. H.R. 7 would stop this and make ObamaCare conform to the Hyde amendment. If the Hyde amendment had been applied to ObamaCare, as President Obama promised it would be, the number of federally subsidized plans with elective abortion coverage would have been zero.

As we work to repeal and replace the deeply flawed ObamaCare, we need to ensure taxpayer subsidies are not used to pay for abortion coverage.

According to a Marist Poll conducted last July, 62 percent of respondents—a majority of the women asked—and including 45 percent of those who identify as pro-choice do not support taxpayer funding for abortions. H.R. 7 simply codifies and makes permanent a protection against the use of taxpayer funding for abortion that the majority of Americans and certainly a majority of my constituents in Wyoming support.

Therefore, I urge support for the rule to allow consideration of H.R. 7.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. I thank the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Ms. CHENEY) for the customary 30 minutes.

(Mr. MCGOVERN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to yet another closed rule. Last night in the Rules Committee, there were three thoughtful amendments that were brought forward. They were all germane and all complied with the rules of the House. Yet, once again, the Republicans in the Rules Committee denied each and every one of them.

There is no opportunity for any amendments to be heard here today and no opportunity for there to be a real debate, and I regret that very much. Again, that is the trend that we see in this Congress.

Madam Speaker, I also oppose the underlying bill. I have a fundamental belief that politicians in Washington should not have the right to interfere in the health decisions of a woman; and this deceptively titled bill will do just that. It continues this Republican majority's never-ending crusade against women, and it is an attempt to take away the constitutionally protected right to abortion services for millions of women, especially middle class and low-income women. That is wrong.

Madam Speaker, these healthcare decisions should be made between women and their doctors, not politicians in Washington.

Who the hell are we in this Chamber to make these private and oftentimes painful decisions for women?

Republicans claim that this bill is about codifying the Hyde amendment, which has been around for four decades. That is 40 years too long, in my opinion. But this bill isn't really about the Hyde amendment. Despite what Republicans claim, this extreme and sweeping bill would go even further by placing unprecedented limits on women's access to reproductive health services even if they want to pay for abortion coverage out of their own pockets.

Placing restrictions on how women with private insurance can spend private dollars when purchasing health insurance would radically change our Nation's longstanding policy. It is deeply troubling and must not become law.

Madam Speaker, just days ago during the nationwide Women's March, millions of people gathered all across the country and around the globe to defend women's rights. These marches were likely the single largest day of protest in American history. More than half a

million people took to the streets right here in our Nation's Capital; and I was proud to march with these dedicated men and women, along with my wife and my daughter. My son, I am also proud to say, joined the march in Boston.

The marches were peaceful. Not a single arrest was reported in Washington, D.C. And they were also clear, sending a message to each of us that women's rights are human rights.

But far from respecting those rights, the majority is here today attacking a woman's constitutional right to make her own decisions about her health, her family, and her future.

Despite this dangerous bill passing the Republican-controlled House in previous Congresses, it has traditionally died in the Senate; and I hope the Senate keeps with that tradition.

The ultimate goal of congressional Republicans and of Donald Trump is to overturn Roe v. Wade. Make no mistake about it. They want to take us back to the days of back-alley abortions where women lost their lives. That would be an awful thing to do.

I hope people who believe in upholding a woman's right to choose are watching this debate, and I hope that they are just as outraged as I am by this attempt to roll back women's healthcare rights. I hope they call their Representatives in Congress today to speak out. This is a time for action, and we need all of you to make your voices heard.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. CHENEY. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX).

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, our colleague on the other side of the aisle asked: Who the hell are we to be here speaking on this legislation and passing this legislation?

Well, Madam Speaker, we are the Representatives of the people of this country.

Madam Speaker, the most conservative estimates show that we have lost 54 million children to abortion since 1973. In a nation founded upon principles that recognize the dignity of every human life, we should not tolerate this extermination of innocent lives.

□ 1245

The majority of Americans recognize this tragedy for what it is, and there is consensus among them that they do not want their tax dollars paying for a practice they sincerely oppose, and we are their representatives.

Since 1976, the Hyde amendment has been included in relevant appropriations bills to prohibit Federal funding of abortions. Each year it has been consistently renewed and supported by congressional majorities and Presidents of both parties.

Estimates from the Congressional Budget Office indicate that the Hyde amendment has prevented hundreds of thousands of abortions each year. That means millions of Americans are alive today because of the Hyde amendment. After 40 years, it is time for this lifesaving amendment to become permanent law.

H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion and Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act, makes the Hyde amendment and other current abortion funding prohibitions permanent and government-wide. This commonsense measure restores a longstanding agreement that protects the unborn and prevents taxpayers from being forced to finance thousands of elective abortions.

For these reasons, I urge my colleagues to vote to respect our Nation's consensus on abortion funding and affirm life by voting in favor of this rule and H.R. 7.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY).

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam Speaker, a few days ago, I stood immersed in a sea of women, of men, and of children of all colors, creeds, and backgrounds; citizens who fiercely believe that the diversity of their opinions anchor, that they do not undermine, the values that we share, and that their personal activism and unique advocacy could be traced back to one collective, guiding principle—equality.

As hundreds of thousands of people swarmed this Capital, Boston Common, town greens from Wilton, New Hampshire, to Newport, Oregon, they sent a clear message to their government that when you treat any of us as less, you threaten all of us.

And that is what this bill does. It tells women across this country that their health can be compromised; that constitutionally guaranteed means something different to them than it does to men.

If this was a simple attempt to limit a woman's legal right to abortion or reproductive health care, that would be bad enough. But it is more than that.

Combined with yesterday's reinstatement of the global gag rule, this bill crystallizes the fact that our new GOP-led government sees women's health care as expendable, both within and far beyond our borders.

Make no mistake, if my colleagues continue down this path, I know that there will be a few million men, women, and children willing to keep marching.

Ms. CHENEY. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would just note that our colleagues on the other side of the aisle have referred several times now to the massive turnout for the women's march here, and we, ourselves, will be having, I am sure, a very large turnout this week; as well as I would like to point out that that women's march excluded groups that were pro-life women's groups. And so the notion that somehow it was reflective of all women in this Nation is fundamentally misleading.

Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes of my time to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), the cosponsor of this bill who has done tremendous work.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentlewoman for yielding, and I want to thank her for her leadership, for being one of the prime cosponsors of the bill, H.R. 7, along with Mrs. BLACK, Ms. FOXX, Mrs. WAGNER, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mrs. NOEM, Mrs. HARTZLER, and all the others who have joined in as sponsors of this lifesaving legislation.

I would also like to thank Speaker RYAN, Majority Leader MCCARTHY, Whip SCALISE, and Conference Chair CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS for their extraordinary leadership in defending the most innocent and the most vulnerable among us, unborn children, as well as providing protections for their mothers, and for bringing this legislation, H.R. 7, to the floor.

Forty years ago, Madam Speaker, Congress enacted the Hyde amendment, a law that continues to this day to proscribe Federal Medicaid funds from being used to subsidize abortion in most circumstances.

More than 20 peer-reviewed studies show that more than 2 million people are alive today, 2 million, because of the Hyde amendment. Two million people who would have been aborted, instead, survived because public funds were unavailable to effectuate their violent demise, while their mothers benefited from prenatal health care and support; 2 million survivors who have had the opportunity to live and to enjoy the most basic and the most elemental of all human rights, the right to life.

Madam Speaker, we are experiencing a megatrend in America, consistently reflected in polling data, including the most recent polling data from the Marist Poll yesterday, that showed that 61 percent of Americans are against public funding for abortion, and most want, even those who identify as pro-choice, more restrictions to protect the innocent unborn.

People are seeing the truth of who abortion actually destroys, as today's proudly shared, first baby pictures are most often of ultrasound imaging photos depicting the amazing miracle of the developing child in the womb.

Growing numbers of Americans are often shocked to learn that the methods of abortion include dismemberment of a child's fragile body, including decapitation, and the severing of arms and legs, or the use of drugs like RU–486 that literally starve the child to death before forcibly expelling her or him from the safety of the womb.

Yet, the billion-dollar abortion industry continues to cleverly market the chief sophistry of choice, while going to extraordinary lengths to cover up, ignore, and trivialize the battered victim child in the womb.

Madam Speaker, pro-life Americans struggle for the day when abortion violence will be replaced by compassion and empathy for women and respect for

the weak and most vulnerable among us, the child in the womb. They believe, as do my pro-life colleagues, that we ought to love them both, mother and child, and not fund the destruction of children through abortion.

Lawmakers also need to hear the courageous voices of women who are silent no more, a rapidly expanding number of women who share the agony and heartbreak that they have endured after procuring an abortion.

As I mentioned, yesterday there was a poll that came out, and, again, it found that 61 percent of Americans oppose taxpayer funding for abortion, and only 35 percent support it, which is precisely what we seek to accomplish with enactment of H.R. 7. It would make the Hyde amendment and other current abortion funding restrictions permanent and government-wide.

I would note, parenthetically, that soon after the Hyde amendment was enacted in 1976, other abortion funding riders were enacted into law, and Hyde itself was upheld by the Supreme Court in 1980.

In 1983, I authored the ban on funding abortion in the Federal Employees Health Benefits program. Most must be renewed legislatively each and every year. This legislation would make it permanent.

The legislation ensures that the Affordable Care Act, until repeal, conforms with the Hyde amendment.

I would remind my colleagues that just a few feet from where I stand, on September 9, 2009—and I have his speech right in front of me—the President of the United States said: ''And one more misunderstanding I want to clear up—under our plan, no Federal dollars will be used to fund abortions, and Federal conscience laws will remain in place.''

Well, on the latter, the conscience laws remained in place, but they were just simply not enforced.

And of course we know now, as my good friend, Ms. CHENEY, mentioned, we know that, according to the GAO—because people kept saying in the early years, oh, there is no funding, public funding for abortion, so we asked GAO to look into it. They came back and said there is much—over 1,000 plans pay for abortion on demand.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD an article that appeared in The Washington Post: ''Does Obamacare provide federal subsidies for elective abortions?'' It talks about the GAO report, and it basically says that those who claim that it does, they earn three Pinocchios.

[Jan. 26, 2017]

DOES OBAMACARE PROVIDE FEDERAL SUBSIDIES FOR ELECTIVE ABORTIONS?

(By Michelle Ye Hee Lee)

''The president's health-care law authorized massive subsidies to assist millions of Americans to purchase private health plans that will cover abortion on demand. In other words, hard-earned taxpayer dollars are now being used to pay for elective abortions. This is simply unacceptable.''—Rep. Virginia Foxx (R–N.C.), House debate, Jan. 22, 2015

The argument that the Affordable Care Act, a.k.a. Obamacare, provides federal subsidies for abortions came up several times during the House debate on an antiabortion bill.

The bill would prohibit using federal funds for any abortions or for any health plans that cover abortions. Under Obamacare, federal funds can be used to cover abortions for pregnancies caused by rape or incest, or that endanger the mother's life. But no federal subsidies for premiums can be used for elective abortions. The House debate centered on whether this restriction is being enforced, and whether additional protection for taxpayers are needed.

There often is overheated rhetoric in the abortion debate that cannot be fact-checked. (The Fact Checker previously examined Democrats' claims following the Hobby Lobby ruling.)

The bill's opponents, who support abortion rights, say the system works and that the measure would unnecessarily restrict women's private insurance choices. Lawmakers who oppose abortion rights don't buy it; they say the system is just an accounting gimmick. The goal of this fact check is not to relitigate the debate but to examine evidence to support the above statement, which was repeated throughout the debate.

Foxx, one of the lawmakers arguing for the bill, was among several Republicans who claimed federal subsidies are paying for elective abortions. Does this accurately portray how abortions are covered under Obamacare?

THE FACTS

The House passed H.R. 7, No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion and Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act of 2015, on the anniversary of the Supreme Court's 1973 Roe v. Wade decision. The bill was a watered-down measure that the House took up at the last minute after GOP leaders pulled an initial, more restrictive bill.

Public funding for abortions is intricately structured. Under the Hyde Amendment, federal funds can't be used for elective abortions under Medicaid-funded plans. Some states do pay 100 percent of the cost of elective abortions without passing on any cost to the federal government.

Under Obamacare, health insurance plans could cover some or all elective abortions, but they can't use federal tax credits and subsidies to offset the cost. Insurance providers that cover elective abortions must charge consumers separately and deposit the money into a separate account that contains no federal money. Providers need to bill enrollees separately for elective abortions by itemizing them separately in monthly bills or sending separate bills.

States can pass laws to ban or restrict health plans from providing coverage for elective abortions. In 2014, 23 states restricted coverage for these procedures. There were 1,036 plans in 28 states that provided some or all coverage for elective abortions.

In a speech to Congress and a subsequent executive order, President Obama gave assurances that federal subsidies would not be used to cover elective abortion services. He ordered Health and Human Services and the Office of Management and Budget to issue a guideline for states so they can comply with billing and funding segregation requirements.

Obama's not keeping his promise, say supporters of H.R. 7. Staffers for Foxx and two of the other lawmakers who made similar claims—H.R. 7 sponsor Rep. Chris Smith (R–N.J.) and Rep. Ana Wagner (R–MO.)—pointed to a September 2014 Government Accountability Office report. At the request of GOP leaders, the GAO examined whether health plans were following the elective abortion billing requirements.

GAO picked 18 plans in 10 states with no laws restricting abortion coverage as a nonprobability sample representing a quarter of all health plans that cover elective abortions. GAO found 17 of 18 issuers were not separately billing consumers. The one remaining issuer said its bills show there is a charge ''for coverage of services for which member subsidies may not be used.''

These issuers did not give blanket coverage for all abortions. One covered abortions that a health-care provider determines necessary, and two limited coverage to no more than one elective abortion a year. All 18 issuers had payment requirements such as co-pays, deductions and out-of-pocket costs.

The report did not examine whether the providers were illegally using federal subsidies to pay for elective abortion services. In response to the report, HHS released a new set of regulations to clarify billing and funding segregation requirements.

Experts say the GAO's findings do not necessarily mean insurance providers are inappropriately using federal subsidies to cover abortion services. There is no government or industry agency tracking insurers' compliance, making it impossible to know whether providers are following the law, they said.

''It's really not clear how these different plans are being operationalized,'' said Alina Salganicoff, Kaiser Family Foundation's director of women's health policy.

The GAO report found premium amounts collected from elective abortion services ranged from 51 cents to $1.46 per enrollee per month. To put this in context, the national average premium for a 40-year-old person purchasing coverage through the marketplace was between $224 to $270 per month, according to the Kaiser Family Foundation. (An earlier, non-age-specific average monthly estimate was $241.) Even if the maximum charge ($1.46) was added to the cheapest health plan ($224), the elective abortion surcharge is less than 1 percent of the monthly bill.

The key point made by lawmakers and advocacy groups who oppose abortion rights is that money is fungible, and that it doesn't matter exactly how the money is being collected. A dollar is a dollar, they say, and every dollar paid to an insurance provider in the marketplace ultimately goes into collective risk pools that are used to rim government-subsidized health insurance, so taxpayers are effectively paying for elective abortions.

''The point is the federal subsidies provided for those 1,036 plans are funding abortion just as much as the private funds contributed by the individual. That is consistent with the commonly held understanding that money is fungible and the funds received by the insurance company are used to pay all benefits,'' Sheridan Watson, Foxx's communications director, wrote to The Fact Checker.

THE PINOCCHIO TEST

The GAO's report found that the insurers it studied were not following billing requirements. But experts say that does not necessarily mean the providers were illegally using federal subsidies for abortions. Even if they were, Foxx's statement that Obamacare authorized ''massive'' subsidies is an exaggeration. Based on the estimates above, abortion charges would range from 0.2 percent to 0.65 percent of an enrollee's monthly bill.

The claim that ''hard-earned taxpayer dollars'' are paying for abortions ''on demand'' implies that taxpayers foot the abortion bill for any woman who requests one. But in reality, some providers still imposed their own restrictions on which abortions to cover, and all 18 issuers had payment requirements, such as out-of-pocket costs and co-pays.

Lawmakers like Foxx who oppose abortion rights discredit the billing and funding separation requirement for elective abortion services. Billing doesn't matter, they say, because federal tax dollars used for subsidies pay for everything in a health plan. This is an opinion, and something that can't be fact-checked. But to say that massive federal subsidies are paying for abortions on demand is not an accurate portrayal of this complex issue, and the facts in the GAO report do not support this argument.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MATSUI).

Ms. MATSUI. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to H.R. 7.

On Saturday, I joined millions of women, men, and children who took to the streets and raised their voices in defense of equality. We marched because women's rights are truly human rights. We marched because women should be able to make their own choices about their own bodies. We marched because everyone deserves health care, not just the privileged few.

And yet, here we find ourselves voting on another Republican attempt to cut off reproductive health care from the people who need it the most. H.R. 7 would be devastating for all women, but would disproportionately impact low-income families, women of color, immigrants, and young people.

But we were reminded this weekend that, as women, our destinies are tied together, and we will not be silent as Republicans attempt to interfere with a woman's constitutional right to choose. Women are watching.

Ms. CHENEY. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACK).

Mrs. BLACK. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the rule to provide consideration of H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion and Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act. This bill is, quite literally, the least we can do for American taxpayers and our voiceless unborn.

Frankly, the fact that we are even here discussing this, and that there is opposition to this bill at all, really does break my heart, and it speaks to the depths of the entanglement with the big abortion industry that exist in some corners of this Chamber. Because, at the end of the day, you know what this bill really is about? The right to choose.

We hear our friends across the aisle use the phrase a lot. But what about the other right to choose, the right of the taxpayer to choose not to pay for the practice that violates everything that they believe? That is what we are here to protect.

The American people support this policy, with 6 in 10 surveyed saying that taxpayer dollars should not be used to fund abortions. And these are both pro-life and pro-choice.

So today, Madam Speaker, I am asking my colleagues across the aisle to honor the will of their constituents. I am asking them to remember the good old Democratic rallying cry of safe, legal, and rare abortion. Obviously, abortion is not rare today when over 330,000 abortions are performed in 1 year.

If my colleagues still believe these words, they will join us in supporting this modest solution to keep unsuspecting taxpayers off of the hook for this practice. And if they can't vote for this bill then there is truly not a single limit on abortion that they will accept, and that is a sad commentary on the state of politics.

I urge a ''yes'' vote on the rule.

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

Let me just clarify for the RECORD that there is no Federal funding for abortion. All you have to do is read the Hyde amendment, which has been in effect for 40 years. I don't support it, but that is the law of the land.

The majority of Americans believe abortion should be legal. So if you want to talk about polls, the overwhelming number of Americans believe that abortions should be safe and legal.

I also would like to say that while my colleagues are working overtime to try to defund organizations like Planned Parenthood, it is because of Planned Parenthood, the counseling that is provided, and the reproductive services that are provided at their clinics, and contraception, that the number of abortions have decreased in this country.

Madam Speaker, I am going to ask my colleagues to defeat the previous question. And if we do, I am going to offer an amendment to the rule to bring up legislation, which I am happy to be a cosponsor of, along with Ms. ESHOO, that would require sitting Presidents and Presidential nominees to disclose their last 3 years of tax returns.

□ 1300

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will remind all persons in the gallery that they are here as guests of the House and that any manifestation of approval or disapproval of proceedings is in violation of the rules of the House.

The gentleman may continue.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Despite the long tradition of Presidents and Presidential nominees of disclosing their tax returns, Donald Trump has refused to release his, and his spokesperson recently said that he has no intention of doing so. The American people expect and deserve transparency, which this legislation would ensure.

Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of the amendment in the RECORD, along with extraneous material, immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, between his refusal to release his tax returns and all these business conflicts of interest, this Presidency is on a collision course with corruption.

Madam Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support our effort here.

To discuss our proposal, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from California (Ms. ESHOO).

Ms. ESHOO. Madam Speaker, I thank our wonderful colleague from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for yielding to me.

Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to the rule and the underlying legislation, and I urge my colleagues to defeat the previous question so that this bill that I have authored, the Presidential Tax Transparency Act, can be made in order for immediate floor debate and a vote.

Now, the Presidential Tax Transparency Act would require the President and future Presidential nominees of both parties to disclose their tax returns. Many Americans took for granted that this was covered by law, but what we have had is a decades-long tradition of voluntary disclosure by both Republican and Democratic nominees for the Presidency.

For the first time since the immediate post-Watergate era, candidate Trump and now President Trump has refused to release his tax returns to the public. Those who seek or hold the most powerful office in the world should be held to the highest standard of transparency to ensure the best interests of the American people are met.

Tax returns provide an important baseline disclosure because they contain highly instructive information, including whether the candidate paid any taxes, what they own, what they have borrowed and from whom, whether they have made charitable donations, and whether they have taken advantage of tax loopholes or offshore tax shelters.

The President and his spokesperson have both recently said that he will not release his tax returns because the American people ''don't care.'' I beg to differ. The top petition on the Web site of the White House calls for the release of the President's tax returns with over 300,000 signatures already on it. A Washington Post-ABC News poll released last week found that 74 percent of the American people, including 53 percent of whom are Republicans, believe the President should release his tax returns. We want a President free of conflicts of interest.

For all of these reasons, I urge my colleagues to reject the previous question and to vote for the Presidential Tax Transparency Act.

Ms. CHENEY. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, it is no surprise that our colleagues on the other side of the aisle would rather talk about just about anything besides the text and the substance of the rule and the bill that we are about to consider.

The transparency that is important to this debate and that is relevant for this discussion today is transparency that is in the rule and in this bill that would require that insurance companies make sure that people understand what they are purchasing and whether or not they are purchasing a plan that will, in fact, provide abortion coverage.

I also just want to note that although there may be some in this Chamber who view The Washington Post Fact Checker as the oracle and font of all wisdom, he got this one wrong, as he has in many cases, and, in fact, failed to understand that there are, as we meet here today, monthly advanced payments of U.S. taxpayer funding going to insurance companies or to exchanges to pay for health insurance plans that subsidize abortion on demand.

Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JODY B. HICE).

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I thank my friend from Wyoming.

Madam Speaker, regardless of attempts from the other side to distract and derail what we are discussing, the vote today is on the permanent application of the Hyde amendment, which would ban taxpayer dollars from being used for abortion.

The truth is that taxpayers get up and go to work every day. They work by the sweat of their brow. The majority of them find the practice of abortion to be a serious violation of their personal beliefs. Under that situation and scenario, it is unconscionable that this body would even consider taking the money of those hardworking taxpayers and using their money to fund abortion.

The Hyde amendment has traditionally maintained bipartisan support. It has been signed into law by both Democratic and Republican Presidents since 1976. In addition to that, the Supreme Court has upheld the law, doing so in 1980, ruling that, regardless of the freedom recognized in Roe v. Wade to terminate a pregnancy, there is not a constitutional entitlement to use taxpayer money to finance such an act.

The Hyde amendment has saved the lives of roughly 300,000 unborn children annually. It is bipartisan, it has been upheld by the Supreme Court, and it protects taxpayers who have a conscientious objection. So I strongly encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support H.R. 7 when it comes before the full House for a vote today.

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

Madam Speaker, I just would like to assure my colleague from Wyoming that we are not trying to distract when we bring up the issue of the President's tax returns, but we have no opportunity here to be heard. The bill before us, as I mentioned in my opening statement, is a closed rule. It is a Putin rule, if you will, where it is their way or the highway and where no debate is allowed on alternative ideas. We had three thoughtful amendments brought before the Rules Committee last night, all germane, all in compliance with the House rules. They rejected all three of them.

On the issue of the Presidential tax returns, yes, we are bringing it up because the American people want to know whether there are conflicts of interest. They don't want the White House to be known for being a place of corruption. They want our Presidents to follow the rules and the laws of the land. So people want to know, but we have been given no opportunity to do that.

So forgive me if we take procedural motions to try to make our point, but my colleagues on the Republican side lock us out of any opportunity to be heard. The Rules Committee has become a place where democracy goes to die, I am sad to say, and I hope that changes.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE).

Mr. KILDEE. Madam Speaker, I thank my friend for yielding.

Madam Speaker, like many of us this past Saturday, I marched in Washington with millions of women across the country claiming their human rights and claiming their basic individuals rights. Madam Speaker, the previous speaker on the other side made mention of the fact that the Hyde amendment is the law of the land and that it has been upheld by the United States Supreme Court. We know. We get it. That is not what this is about.

This is about going well beyond that and actually limiting what women can do and what individuals can do with their own money when acquiring health care that includes the reproductive health services that are the subject of this debate.

How many times do we have to come to the floor to make the point that choices about women's health care should be made between a woman and her doctor, not somebody in Washington dictating to women what they can do with their own money and with their own bodies?

Do you know what else is the law of the land? Do you know what else has been upheld by the Supreme Court almost a half a century ago?

That fundamental right that women have over the determinations they make for themselves about their own bodies. That has been upheld by the United States Supreme Court as well.

Ms. CHENEY. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BABIN).

Mr. BABIN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Wyoming.

Madam Speaker, for the past 30 years, through the Hyde amendment, the U.S. Congress has acted to prevent taxpayer money from being used to pay for abortions. The bipartisan Hyde amendment has been an annual rider on appropriations bills, but ObamaCare bypassed this abortion funding prohibition leading to the largest expansion of taxpayer funding of abortion in American history since Roe v. Wade.

That is why we desperately need to pass H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion and Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act to permanently codify the Hyde amendment and apply it across the entire Federal Government. This bill will also ensure that the prohibition is not subject to annual threats and it will close the massive loophole that was created by ObamaCare.

Since 1976, the Hyde amendment has saved the lives of over 2 million babies—roughly the same number of people who live in the city of Houston, Texas, where I serve as a U.S. Representative. For the sake of these 2 million people and the millions more that will be saved, we must permanently codify the Hyde amendment's pro-life protections.

Furthermore, as ObamaCare presented the largest expansion of abortions since the Roe v. Wade Supreme Court case, we must ensure that the Hyde amendment covers all areas of the Federal Government. This will ensure that taxpayer dollars are no longer used to subsidize abortions.

H.R. 7 is a critical piece of legislation that is supported by nearly two-thirds of the American people who do not want the government to be in the business of killing unborn babies. Congress must act to preserve the Hyde amendment for posterity and to put an immediate end to the ongoing harm being done with taxpayers' money.

I strongly encourage my colleagues to vote for the passage of this much-needed bill to end taxpayer funding of abortion once and for all.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SÁNCHEZ), who is the vice chairwoman of the Democratic Caucus.

Ms. SÁNCHEZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 7, the misnamed No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act.

Just 2 days ago, our Nation celebrated the 44th anniversary of Roe v. Wade, affirming that a woman has a constitutional right to make the decision of what is best for herself and her family. However, Republicans have been relentless in their pursuit to deny women this constitutional right, and H.R. 7 is just another reckless example.

H.R. 7 will have devastating consequences on every single woman in America. The bill would deny women, families, and small businesses tax credits if they elect an insurance plan that covers abortions. The IRS would be inserted into one of the most important and private decisions a woman can make and one that should be solely between her and her doctor. That is the most egregious and offensive example of government overreach that I can think of.

Madam Speaker, women are responsible. Women are smart. Women know what is best for them, and women can make their own choices. Allow them to do that and vote against H.R. 7.

Ms. CHENEY. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HULTGREN).

Mr. HULTGREN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Wyoming. I am so grateful to be here to talk on this important subject.

Madam Speaker, Thomas Jefferson once said: ''The care of human life and happiness, and not their destruction, is the first and only object of good government.''

It is with Jefferson's words in mind that I rise today as an original cosponsor in support of the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion and Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act.

This legislation sustains Mr. Jefferson's vision of good government. It makes permanent the Hyde amendment restricting Federal funding for abortions and thereby ensuring the care of human life and not its destruction. Most Americans oppose the use of their tax dollars to pay for abortions.

Since 1976, the Hyde amendment has saved nearly 2 million unborn children and continues to save more than 60,000 lives in the United States every year. Americans also deserve to know—before they purchase it—if their healthcare plans cover elective abortion.

H.R. 7 addresses the abortion secrecy clause in the Affordable Care Act. It requires qualified plans to disclose to enrollees at the time of enrollment whether a plan covers abortion. Americans should never be forced to pay for someone's abortion. This legislation will restore the status quo on government funding for elective abortions and make this policy permanent and consistent across the Federal Government.

I commend Congressman SMITH and Congressman LIPINSKI for their bipartisan cooperation in introducing this bill, and I am pleased to support it.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. DAVIS).

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Madam Speaker, let me tell you about Chelsea, a mother of two young children, who was on Medicaid when she was diagnosed with cervical cancer. She never missed her birth control pills, but when she went to the clinic for treatment, she was told that she was pregnant and could not get the surgery she needed because of the pregnancy.

□ 1315

Why is that? Because of the Hyde rule, Medicaid would not cover the abortion care that she needed, and her cancer treatment was delayed, obviously compromising her health.

Instead of discussing ways to make Chelsea's situation better, we are considering a bill that would make the ban on abortion care services under Medicaid permanent.

This is not about women asking for free, federally funded abortions. This is about women like Chelsea being able to receive the medical care they desperately need.

We saw this weekend millions of women took to the streets throughout our country in a historic movement. So let's show them that we are listening by rejecting this bill that makes bad policy permanent.

Madam Speaker, let's leave a woman's medical decision between her and her doctor and reject this far-reaching bill.

Ms. CHENEY. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. HARTZLER).

Mrs. HARTZLER. Madam Speaker, I am just heart sick today to hear some of my colleagues talking about how they were celebrating the 44th anniversary of Roe v. Wade. That is 60 million babies—little girls, little boys—who have been aborted and no longer have a chance to live. We could have had perhaps a cure for cancer or Alzheimer's. Who knows what the potential of those 60 million lives could have been.

So it is hard to hear my colleagues talk about a celebration of that and using the terminology that this bill deals with abortion care. Abortion isn't care and abortion isn't services. It is taking a life.

This bill does nothing to change Roe v. Wade, although I wish it could, but it simply says that taxpayers do not have to participate in it. The taxpayers all across this country who believe that every life is precious work hard and send in their money every April 15. They entrust it to us, their elected officials. We have national security issues, we have roads, we have education. They don't want to see it go to something like taking a life through abortion.

So this is what we are doing today, simply making permanent a policy that we have had to put in as an amendment to appropriations every year and fight for. This is just making sure that, here in Washington, in America, the taxpayers invest in women's health care and are not investing in abortion.

We should be about saving lives, not taking them. That is what this bill does. I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. BONAMICI).

Ms. BONAMICI. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to the rule and the underlying bill, H.R. 7, a dangerous attack on the right of women to make their own decisions about their health and their bodies.

On Saturday, I, too, joined the peaceful march in our Nation's Capital with hundreds of thousands of women and men. Millions more marched in Oregon, across the country, and around the world to demand that our voices be heard.

This legislation, one of the majority's first priorities under the Trump administration, won't create jobs. It will create barriers to reproductive health care for countless women. It will disproportionately affect low-income women, young women, women of color, women in rural communities, and immigrant women. This bill turns back the clock. It puts women's lives at risk.

Restricting abortion does not make it go away. It makes it unsafe. This bill will drive women back to back alleys.

I urge a ''no'' vote on the rule and on H.R. 7.

Ms. CHENEY. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LOFGREN).

Ms. LOFGREN. Madam Speaker, 44 years ago, the Supreme Court made an important decision. It said that women have a constitutional right to make decisions about their own health care and their own bodies, not the government.

It was just a few days ago that millions of American women marched all across the United States, reaffirming their opposition to efforts to take away their rights. That is what this bill would do.

There has been a lot of discussion about taxpayers funding abortion. That is not currently the law, not only in the Hyde amendment, but the Affordable Care Act requires women who wish to have this coverage to pay for it themselves.

We have heard a lot about alternative facts recently, but the fact is there is no taxpayer money for abortion in the United States—there hasn't ever been for many years—and that was also the accommodation that the Supreme Court made.

Let's make sure that the constitutional rights of women to control their own bodies is not attacked.

Ms. CHENEY. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I just want to make a point in terms of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle and the constant reference to women, women, women, as though all women believe what they believe.

They have very strongly held views on the other side of the aisle, but the notion that somehow all women can be categorized as being pro-abortion is just simply wrong and, frankly, offensive to those of us who have different views.

Madam Speaker, I would like to say, at this point in time, that we are not making any kind of a dangerous attack on women's rights.

My colleagues have accused us of being relentless. We are relentless. We are relentless, Madam Speaker. We are relentless in defense of the unborn, the most vulnerable among us.

Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS).

Mr. ROTHFUS. Madam Speaker, I rise to support this rule and the underlying bill, H.R. 7.

For decades, Congress has annually passed the Hyde amendment, which has prevented any government program from funding or subsidizing elective abortion. The Hyde amendment has saved over 2 million unborn children since 1976, including 100,000 lives in Pennsylvania.

For decades, this annual restriction on taxpayer funding of abortion has been referred to as the Hyde amendment because it was the late Congressman Henry Hyde from Illinois who sought to protect as many unborn children as he could during his service in Congress. Recollecting his own work, Congressman Hyde offered this poignant reflection:

''When the time comes as it surely will, when we face that awesome moment, the final judgment, I've often thought, as Fulton Sheen wrote, that it is a terrible moment of loneliness. You have no advocates, you are there alone standing before God—and a terror will rip through your soul like nothing you can imagine. But I really think that those in the pro-life movement will not be alone. I think there will be a chorus of voices that have never been heard in this world but are heard beautifully and clearly in the next world—and they will plead for everyone who has been in this movement. They will say to God, 'Spare him because he loved us'. . . . ''

Henry Hyde is not forgotten, and this work goes on.

Despite former-President Obama's promise that no abortion would be covered by his healthcare law, the Affordable Care Act authorized and appropriated funds for healthcare plans with abortion coverage. This must stop.

We must remember, abortion is not health care, and in no way should the government fund or subsidize the violent destruction of unborn children.

It is the overwhelming opinion of Americans, including those who identify as pro-choice, that taxpayer dollars should not be used for abortion. This legislation is absolutely essential to apply the principles of the Hyde amendment consistently across the Federal Government.

As hundreds of thousands march this Friday on the 44th anniversary of Roe v. Wade, a decision Justice White referred to as an exercise in raw judicial power, I urge my colleagues to support this rule and the underlying bill.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY).

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, I thank my good friend from the great State of Massachusetts for his extraordinary leadership on this issue and so many others and for standing up for women. The right to speak is a very special one.

Madam Speaker, the right to choose is meaningless without the access to choose. That is what this bill is about. It is cutting off access to choice. That is why the anti-choice movement is so strongly behind this bill.

H.R. 7 is a cynical attempt to use the Federal Government's power of the purse to restrict a woman's access to her constitutionally protected right to an abortion.

I oppose the Hyde amendment and believe that we should be increasing access to comprehensive health care, not reducing it. But this bill makes the Hyde amendment permanent. It goes further. It prohibits the Affordable Care Act tax credits for individuals and employers who choose plans that cover abortion.

H.R. 7 would restrict abortion coverage or make such coverage too burdensome or expensive for many Americans to afford. It is a step back towards a dark and ugly time when anti-abortion laws took a substantial toll on women's health and, in many cases, cost them their very lives.

I urge my colleagues to join me in voting ''no'' on this rule and the underlying bill.

Ms. CHENEY. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I will just remind Members that, in order to gain votes of several pro-life Democrats needed for passage of the Affordable Care Act, President Obama issued an executive order on March 24, 2010, and it said:

> The Affordable Care Act maintains current Hyde restrictions governing abortion policy and extends those restrictions to newly created health insurance exchanges.

The problem is, it never happened.

There were people who are saying even today that there is no taxpayer funding for abortion. Yes, there is. We finally went to the GAO. We asked them to do a study, an audit. They spent a full year on it and confirmed that the plans that we were subsidizing with taxpayer dollars covered abortion.

I remind my colleagues that, under the Hyde amendment, plans that pay for abortion are precluded from receiving government funding. 1,036 Affordable Care Act exchange plans were found to have abortion on demand being paid for by the taxpayers.

So if the Hyde amendment had been applied as former President Obama had said it would, there would have been zero coverage for abortion, except in cases of rape, incest, and life of the mother.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON).

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I thank my good friend for yielding.

I stand here in a unique position; first, to oppose this sweeping attack on women's reproductive health in its entirety, but I also am compelled to discuss the unique provision that singles out the District of Columbia, permanently barring the District of Columbia from spending its own local funds—not a cent of it raised in this Congress—on abortion services for low-income women, thus uniquely denying the District of Columbia government the right that local and State governments exercise throughout the United States using their own local funds.

Madam Speaker, H.R. 7 goes further. It insults the District of Columbia.

Just to make sure everybody understands that the bill means to include the District of Columbia, it tortuously defines or redefines the term ''Federal Government'' to include a local jurisdiction, the ''District of Columbia government.''

The District of Columbia government is thrown in with the Federal Government. We are talking about U.S. citizens, the people I represent, who are number one per capita in taxes raised to support the government of the United States of America.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield the gentlewoman an additional 1 minute.

Ms. NORTON. This bill, of course, is annual, and it is less inclined to become law than to be part of the annual upcoming march.

We do not intend, Madam Speaker, to let our colleagues get away with not supporting democracy, including the right of local governments to spend their own local funds on choice. Everywhere on Earth you can support such a right, except for the 700,000 people who live in your own Nation's Capital.

□ 1330

Ms. CHENEY. Madam Speaker, under the Constitution, all funds for the District of Columbia are appropriated by the United States Congress, so we in the Congress bear a particular and additional responsibility for funds in the District of Columbia.

I would also note, Madam Speaker, that there are no limitations in the District of Columbia on when an abortion can be performed; and therefore, if we were to lift this amendment, if we were not to have this rule in place, you could potentially have the U.S. taxpayers in a situation where they were being forced to fund even late-term abortions in the District of Columbia, which is fundamentally against the Hyde amendment, fundamentally against everything that we have supported and against the majority of the people in this Nation.

Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS), the chairman of the Committee on Rules.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman from Wyoming not only for being on the Committee on Rules, but also today for handling her first rule. Welcome to Congress and welcome to the Committee on Rules.

Madam Speaker, the bill that we have before us today is an extension of, really, a bipartisan agreement that we have had for 30-plus years: that we should not have abortions that are paid for by the taxpayer. The bottom line is

that this is a very difficult issue, no matter which side you might be on; but I believe that the right thing to do is to say that, based upon the morality and, really, the right thing, that the Federal Government, the taxpayers, should not be engaged in paying for abortions, killing of babies in this country.

We believe it is morally wrong, and all we are simply doing today is standing up and saying we are going to extend the same privileges that we have had on a bipartisan basis for 30-plus years not only with the Hyde amendment, but placing that across all pieces, parts of appropriations and bills and things that we do here in Congress. This has absolutely nothing to do with taking away a woman's right to choose. It has nothing to do with dealing with the Supreme Court. It has everything to do with using taxpayer dollars.

Yesterday we had a very appropriate and a very timely conversation at the Committee on Rules, and I think both sides handled their arguments and their agreements and disagreements well. It is my hope that we do this here today.

But let me say this, that the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) came up as an advocate for women, as an advocate for women who are engaged in the scurrilous trading of women and misconduct with women. I think he was seen for what he is. He is a strong advocate for life and for women who need to feel safe in this country. He stood up yesterday as an advocate for saying we should not use taxpayer money to pay for abortions, and that is really what this bill is.

I thank the gentlewoman from Wyoming for allowing me to be here.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, the distinguished gentleman from Texas, the chairman of the Committee on Rules, says this bill has nothing to do with taking away a woman's right to choose. I would beg to differ. I think it has everything to do with taking away a woman's right to choose.

But this is the rule. I was hoping that maybe he would address the fact that, again, three thoughtful amendments were brought before the Committee on Rules yesterday by Democrats. They were all germane. They all comply with the House rules. I was hoping he would explain why they were all denied, especially since the bill before us didn't go through regular order; it didn't go through a committee process to be brought to the floor. This was just kind of plopped into the Committee on Rules, and no amendments were made in order. That is not the way a deliberative body should be run. There are disagreements on this issue, but don't be afraid of allowing opposing viewpoints to be heard on this House floor. But apparently he didn't want to talk about that.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. PANETTA).

Mr. PANETTA. Madam Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 7, a bill which brings permanency to the Hyde amendment, a bill which attempts to take away low-income women's reproductive rights. Therefore, I submit to you that it is a bill more about divisive politics than decent policy.

This past Saturday, I joined hundreds of my constituents on The National Mall. We demonstrated our support for reproductive rights and for women's health care across our Nation.

In my district, on the central coast of California, we have an organization that administers those types of essential services. Mar Monte Planned Parenthood provides over 60,000 preventive, reproductive, and wellness healthcare visits each year, and for some that is the only health care they can get or they can afford.

Madam Speaker, the Hyde amendment isn't going anywhere, whether we like it or not. So I submit to you that it is these types of bills that do nothing to bring Congress together and everything to drive us apart because it is bills like H.R. 7 that can harm the most vulnerable in my community and across our Nation. That is why I respectfully ask my colleagues to oppose H.R. 7.

Ms. CHENEY. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. GOTTHEIMER).

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. Madam Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the rule and the underlying bill, H.R. 7. Forty-four years ago this week, before I was even born, the Supreme Court recognized that the government has no business coming between a woman and her doctor when it comes to making personal medical decisions. Yet now, decades later, many in Washington seem determined to turn back the clock on progress on women's health and women's rights.

The new administration recently instituted a rule that would limit the ability of women around the world to access accurate information about their bodies and make their own medical decisions. And now the House is considering a radical bill that would not only undermine a woman's right to make her own healthcare decisions, but also her ability to even choose her own health insurance plan. On top of that, the bill would actually raise taxes on small businesses who provide their employees with access to comprehensive health coverage and impose unfair burdens on the women of the United States military. These are the facts.

I will always fight back against efforts to limit choice in women's health, and that is why I strongly oppose this bill. This past weekend we saw millions of women around the country and around the world, including hundreds in my own hometown of Wyckoff, New Jersey, where I was, rally against these backward and dangerous policies.

I urge my colleagues to turn their focus from rolling back women's rights to actually focusing on getting things done for the people of this country—creating jobs and lowering taxes.

Ms. CHENEY. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, may I ask the gentlewoman from Wyoming if she has additional speakers.

Ms. CHENEY. Madam Speaker, I am prepared to close.

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

Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter from 23 faith-based organizations and communities urging Members to reject H.R. 7; a letter from the American Civil Liberties Union urging Members to vote ''no'' on H.R. 7; a letter from 44 women's health, religious, and other advocacy organizations strongly opposed to H.R. 7; and a letter from the American Association of University Women urging Members to oppose H.R. 7.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 28, 2014

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: As leaders of faith-based organizations and communities, we urge you to reject H.R. 7, a bill introduced as the so-called ''No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act,'' which would harm a woman's health, economic security, and religious liberty by making coverage of abortion inaccessible in both public and private health plans. Enclosed is a statement of shared principles that compel us, together with 20 of our partner organizations from the faith community, to speak out against legislation like H.R. 7, which seeks to impose a narrowly-defined view of one religious viewpoint on every citizen, threatening the freedom of religion afforded to every individual by the U.S. Constitution.

H.R. 7 is sponsored in the House by Rep. Chris Smith (NJ–4). This bill would raise taxes on women and families, as well as small businesses, who access or offer abortion coverage as part of a comprehensive insurance plan. It would do so by denying women and families a premium assistance tax credit if they choose a plan in the health insurance marketplace that includes abortion, a proposal soundly rejected by Congress in the 2010 health reform debate. This bill would also deny small employers a Small Business Tax Credit for offering their workers comprehensive coverage that includes abortion. Further, as amended in committee, this bill would withhold abortion coverage from women enrolled in a multistate, private insurance plan. Taken together, these provisions would jeopardize coverage of abortion in the full private insurance market, risking coverage that many women and families have today; more than 80 percent of private health plans currently cover abortion care.

Also among its provisions, H.R. 7 would make permanent dangerous restrictions that withhold abortion coverage from women who access coverage or care through federal programs, such as women enrolled in Medicaid, federal employees, Native American women, and others. It would also permanently withhold abortion coverage from low-income women living in the District of Columbia, a federal ban that goes against the wishes of DC elected officials and voters. These provisions would disproportionately harm women struggling to make ends meet, risking their economic security, health and well-being, and ability to make personal decisions in accordance with their own conscience and religious or moral beliefs.

Please see the enclosed statement outlining shared principles of faith that compel us and our partners to speak out against this harmful proposal. As communities and organizations that represent diverse constituencies of faith, we stand united in opposition to H.R. 7 given the danger it poses to women and their families by jeopardizing affordable and accessible insurance coverage of abortion.

We urge you to reject H.R. 7 when it reaches the House floor for a vote.

Sincerely,

NANCY KAUFMAN,
CEO, National Council of Jewish Women.
REV. HARRY KNOX,
President and CEO, Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice.
JON O'BRIEN,
President, Catholics for Choice.

INTERFAITH STATEMENT OPPOSING RESTRICTIONS ON WOMEN'S HEALTH CARE OPTIONS

The undersigned religious, religiously affiliated, and faith-centered organizations and communities represent millions of people of faith committed to women's health and reproductive choices. We are deeply troubled by legislative efforts designed to restrict women's access to comprehensive reproductive health care options, including abortion, contraception, HIV/STD testing, cancer screenings, and other essential health services.

We recognize that issues surrounding women's reproductive choices—and those regarding abortion in particular—are complex. Although we come from diverse faith traditions, we all agree that proposals aimed at restricting access to reproductive healthcare would have devastating consequences for women and their families, particularly low-income women. We call on Congress and the President to reject these intolerable measures.

As people of faith, the following common principles compel us to speak out together against these proposals:

Striving for social justice and equal rights to health care: All too often, legislation is proposed that would create significant barriers to women's access to reproductive health options and make it harder for women to make their own reproductive choices based on their individual beliefs and consciences. We are especially concerned about efforts to de-fund the Title X Family Planning program and those organizations, such as Planned Parenthood, that serve as a key part of our social safety net. Title X health centers and clinics are on the public health front lines, serving low-income individuals and other vulnerable populations. These centers help men and women of limited means prevent unintended pregnancies; they promote prevention of, and treatment for HIV and other STDs; they offer life-saving cancer screenings; and they provide crucial medically-accurate information about sexual health. Title X providers ensure that women who want to have children get the information and care they need to promote a healthy pregnancy. As faith-centered organizations, we are committed to the most marginalized and the most vulnerable of our society, especially those with limited financial means or those who live in areas with limited access to services. Reducing health care options for some, based on their economic strata or geographic location, is profoundly unjust.

Respecting women's moral agency: We affirm women as moral agents who have the capacity, right, and responsibility to make their own decisions about sexuality, reproduction, and their families. Legislation that eliminates health coverage for and limits the availability of reproductive health care services through funding restrictions would severely limit a woman's ability to make decisions about her own health care and about how best to care for her family, guided by her own conscience, her personal circumstances, and her own moral or faith tradition.

Valuing compassion and the obligation to protect every woman's health and life: Restrictions on women's health care options endanger women's lives. In particular, we oppose proposals that would allow hospitals and individual health workers to refuse to provide abortion services to a woman, even when such care is necessary to save her life. As people of faith, we strongly believe that a health worker's right to refuse to provide certain services must not infringe on a woman's right to access the health care she needs. Above all, that refusal must not endanger her life. Health professionals and the organizations that support them have an obligation to ensure access to necessary services, whether directly or by referral to an accessible alternative health care provider.

Safeguarding religious liberty: We believe that one person's religious viewpoint must not be imposed on others. Different faiths, and even groups within a single faith community, hold varying views and opinions. Time and again, our nation has answered this diversity of opinions by upholding the founding principle of religious freedom. Reproductive freedoms are integrally bound with religious freedoms—a connection recognized by the Supreme Court's 1973 decision in Roe v. Wade. Women have a right to make reproductive health choices based on their own faith tradition, free from constraints imposed by those seeking to legislate one religious viewpoint or another. We oppose legislation that would erode Americans' constitutionally protected right to religious freedom.

As people of faith, we believe in compassion, justice, and the dignity of all women. We understand that those who would restrict women's access to comprehensive reproductive health care are often motivated by their religious beliefs and seek to impose their views on others. However, freedom of choice means that every person is valued as a moral decision-maker, free to make personal decisions about their reproductive lives based on their own religious beliefs and consciences. We cannot presume to tell others how best to inform and listen to their own consciences as they make decisions about whether and when to have children or how best to care for their families. Today, and every day, we stand up as people of faith for women's health and reproductive choices—and we urge our government to do the same.

Signed:

Anti-Defamation League; B'nai B'rith International; Catholics for Choice; Disciples Justice Action Network; Episcopal Women's Caucus; Global Faith and Justice Project, Horizons Foundation; Hadassah, The Women's Zionist Organization of America, Inc.; Jewish Council for Public Affairs; Jewish Council on Urban Affairs; Jewish Women International; Metropolitan Community Churches; Muslims for Progressive Values.

National Council of Jewish Women; Reconstructionist Rabbinical College and Jewish Reconstructionist Communities; Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice; Religious Institute; Soulforce; The Fellowship of Affirming Ministries; Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations; Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association; Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation; United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries; Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual.

AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION,
Washington, DC, January 23, 2017.

VOTE ''NO'' ON H.R. 7, THE ''NO TAXPAYER FUNDING FOR ABORTION AND ABORTION INSURANCE FULL DISCLOSURE ACT OF 2017''

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and our nearly two million members and supporters, we urge Members of the House of Representatives to vote no on H.R. 7, the so-called ''No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion and Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act of 2017.'' The ACLU opposes this legislation, which would make harmful, discriminatory abortion coverage restrictions permanent and interfere with private health insurance coverage for abortion.

H.R. 7 would make permanent the Hyde Amendment and its progeny, discriminatory abortion coverage restrictions that single out and exclude abortion from a host of programs that fulfill the government's obligation to provide health care. These restrictions disproportionately impact those who already face significant barriers to care—low-income families, women of color, immigrants, young people, LGBTQ people, and those in rural areas. They discriminate against these women, who rely on the government for health care, by severely restricting their access to a health care service that is readily available to women of means and women with private insurance.

A woman in need of abortion care who does not have independent financial resources must scramble to raise the necessary funds, delay receiving care, and is often left with no choice but to carry to term in circumstances where she is physically, emotionally, or financially unprepared to care for a child. In fact, restricting Medicaid coverage of abortion forces one in four poor women seeking abortion to carry an unwanted pregnancy to term. When a woman seeking an abortion is denied one, she is three times more likely to fall into poverty than a woman who can obtain the care she needs. If a woman chooses to carry to term, Medicaid (and other federal insurance programs) offers her assistance for the necessary medical care. But if she needs to end her pregnancy, the same programs will deny her coverage for her abortion. The government should not interfere with a woman's personal medical decisions by selectively withholding benefits in this way.

H.R. 7 also takes particular aim at low-income women in the District of Columbia. Although the use of federal funds is currently restricted from covering most abortions, states are free to use their own funds to include abortion coverage in their medical assistance programs. The only exception is the District of Columbia. H.R. 7 would make permanent a provision that forbids the District from using its own locally raised non-federal dollars to provide coverage for abortion for its low-income residents. The D.C. abortion ban disenfranchises the District's residents, and allows non-resident Members of Congress who are not accountable to the people of the District to impose their own ideology upon the District's residents with impunity.

H.R 7 would also impact women's ability to purchase private insurance that includes abortion coverage. It would revive the so-called Stupak Amendment, rejected by the 111th Congress, which would bar anyone receiving a federal premium assistance credit from buying a private insurance policy that includes abortion coverage on the Affordable Care Act's (ACA) insurance exchanges. This is not only an attempt to effectively ban abortion coverage in the exchanges by encouraging insurers to exclude it, but it would have a ripple effect on plans outside the exchanges that jeopardizes abortion coverage for millions of women. Further, the inaccurate disclosure requirements in H.R. 7

would push insurance companies to drop abortion coverage and deter women from purchasing plans that include such coverage by misleading them about the cost of purchasing these plans. These provisions are direct attacks on a woman's ability to make personal medical decisions with complete and accurate information.

Additionally, H.R. 7 rewrites tax law to penalize a single, legal, medical procedure: abortion. It would deny small businesses tax credits if the insurance they provide to their employees includes abortion coverage, effectively coercing employers to offer plans that exclude abortion. The bill would also deny millions of women and families premium tax credits if they purchase a health insurance plan that covers abortion, forcing them to forgo comprehensive health insurance plans in order to get the premium assistance they need. This manipulation of the tax code is simply government interference in taxpayers' private medical decisions and should be rejected.

Abortion is basic, constitutionally-protected health care for women. Yet H.R. 7 attacks women's fundamental right and access to abortion. It first targets women—particularly poor women and women of color who rely on the government for their health care—and seeks to permanently deny them coverage for a benefit to which they are entitled. Then, under the guise of ''safeguarding'' taxpayer dollars, H.R. 7 advances an aggressive campaign to destabilize the insurance market for abortion coverage. Congress should be eliminating barriers to women's ability to exercise their constitutionally protected right to safe, legal abortion. Instead, H.R. 7 would interfere with women's personal medical decisions by putting even more bathers in the way.

For these reasons, the ACLU opposes H.R. 7 and urges members of the House of Representatives to vote no.

Sincerely,

FAIZ SHAKIR,
Director, Washington Legislative Office.
GEORGEANNE M. USOVA,
Legislative Counsel.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: The undersigned organizations strongly urge you to oppose the deceptive ''No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act'' (H.R. 7), a bill designed to fundamentally alter the health insurance market—from a market where abortion coverage is the industry standard to one where abortion coverage is eliminated. H.R. 7 does this by changing the laws that govern both private and public insurance and by twisting the tax code into a tool to take away abortion coverage from women who have it. Ultimately, this bill is designed to deny women the decision whether or not to have an abortion by taking away their insurance coverage.

H.R. 7 twists the tax code into a tool to take away health insurance coverage that women have today. For example, the bill would deny millions of women and families premium tax credits if they purchase a health insurance plan that covers abortion. The bill would force these women—particularly low and moderate income women—to forego a health insurance plan that includes abortion in order to get the premium assistance they need. H.R. 7 would also raise taxes on small businesses by denying the Small Business Health Tax Credit to businesses that offer health insurance that covers abortion. This credit was created to encourage small businesses to offer health insurance to their employees by making it more affordable. This bill would penalize employers for choosing comprehensive coverage for their employees and their families.

H.R. 7 could cause the entire insurance market to drop abortion coverage. The impact of H.R. 7's changes could be that women across the country lose comprehensive health insurance that includes abortion coverage. The elimination of abortion coverage in the Marketplaces is expected to set the industry standard, meaning that all plans, inside and outside the Marketplace, could drop such coverage.

H.R. 7 introduces a new ban on private insurance by forcing all multi-state insurance plans to drop abortion coverage. Currently, the law requires that at least one multi-state health insurance plan in a Marketplace must not provide abortion coverage (except for narrow exceptions). H.R. 7 would replace this requirement with a dramatic restriction banning abortion coverage in all multi-state health insurance plans.

The Rules Committee Print of H.R. 7 includes new provisions that would impose inaccurate and misleading disclosure requirements regarding abortion coverage in plans offered in the Marketplace. This bill overrides existing provisions of the Affordable Care Act that provide consumers with information about their health plans, and instead adds new requirements intended to push insurance companies to drop abortion coverage and deter women from purchasing plans that include such coverage. Moreover, H.R. 7 wrongly asserts that there is a ''surcharge'' in plans that cover abortion, and would require women to be misled with this falsehood. These new provisions are not about disclosure, but about eliminating abortion coverage, in line with the rest of the bill's dangerous provisions.

H.R. 7 would permanently ban federal health insurance programs such as Medicaid from including abortion coverage. H.R. 7 would codify harmful legislative riders that deny abortion coverage to women who receive health insurance through the federal government. Moreover, H.R. 7 makes permanent a rider that denies the District of Columbia the ability to decide whether to use its own local finds to provide abortion coverage. These bans disproportionately affect women of color and low-income women, denying these women the ability to make their own important health care decisions.

H.R. 7 would endanger women's health by eliminating coverage of abortion even in circumstances where a woman needs an abortion to prevent severe, permanent damage to her health. Because H.R. 7 only makes exceptions in the cases where the woman's life is endangered, or where she is the survivor of rape or incest, it would leave women whose health is seriously threatened by their pregnancies without access to the care their doctors recommend to protect their health. The impact can be especially harmful to women underserved by the health care system and women with serious health problems.

In summary, H.R. 7 would deny millions of women the ability to make their own decision about whether to have an abortion. H.R. 7 is a dangerous bill that jeopardizes women's health by directly banning abortion coverage, by raising taxes on families and small businesses that purchase comprehensive insurance coverage, and by imposing ''disclosure'' requirements that encourage the elimination of abortion coverage. The intent and impact of H.R. 7 is to forever eliminate coverage of abortion in all insurance markets. We strongly urge you to reject this bill.

Sincerely,

Advocates for Youth; American Association of University Women (AAUW); American Civil Liberties Union, American Nurses Association, American Public Health Association; American Society for Reproductive Medicine; Association of Reproductive Health Professionals (ARHP); Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum; Black Women's Health Imperative; Catholics for Choice.

Center for Reproductive Rights; Choice USA; Feminist Majority; Hadassah, The Women's Zionist Organization of America, Inc.; Jewish Women International; Joint Action Committee for Political Affairs; Medical Students for Choice; Methodist Federation for Social Action; NARAL Pro-Choice America; National Abortion Federation.

National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum; National Center for Lesbian Rights; National Council of Jewish Women; National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association; National Health Law Program; National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health; National Organization for Women; National Partnership for Women & Families; National Women's Health Network; National Women's Law Center; People For the American Way.

Physicians for Reproductive Health; Planned Parenthood Federation of America; Population Connection Action Fund; Population Institute; Raising Women's Voices for the Health Care We Need; Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice; Religious Institute; Reproductive Health Technologies Project; Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS); Unitarian Universalist Association; Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation; United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries; WV Citizen Action Group.

AAUW EMPOWERING WOMEN SINCE 1881,
Washington, DC, January 24, 2017.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the more than 170,000 bipartisan members and supporters of the American Association of University Women (AAUW), I urge you to oppose H.R. 7, a dangerous limitation on abortion that puts women's health and rights at risk. H.R. 7 would withhold abortion coverage from virtually all women in the U.S. and potentially push insurers into ceasing coverage of abortion care. This bill is a part of a political strategy that seeks to interfere with women's personal decision-making around their reproductive health care.

AAUW supports the right of every woman to access safe, accessible, affordable, and comprehensive family planning and reproductive health services. We believe that all women should be able to make their own decisions with advice and support from those they trust the most. We know that women look to doctors, family members, and other trusted individuals, not politicians, to make important medical decisions about their health.

H.R. 7 would make abortion restrictions that are often built into annual appropriations bills permanent. Such an action would withhold abortion coverage from almost all women—those who rely on Medicaid, federal insurance plans and health programs, as well as those who are Peace Corps Volunteers, Native American women, Washington, D.C. residents, and many others. In addition, by creating burdensome regulations for insurers to cover abortion services, many more women would lose access to the care they need. When policymakers deny women insurance coverage for abortion, women are forced to either carry the pregnancy to term or pay for care out of their own pockets. Consequently, cutting off access to or placing strict limitations on abortion can have profoundly harmful effects on public health, particularly for those who already face significant barriers to receiving care, such as low-income women, immigrant women, LGBTQ people, and women of color.

Again, I urge you to oppose H.R. 7, a dangerous limitation on abortion that puts

women's health and rights at risk. Votes associated with this legislation may be scored in the AAUW Action Fund Congressional Voting Record for the 115th Congress. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 202/785–7720, or Anne Hedgepeth, Senior Government Relations Manager, if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

LISA M. MAATZ,
Vice President of Government Relations and Advocacy.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, let me begin my closing by reminding people that we are about to vote on the rule. The rule defines how we are going to consider this legislation. This is a closed rule. This is a Putin rule. This is a rule that allows no opposing viewpoints to be brought before this Chamber to be debated and voted on. It is completely closed. On top of that, it didn't go through regular order.

Now, I know my colleagues will say, well, it went through regular order in the previous Congress. But there are 55 new Members of the House in this Congress, and I think they have a right to expect regular order from the leadership of this House when legislation is brought to the floor. The rule should be rejected because it is closed.

I would urge my colleagues, even those who may be sympathetic to the underlying legislation to, at some point, stand up to your leadership and say, ''Enough of this closed process.'' Open this place up a little bit. This is supposed to be the greatest deliberative body in the world, and yet we do everything but deliberate. At some point, I hope some of my Republican colleagues will be brave enough to stand with us who are calling for a more open process.

I also urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on the underlying bill.

I also include in the RECORD an article from Politico entitled, ''Study: Abortion Rate Falls to Record Low.''

[From Politico, Jan. 17, 2017]

STUDY: ABORTION RATE FALLS TO RECORD LOW

(By Brianna Ehley)

The U.S. abortion rate dipped to its lowest level on record in 2014, according to a new study by the Guttmacher Institute.

The abortion rate dropped 14 percent between 2011 and 2014 to 14.6 abortions per 1,000 women, researchers said. During the same time period, the number of abortions dropped 12 percent to 926,200 in 2014.

Researchers suggested two main reasons for the decline: a combination of greater access to contraception and less access to abortion services in states that have enacted new restrictions.

The number of clinics providing abortions dipped 6 percent between 2011 and 2014, with the largest declines in access in the Midwest and the South.

''Abortion restrictions and clinic closures mean that patients may need to travel greater distances to access services,'' Rachel Jones, the study's lead author, said in a statement. ''Some of the abortion rate decline is likely attributable to women who were prevented from accessing needed services.''

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, part of the reason for that is because women are having more access to good health care. Part of the reason why that number is getting lower is because of organizations like Planned Parenthood, which provide clinics and counseling and contraception to young women so that we can actually avoid more people being in the situation where they have to confront the issue of abortion. And yet my colleagues' next salvo is going to be going after Planned Parenthood. The abortion rate in this country is going down.

The underlying bill is not about making sure that taxpayer money doesn't go to fund abortion. That is what the Hyde amendment does.

The Affordable Care Act, by the way, makes it clear that no portion of the premium tax credits may be used to pay for the portion of comprehensive health coverage that is purchased in the marketplace that relates to abortion services. That is not what this is about.

This is basically the first attempt to really go after the basic constitutional right for a woman to be able to choose when it comes to abortion services. That is what this is about. The leadership of this House—indeed, the President of the United States—has made it clear they want to repeal Roe v. Wade. They want to put Justices on the Supreme Court who will repeal that decision. They want to pass legislation that will do everything to be able to deny women that basic right. That is what is going on here.

Finally, Madam Speaker, I am asking people to vote ''no'' on the previous question so that we can actually debate and vote on this issue of requiring Presidential candidates and Presidents to release their tax returns. I say to my colleagues in all sincerity, this President's refusal to release his tax returns, all these conflicts of interest that he has, this is a White House on a collision course with corruption. Donald Trump said he wanted to come to Washington to drain the swamp, but by not releasing his tax returns, by allowing all these conflicts of interest to remain, he is bringing the swamp to the White House. Enough.

Let us vote for transparency here. Let us vote in a way that the majority of Americans think we ought to do, and that is to require this President to come clean, to show us what his tax returns are, to show us what he is hiding, to show us where his investments are, to show us if there are any dealings with Russia or Putin or whatever.

I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on the previous question so we can have that opportunity to be able to debate that issue, because if you don't vote ''no,'' I can guarantee you that the Committee on Rules will never make it in order. The Committee on Rules never makes anything in order that the leadership of this House doesn't put its rubber stamp on. I think that that is unfortunate. As I said before, the Committee on Rules is becoming a place where democracy goes to die. It is about time that my colleagues on both sides of the aisle stand up and say, ''Enough. Let's open this place up.''

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

Ms. CHENEY. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am really heartened today, Madam Speaker, to hear so much concern from my colleagues on the other side of the aisle about making sure that patients and individuals have the right to make decisions about their own health care. I would expect, then, to see support from the other side of the aisle when we are in a position where we are putting in place our replacement for ObamaCare. That is one of the main reasons we are repealing ObamaCare, getting the government out of the business of telling people what they can and can't have with respect to their own health care. That is not the issue that we are debating here today, however, Madam Speaker.

I want to thank the gentleman from New Jersey for his tireless work on this issue and for introducing this bipartisan bill. A majority of Americans across the country share the view that we must continue to work to protect the lives of mothers and their unborn children. As you have already heard, Madam Speaker, the Hyde amendment is responsible for saving the lives of at least 2 million babies, the most vulnerable among us.

Codifying a permanent restriction on the use of taxpayer funding for abortions is long overdue. I urge adoption of both the rule and H.R. 7 so we can continue to protect and save lives.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise again in strong opposition to the rule for H.R. 7, the so-called ''No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act,'' and the underlying bill.

I oppose this bill because it is unnecessary, puts the lives of women at risk, interferes with women's constitutionally guaranteed right of privacy, and diverts our attention from the real problems facing the American people.

A more accurate short title for this bill would be the ''Violating the Rights of Women Act of 2017''!

Instead of resuming their annual War on Women, our colleagues across the aisle should be working with Democrats to build upon the ''Middle-Class Economics'' championed by the Obama Administration that have succeeded in ending the economic meltdown it inherited in 2009 and revived the economy to the point where today we have the highest rate of growth and lowest rate of unemployment since the boom years of the Clinton Administration.

We could and should instead be voting to raise the minimum wage to $15.00 per hour so that people who work hard and play by the rules do not have raise their families in poverty.

A far better use of our time would be to provide help to unemployed job-hunters by making access to community college affordable to every person looking to make a new start in life.

Instead of voting to abridge the constitutional rights of women for the umpteenth time, we should bring to the floor for a first vote comprehensive immigration reform legislation or legislations repairing the harm to the Voting Rights Act of 1965 by the Supreme Court's decision in Shelby County v. Holder.

Madam Speaker, the one thing we should not be doing is debating irresponsible ''messaging bills'' that abridge the rights of women and have absolutely no chance of overriding a presidential veto.

The version of H.R. 7 before us now is as bad today as it was when the House Republican leadership insisted on bringing it to a vote a year ago. The other draconian provisions of that terrible bill are retained in H.R. 7, which would:

1. Prohibit federal funds from being used for any health benefits coverage that includes coverage of abortion. (Thus making permanent existing federal policies.)

2. Prohibit the inclusion of abortion in any health care service furnished by a federal or District of Columbia health care facility or by any physician or other individual employed by the federal government or the District.

3. Apply such prohibitions to District of Columbia funds.

4. Prohibit individuals from receiving a refundable federal tax credit, or any cost-sharing reductions, for purchasing a qualified health plan that includes coverage for abortions.

5. Prohibit small employers from receiving the small-employer health insurance credit provided by the health care law if the health plans or benefits that are purchased provide abortion coverage.

If H.R. 7 were enacted, millions of families and small businesses with private health insurance plans that offer abortion coverage would be faced with tax increases, making the cost of health care insurance even more expensive.

Under the Affordable Care Act, insurers are able to offer abortion coverage and receive federal offsets for premiums as long as enrollees pay for the abortion coverage from separate, private funds.

If enacted, H.R. 7 would deny federal subsidies or credits to private health insurance plans that offer abortion coverage even if that coverage is paid for from private funds.

This would inevitably lead to private health insurance companies dropping abortion coverage leaving millions of women without access to affordable, comprehensive health care.

Currently, 87% of private insurance health care plans offered through employers cover abortion.

If H.R. 7 were to become law, consumer Options for private health insurance plans would be unnecessarily restricted and the tax burden on these policy holders would increase significantly.

H.R. 7 would also deny tax credits to small businesses that offer their employees insurance plans that cover abortion, which would have a significant impact on millions of families across the nation who would no longer be able to take advantage of existing tax credits and deductions for the cost of their health care.

For example, small businesses that offer health plans that cover abortions would no longer be eligible for the Small Business Health Tax Credit—potentially worth 35%-50% of the cost of their premiums—threatening 4 million small businesses.

Self-employed Americans who are able to deduct the cost of their comprehensive health insurance from their taxable income will also be denied similar tax credits and face higher taxes.

H.R. 7 would also undermine the District of Columbia's home rule by restricting its use of funds for abortion care to low-income women.

The Hyde Amendment stipulates that no taxpayer dollars are to be used for abortion care, and has narrow exceptions for rape, incest, and health complications that arise from pregnancy which put the mother's life in danger.

H.R. 7 would restrict women's access to reproductive health care even further by narrowing the already stringent requirements set forth in the Hyde Amendment.

When the Affordable Care Act was signed into law, the President issued an Executive Order to ''ensure that Federal funds are not used for abortion services.''

This version of H.R. 7 goes far beyond the safeguards established under the Affordable Care Act, and sets a dangerous precedent for the future of women's reproductive health in this country because it includes two new provisions that were added at the nth hour but have never received a hearing or a mark-up.

These new provisions would (1) ban abortion coverage in multi-state health plans available under the ACA; and (2) mandate that health plans mislead consumers about abortion coverage by requiring all plans in the health-insurance exchanges that include abortion coverage to display that fact prominently in all advertising, marketing materials, or information from the insurer but interestingly, does not require the same disclosure from plans that do not cover abortion.

Madam Speaker, H.R. 7 would also force health plans to mislead consumers about the law's treatment of abortion.

As a concession to anti-choice lawmakers, the ACA requires insurance plans participating in the new health system to segregate monies used for abortion services from all other funds.

In order to aid in identifying these funds and simplify the process of segregating general premium dollars from those used to cover abortion services, the ACA requires that health plans estimate the cost of abortion coverage at no less than $1 per enrollee per month.

H.R. 7 would require plans covering abortion to misrepresent this practice as an ''abortion surcharge,'' which is to be disclosed and identified as a portion of the consumer's premium.

By describing abortion coverage in this way, H.R.7 makes it look as 7 though it is an added, extra cost, available only at an additional fee, when in fact it is not.

Taken together, the provisions in H.R. 7 have the effect, and possibly the intent, of arbitrarily infringing women's reproductive freedoms and pose a nationwide threat to the health and wellbeing of American women and a direct challenge to the Supreme Court's ruling in Roe V. Wade.

Madam Speaker, one of the most detestable aspects of this bill is that it would curb access to care for women in the most desperate of circumstances.

Women like Danielle Deaver, who was 22 weeks pregnant when her water broke. Tests showed that Danielle had suffered anhydramnios, a premature rupture of the membranes before the fetus has achieved viability.

This condition meant that the fetus likely would be born with a shortening of muscle tissue that results in the inability to move limbs. In addition, Danielle's fetus likely would suffer deformities to the face and head, and the lungs were unlikely to develop beyond the 22–week point.

There was less than a 10% chance that, if born, Danielle's baby would be able to breathe on its own and only a 2% chance the baby would be able to eat on its own.

H.R. 7 hurts women like Vikki Stella, a diabetic, who discovered months into her pregnancy that the fetus she was carrying suffered from several major anomalies and had no chance of survival. Because of Vikki's diabetes, her doctor determined that induced labor and Caesarian section were both riskier procedures for Vikki than an abortion.

Every pregnancy is different. No politician knows, or has the right to assume he knows, what is best for a woman and her family.

These are decisions that properly must be left to women to make, in consultation with their partners, doctors, and their God.

H.R. 7 lacks the necessary exceptions to protect the health and life of the mother.

H.R. 7 is an unconstitutional infringement on the right to privacy, as interpreted by the Supreme Court in a long line of cases going back to Griswold v. Connecticut in 1965 and Roe v. Wade decided in 1973.

In Roe v. Wade, the Court held that a state could not prohibit a woman from exercising her right to terminate a pregnancy in order to protect her health prior to viability.

While many factors go into determining fetal viability, the consensus of the medical community is that viability is acknowledged as not occurring prior to 24 weeks gestation.

Supreme Court precedents make it clear that neither Congress nor a state legislature can declare any one element—''be it weeks of gestation or fetal weight or any other single factor—as the determinant'' of viability. Coloyal v. Franklin, 439 U.S. 379,388–89 (1979).

The constitutionally protected right to privacy encompasses the right of women to choose to terminate a pregnancy before viability, and even later where continuing to term poses a threat to her health and safety.

This right of privacy was hard won and must be preserved inviolate.

The bill before us threatens this hard won right for women and must be defeated.

I urge all members to join me in opposing the rule and the underlying bill.

The material previously referred to by Mr. MCGOVERN is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 55 OFFERED BY MR. MCGOVERN

At the end of the resolution, add the following new sections:

SEC. 2. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 305) to amend the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 to require the disclosure of certain tax returns by Presidents and certain candidates for the office of the President, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided among and controlled by the respective chairs and ranking minority members of the Committees on

Ways and Means and Oversight and Government Reform. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

SEC. 3. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 305.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the Democratic minority to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives (VI, 308–311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as ''a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge.'' To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that ''the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition'' in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R–Illinois) said: ''The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition ''

The Republican majority may say ''the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever.'' But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: ''Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment.''

In Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled ''Amending Special Rules'' states: ''a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate.'' (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: ''Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon.''

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Republican majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of adoption of the resolution.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 233, nays 187, not voting 12, as follows:

[Roll No. 62]

YEAS—233

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Banks (IN)
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bergman
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Budd
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Cheney
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comer
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davidson
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Dunn
Emmer
Farenthold
Faso
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flores
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garrett
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guthrie
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Holding
Hollingsworth
Hudson
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger
Knight
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Lewis (MN)
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Marshall
Massie
Mast
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Murphy (PA)
Newhouse
Noem
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Posey
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (SC)
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney, Francis
Rooney, Thomas J.
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce (CA)
Russell
Rutherford
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smucker
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NAYS—187

Adams
Aguilar
Barragán
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (MD)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capuano
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Crist
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Espaillat
Esty
Evans
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Gonzalez (TX)
Gottheimer
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hanabusa
Hastings
Heck
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Hoyer
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Halleran
O'Rourke
Pallone
Panetta
Pascrell
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Rosen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Smith (WA)
Soto
Speier
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—12

Blumenauer	Joyce (OH)	Rush
Coffman	Mulvaney	Slaughter
Johnson, E. B.	Payne	Velázquez
Jones	Price, Tom (GA)	Zinke

□ 1404

Mr. VEASEY changed his vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania changed his vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. FOXX). The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 236, noes 183, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 63]

AYES—236

Abraham	Duncan (SC)	Kustoff (TN)
Aderholt	Duncan (TN)	Labrador
Allen	Dunn	LaHood
Amash	Emmer	LaMalfa
Amodei	Farenthold	Lamborn
Arrington	Faso	Lance
Babin	Ferguson	Latta
Bacon	Fitzpatrick	Lewis (MN)
Banks (IN)	Fleischmann	Lipinski
Barletta	Flores	LoBiondo
Barr	Fortenberry	Long
Barton	Foxx	Loudermilk
Bergman	Franks (AZ)	Love
Biggs	Frelinghuysen	Lucas
Bilirakis	Gaetz	Luetkemeyer
Bishop (MI)	Gallagher	MacArthur
Bishop (UT)	Garrett	Marchant
Black	Gibbs	Marino
Blackburn	Gohmert	Marshall
Blum	Goodlatte	Massie
Bost	Gosar	Mast
Brady (TX)	Gowdy	McCarthy
Brat	Granger	McCaul
Bridenstine	Graves (GA)	McClintock
Brooks (AL)	Graves (LA)	McHenry
Brooks (IN)	Graves (MO)	McKinley
Buchanan	Griffith	McMorris Rodgers
Buck	Grothman	McSally
Bucshon	Guthrie	Meadows
Budd	Harper	Meehan
Burgess	Harris	Messer
Byrne	Hartzler	Mitchell
Calvert	Hensarling	Moolenaar
Carter (GA)	Herrera Beutler	Mooney (WV)
Carter (TX)	Hice, Jody B.	Mullin
Chabot	Higgins (LA)	Murphy (PA)
Chaffetz	Hill	Newhouse
Cheney	Holding	Noem
Cole	Hollingsworth	Nunes
Collins (GA)	Hudson	Olson
Collins (NY)	Huizenga	Palazzo
Comer	Hultgren	Palmer
Comstock	Hunter	Paulsen
Conaway	Hurd	Pearce
Cook	Issa	Perry
Costello (PA)	Jenkins (KS)	Peterson
Cramer	Jenkins (WV)	Pittenger
Crawford	Johnson (LA)	Poe (TX)
Culberson	Johnson (OH)	Poliquin
Curbelo (FL)	Johnson, Sam	Posey
Davidson	Jordan	Ratcliffe
Davis, Rodney	Joyce (OH)	Reed
Denham	Katko	Reichert
Dent	Kelly (MS)	Renacci
DeSantis	Kelly (PA)	Rice (SC)
DesJarlais	King (IA)	Roby
Diaz-Balart	King (NY)	Roe (TN)
Donovan	Kinzinger	Rogers (AL)
Duffy	Knight	Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher	Shuster	Walberg
Rokita	Simpson	Walden
Rooney, Francis	Smith (MO)	Walker
Rooney, Thomas J.	Smith (NE)	Walorski
Ros-Lehtinen	Smith (NJ)	Walters, Mimi
Roskam	Smith (TX)	Weber (TX)
Ross	Smucker	Webster (FL)
Rothfus	Stefanik	Wenstrup
Rouzer	Stewart	Westerman
Royce (CA)	Stivers	Williams
Russell	Taylor	Wilson (SC)
Rutherford	Tenney	Wittman
Sanford	Thompson (PA)	Womack
Scalise	Thornberry	Woodall
Schweikert	Tiberi	Yoder
Scott, Austin	Tipton	Yoho
Sensenbrenner	Trott	Young (AK)
Sessions	Turner	Young (IA)
Shimkus	Upton	Zeldin
	Valadao	
	Wagner	

NOES—183

Adams	Frankel (FL)	Napolitano
Aguilar	Fudge	Neal
Barragán	Gabbard	Nolan
Bass	Gallego	Norcross
Beatty	Garamendi	O'Halleran
Bera	Gonzalez (TX)	O'Rourke
Beyer	Gottheimer	Pallone
Bishop (GA)	Green, Al	Panetta
Blunt Rochester	Green, Gene	Pascrell
Bonamici	Grijalva	Pelosi
Boyle, Brendan F.	Gutiérrez	Perlmutter
Brady (PA)	Hanabusa	Peters
Brown (MD)	Hastings	Pingree
Brownley (CA)	Heck	Pocan
Bustos	Higgins (NY)	Polis
Butterfield	Himes	Price (NC)
Capuano	Hoyer	Quigley
Carbajal	Jackson Lee	Raskin
Cárdenas	Jayapal	Rice (NY)
Carson (IN)	Jeffries	Richmond
Cartwright	Johnson (GA)	Rosen
Castor (FL)	Kaptur	Roybal-Allard
Castro (TX)	Keating	Ruiz
Chu, Judy	Kelly (IL)	Ruppersberger
Cicilline	Kennedy	Ryan (OH)
Clark (MA)	Khanna	Sánchez
Clarke (NY)	Kihuen	Sarbanes
Clay	Kildee	Schakowsky
Cleaver	Kilmer	Schiff
Clyburn	Kind	Schneider
Cohen	Krishnamoorthi	Scott (VA)
Connolly	Kuster (NH)	Scott, David
Conyers	Langevin	Serrano
Cooper	Larsen (WA)	Sewell (AL)
Correa	Larson (CT)	Shea-Porter
Costa	Lawrence	Sherman
Courtney	Lawson (FL)	Sinema
Crist	Lee	Sires
Crowley	Levin	Smith (WA)
Cuellar	Lewis (GA)	Soto
Cummings	Lieu, Ted	Speier
Davis (CA)	Loebsack	Suozzi
Davis, Danny	Lofgren	Swalwell (CA)
DeFazio	Lowenthal	Takano
DeGette	Lowey	Thompson (CA)
Delaney	Lujan Grisham, M.	Thompson (MS)
DeLauro	Luján, Ben Ray	Titus
DelBene	Lynch	Tonko
Demings	Maloney, Carolyn B.	Torres
DeSaulnier	Maloney, Sean	Tsongas
Deutch	Matsui	Vargas
Dingell	McCollum	Vela
Doggett	McEachin	Velázquez
Doyle, Michael F.	McGovern	Visclosky
Ellison	McNerney	Walz
Engel	Meeks	Wasserman Schultz
Eshoo	Meng	Waters, Maxine
Espaillat	Moore	Watson Coleman
Esty	Moulton	Welch
Evans	Murphy (FL)	Wilson (FL)
Foster	Nadler	Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—13

Blumenauer	Mulvaney	Slaughter
Coffman	Payne	Veasey
Huffman	Price, Tom (GA)	Zinke
Johnson, E. B.	Rush	
Jones	Schrader	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1411

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. COFFMAN. Madam Speaker, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted ''Yea'' on roll call No. 62, and ''Yea'' on roll call No. 63.

RESIGNATION AS MEMBER OF COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following resignation as a member of the Committee on Ethics:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC, January 24, 2017.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER RYAN: This letter is to inform you that effective today I am resigning as the Ranking Member of the Committee on Ethics, as I have reached the applicable term limit under rules of the Democratic Caucus. It has been a privilege and a high honor to serve on the committee, which serves an essential function for the House and the public.

Sincerely,

LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the resignation is accepted.

There was no objection.

ELECTING MEMBERS TO A CERTAIN STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. CROWLEY. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Democratic Caucus, I offer a privileged resolution and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 56

Resolved, That the following named Members be and are hereby elected to the following standing committee of the House of Representatives:

(1) COMMITTEE ON ETHICS.—Mr. Deutch, Ms. Clarke of New York, Mr. Polis, and Mr. Brown of Maryland.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1415

NO TAXPAYER FUNDING FOR ABORTION AND ABORTION INSURANCE FULL DISCLOSURE ACT OF 2017

Mrs. BLACK. Madam Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 55, I call up the bill (H.R. 7) to prohibit taxpayer funded abortions, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 7

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion and Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act of 2017''.

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

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—PROHIBITING FEDERALLY FUNDED ABORTIONS

Sec. 101. Prohibiting taxpayer funded abortions.

Sec. 102. Amendment to table of chapters.

TITLE II—APPLICATION UNDER THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

Sec. 201. Clarifying application of prohibition to premium credits and cost-sharing reductions under ACA.

Sec. 202. Revision of notice requirements regarding disclosure of extent of health plan coverage of abortion and abortion premium surcharges.

TITLE I—PROHIBITING FEDERALLY FUNDED ABORTIONS

SEC. 101. PROHIBITING TAXPAYER FUNDED ABORTIONS.

Title 1, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new chapter:

''CHAPTER 4—PROHIBITING TAXPAYER FUNDED ABORTIONS

''301. Prohibition on funding for abortions.
''302. Prohibition on funding for health benefits plans that cover abortion.
''303. Limitation on Federal facilities and employees.
''304. Construction relating to separate coverage.
''305. Construction relating to the use of non-Federal funds for health coverage.
''306. Non-preemption of other Federal laws.
''307. Construction relating to complications arising from abortion.
''308. Treatment of abortions related to rape, incest, or preserving the life of the mother.
''309. Application to District of Columbia.

''§ 301. Prohibition on funding for abortions

''No funds authorized or appropriated by Federal law, and none of the funds in any trust fund to which funds are authorized or appropriated by Federal law, shall be expended for any abortion.

''§ 302. Prohibition on funding for health benefits plans that cover abortion

''None of the funds authorized or appropriated by Federal law, and none of the funds in any trust fund to which funds are authorized or appropriated by Federal law, shall be expended for health benefits coverage that includes coverage of abortion.

''§ 303. Limitation on Federal facilities and employees

''No health care service furnished—

''(1) by or in a health care facility owned or operated by the Federal Government; or

''(2) by any physician or other individual employed by the Federal Government to provide health care services within the scope of the physician's or individual's employment, may include abortion.

''§ 304. Construction relating to separate coverage

''Nothing in this chapter shall be construed as prohibiting any individual, entity, or State or locality from purchasing separate abortion coverage or health benefits coverage that includes abortion so long as such coverage is paid for entirely using only funds not authorized or appropriated by Federal law and such coverage shall not be purchased using matching funds required for a federally subsidized program, including a State's or locality's contribution of Medicaid matching funds.

''§ 305. Construction relating to the use of non-Federal funds for health coverage

''Nothing in this chapter shall be construed as restricting the ability of any non-Federal health benefits coverage provider from offering abortion coverage, or the ability of a State or locality to contract separately with such a provider for such coverage, so long as only funds not authorized or appropriated by Federal law are used and such coverage shall not be purchased using matching funds required for a federally subsidized program, including a State's or locality's contribution of Medicaid matching funds.

''§ 306. Non-preemption of other Federal laws

''Nothing in this chapter shall repeal, amend, or have any effect on any other Federal law to the extent such law imposes any limitation on the use of funds for abortion or for health benefits coverage that includes coverage of abortion, beyond the limitations set forth in this chapter.

''§ 307. Construction relating to complications arising from abortion

''Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to apply to the treatment of any infection, injury, disease, or disorder that has been caused by or exacerbated by the performance of an abortion. This rule of construction shall be applicable without regard to whether the abortion was performed in accord with Federal or State law, and without regard to whether funding for the abortion is permissible under section 308.

''§ 308. Treatment of abortions related to rape, incest, or preserving the life of the mother

''The limitations established in sections 301, 302, and 303 shall not apply to an abortion—

''(1) if the pregnancy is the result of an act of rape or incest; or

''(2) in the case where a woman suffers from a physical disorder, physical injury, or physical illness that would, as certified by a physician, place the woman in danger of death unless an abortion is performed, including a life-endangering physical condition caused by or arising from the pregnancy itself.

''§ 309. Application to District of Columbia

''In this chapter:

''(1) Any reference to funds appropriated by Federal law shall be treated as including any amounts within the budget of the District of Columbia that have been approved by an Act of Congress pursuant to section 446 of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act (or any applicable successor Federal law).

''(2) The term 'Federal Government' includes the government of the District of Columbia.''.

SEC. 102. AMENDMENT TO TABLE OF CHAPTERS.

The table of chapters for title 1, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

''4. Prohibiting taxpayer funded abortions ..... 301''.

TITLE II—APPLICATION UNDER THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

SEC. 201. CLARIFYING APPLICATION OF PROHIBITION TO PREMIUM CREDITS AND COST-SHARING REDUCTIONS UNDER ACA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) DISALLOWANCE OF REFUNDABLE CREDIT AND COST-SHARING REDUCTIONS FOR COVERAGE UNDER QUALIFIED HEALTH PLAN WHICH PROVIDES COVERAGE FOR ABORTION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Subparagraph (A) of section 36B(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by inserting before the period at the end the following: ''or any health plan that includes coverage for abortions (other than any abortion or treatment described in section 307 or 308 of title 1, United States Code)''.

(B) OPTION TO PURCHASE OR OFFER SEPARATE COVERAGE OR PLAN.—Paragraph (3) of section 36B(c) of such Code is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(C) SEPARATE ABORTION COVERAGE OR PLAN ALLOWED.—

''(i) OPTION TO PURCHASE SEPARATE COVERAGE OR PLAN.—Nothing in subparagraph (A) shall be construed as prohibiting any individual from purchasing separate coverage for abortions described in such subparagraph, or a health plan that includes such abortions, so long as no credit is allowed under this section with respect to the premiums for such coverage or plan.

''(ii) OPTION TO OFFER COVERAGE OR PLAN.—Nothing in subparagraph (A) shall restrict any non-Federal health insurance issuer offering a health plan from offering separate coverage for abortions described in such subparagraph, or a plan that includes such abortions, so long as premiums for such separate coverage or plan are not paid for with any amount attributable to the credit allowed under this section (or the amount of any advance payment of the credit under section 1412 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act).''.

(2) DISALLOWANCE OF SMALL EMPLOYER HEALTH INSURANCE EXPENSE CREDIT FOR PLAN WHICH INCLUDES COVERAGE FOR ABORTION.—Subsection (h) of section 45R of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(A) by striking ''Any term'' and inserting the following:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Any term''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(2) EXCLUSION OF HEALTH PLANS INCLUDING COVERAGE FOR ABORTION.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The term 'qualified health plan' does not include any health plan that includes coverage for abortions (other than any abortion or treatment described in section 307 or 308 of title 1, United States Code).

''(B) SEPARATE ABORTION COVERAGE OR PLAN ALLOWED.—

''(i) OPTION TO PURCHASE SEPARATE COVERAGE OR PLAN.—Nothing in subparagraph (A) shall be construed as prohibiting any employer from purchasing for its employees separate coverage for abortions described in such subparagraph, or a health plan that includes such abortions, so long as no credit is allowed under this section with respect to the employer contributions for such coverage or plan.

''(ii) OPTION TO OFFER COVERAGE OR PLAN.—Nothing in subparagraph (A) shall restrict any non-Federal health insurance issuer offering a health plan from offering separate coverage for abortions described in such subparagraph, or a plan that includes such abortions, so long as such separate coverage or plan is not paid for with any employer contribution eligible for the credit allowed under this section.''.

(3) CONFORMING ACA AMENDMENTS.—Section 1303(b) of Public Law 111–148 (42 U.S.C. 18023(b)) is amended—

(A) by striking paragraph (2);

(B) by striking paragraph (3), as amended by section 202(a); and

(C) by redesignating paragraph (4) as paragraph (2).

(b) APPLICATION TO MULTI-STATE PLANS.—Paragraph (6) of section 1334(a) of Public Law 111–148 (42 U.S.C. 18054(a)) is amended to read as follows:

''(6) COVERAGE CONSISTENT WITH FEDERAL ABORTION POLICY.—In entering into contracts under this subsection, the Director shall ensure that no multi-State qualified health plan offered in an Exchange provides health benefits coverage for which the expenditure of Federal funds is prohibited under chapter 4 of title 1, United States Code.''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall apply to taxable years ending after December 31, 2017, but only with respect to plan years beginning after such date, and the amendment made by subsection (b) shall apply to plan years beginning after such date.

SEC. 202. REVISION OF NOTICE REQUIREMENTS REGARDING DISCLOSURE OF EXTENT OF HEALTH PLAN COVERAGE OF ABORTION AND ABORTION PREMIUM SURCHARGES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (3) of section 1303(b) of Public Law 111–148 (42 U.S.C. 18023(b)) is amended to read as follows:

''(3) RULES RELATING TO NOTICE.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The extent of coverage (if any) of services described in paragraph (1)(B)(i) or (1)(B)(ii) by a qualified health plan shall be disclosed to enrollees at the time of enrollment in the plan and shall be prominently displayed in any marketing or advertising materials, comparison tools, or summary of benefits and coverage explanation made available with respect to such plan by the issuer of the plan, by an Exchange, or by the Secretary, including information made available through an Internet portal or Exchange under sections 1311(c)(5) and 1311(d)(4)(C).

''(B) SEPARATE DISCLOSURE OF ABORTION SURCHARGES.—In the case of a qualified health plan that includes the services described in paragraph (1)(B)(i) and where the premium for the plan is disclosed, including in any marketing or advertising materials or any other information referred to in subparagraph (A), the surcharge described in paragraph (2)(B)(i)(II) that is attributable to such services shall also be disclosed and identified separately.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply to materials, tools, or other information made available more than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 55, the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACK) and the gentlewoman from Colorado (Ms. DEGETTE) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Tennessee.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. BLACK. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include any extraneous material on H.R. 7, currently under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Tennessee?

There was no objection.

Mrs. BLACK. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in strong support of the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion and Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act, and I thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) for his unflinching leadership on this issue.

It was just a week ago that groups of women marched in the streets of D.C. and other cities across the country apparently ready to write off this Presidency as it just began.

There were millions of pro-life women who were explicitly told that they were unwelcome at this event. So today, the people's House is giving them and the more than 60 percent of Americans from all political persuasions who oppose taxpayer funding of abortions a voice.

The legislation before us will protect Americans' conscience rights by ensuring that their hard-earned tax dollars are not used to fund the destruction of innocent life. That is a principle that Members of both parties have supported in this Chamber before.

Every year, Democrats and Republicans alike have come together to support funding bills that maintain the law called the Hyde amendment, which prohibits the direct Federal funding of abortion, with limited exceptions. This 40-year-old law has saved an estimated 2 million lives, but it is not permanent, meaning that this time-honored protection could be taken away on a whim. What is more, the law, in its current form, has clear loopholes.

A 2014 GAO study found that taxpayer-funded insurance subsidies could be used to pay for abortions on over 1,000 ObamaCare plans nationwide. That is why today we have the opportunity to make this life-affirming law permanent and governmentwide.

As a mother, a grandmother, and a nurse for more than 40 years, this measure is especially meaningful to me. During my years in the healthcare industry, I saw the joy in young parents' eyes when they met their newborn for the very first time. I held the hands of grieving spouses and children as they said good-bye to their loved ones. And, sadly, I witnessed a young woman lose her life due to the effects of a botched abortion.

These experiences informed my view that all life is a precious gift from God. I pray that in time this truth will be reflected in our Nation's laws. Until then, can't we at least do this much.

I urge a ''yes'' vote on the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion and Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. DEGETTE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.

Madam Speaker, our constituents are looking to this Congress to address the economy, jobs, our crumbling infrastructure, and so many other issues. But despite these pressing needs, the only substantive bill this House is considering this week is a bill restricting a woman's ability to get a full range of healthcare services and a bill, which passed before in this House and that we know is going nowhere in the other body.

Its title alone must be part of the majority's new plan to redefine facts. As we heard the other day, we now apparently have in our discourse ''alternative facts.''

This bill takes that to a whole new level, and let me tell you why. The bill is called the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion and Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act. But under current law, under the Hyde amendment—which I hate, which I will do everything to repeal—we have no taxpayer funding for abortion. Taxpayer funds are currently prohibited from use for abortions. Instead, what this bill does is it takes that concept and it uses it to far expand a restriction on a woman's ability to get the full health care that she needs.

Let me talk about what this bill does exactly. First of all, it codifies the Hyde amendment into statute, which has never been done in this Nation's history.

Secondly, it codifies a ban on abortions in D.C., even when they are done with D.C.'s taxpayer money and not with Federal money.

Number three, it codifies the Helms amendment, which denies women abroad access to safe abortion care by severely restricting the use of U.S. funds to pay for healthcare services in developing countries.

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

Ms. DEGETTE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself an additional 1 minute.

It severely restricts abortion coverage in the ACA's exchanges by forbidding people who have plans where they get subsidies from paying for plans with their own money. This is a far expansion of a restriction on a woman's right to get her own health insurance with her own money.

It denies insurance-related tax credits to small businesses that choose plans that offer abortion services. It permanently bans abortion services for Federal employees and it codifies a ban on abortion coverage for women in military services overseas.

The fact that we are debating this today, just 1 day after President Trump issued an executive order reinstating the global gag rule, is a slap in the face to the over 3 million women who marched last weekend.

Let's vote ''no'' on this bill and let's go to the business that the American public really cares about.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. BLACK. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE), who is the chair of the Judiciary Committee and a longstanding supporter of pro-life.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for her ardent work on this important cause.

However stark Americans' differences of opinion can be on the matter of abortion generally, there has been long, bipartisan agreement that Federal taxpayer funds should not be used to destroy innocent life.

The Hyde amendment, named for its chief sponsor, former House Judiciary Committee Chairman Henry Hyde, has prohibited the Federal funding of abortions since 1976 when it passed the House and Senate that was composed overwhelmingly of Democratic members. It has been renewed each appropriations cycle with few changes for

over 40 years, supported by Congresses controlled by both parties and Presidents from both parties. It is probably the most bipartisan, pro-life proposal sustained over a longer period of time than any other. It is time the Hyde amendment was codified in the U.S. Code.

H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion and Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act, sponsored by Representative CHRIS SMITH of New Jersey, would do just that. It would codify the two core principles of the Hyde amendment throughout the operations of the Federal Government; namely, a ban on Federal funding for abortions and a ban on the use of Federal funds for health benefits coverage that includes coverage of abortion.

As hundreds of thousands of people from across the country come to Washington to express their love of unborn children at the annual March for Life and as we now have a President who supports this legislation, let's reflect on what could be accomplished if the bill we consider today were signed into law.

During the time the Hyde amendment has been in place, the most reliable estimates—and those of the Congressional Budget Office—are that millions of innocent children and their mothers have been spared the horrors of abortion. Millions of lives have been saved. And of those millions of lives saved, many more have grown up to bear their own children and to raise them in happy, loving families.

This bill is more than a proposed law. It is a celebration of the lives of those millions of Americans—boys and girls, men and women of all races—who give joy and feel love and create and contribute all because of the policies this bill contains. And even more than that, this bill is a welcome sign for millions and millions more Americans to come.

I congratulate the President for already reinstating the Mexico City policy, which prohibits the Federal funding of abortions overseas. And I look forward to his signing this bill into law to codify the same policy here in America.

Ms. DEGETTE. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY).

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 7.

We are only 10 days into this 115th Congress, and already Republicans are bringing legislation to the floor to harm women's health. It is clear that House Republicans do not respect women and our ability to make our own decisions.

Millions of women peacefully marched in cities around the country and around the world, yet here we are, once again, voting legislation to give politicians more control over women's bodies than they have of their own.

Let's be clear: the ultimate goal of this bill is to effectively eliminate access to abortions, even when women pay for it themselves. Seven in ten Americans believe that abortions should be safe and legal. And just as we have seen in Texas, when women lose access to abortion, they will take drastic action to seek back-alley abortions or to self-abort.

Let's remember that Roe v. Wade was not the beginning of women having abortions. It was the end of women dying from abortions.

Mrs. BLACK. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from South Dakota (Mrs. NOEM), a member of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mrs. NOEM. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion and Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act.

Specifically, this bill says directly that Federal taxpayer dollars could not be used to provide abortions. It does not do more than that. What it does is it puts into statute a permanency to legislation that has annually been renewed.

Becoming a parent was something that my husband and I always dreamed about. And when we did realize that we were having our first child, we prayed for her and we prayed for our future children, recognizing that they were a gift from God and that that life was to be protected even from the moment of conception.

That is the belief that I have, and my hope and my dream for everyone here in America is that we would recognize that those children are a gift from God to us to protect, to keep, and to make sure that they are brought into this world safely and helped from thereon. My perspective and my profound commitment to protecting unborn children is why I am standing here today.

Time and again, Congress has risen with bipartisan support to oppose taxpayer-funded abortions. Annual provisions, including the Hyde amendment, have been passed repeatedly; and they have been estimated to save over 2 million innocent lives. Our goal here is to save even more. We need to make these provisions permanent.

ObamaCare has allowed the tax dollars of hardworking Americans to flow to over 1,000 abortion-covering health plans. This has made today's bipartisan legislation more important than ever.

H.R. 7 would create a permanent governmentwide prohibition against Federal dollars to fund abortive procedures. It would also ensure the Affordable Care Act complies with the Hyde amendment until it is repealed and replaced. That is the right thing to do.

□ 1430

Today we stand to make sure that every single life is valued, not just the ones that we pick and choose for political reasons; that every single one that God has created has an opportunity to live out their dreams here in the United States of America.

Ms. DEGETTE. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE).

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman for yielding and for her tireless work and leadership on behalf of women's health.

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 7. This discriminatory bill would undermine a woman's access to abortion care, which is a constitutional right as affirmed by Roe v. Wade, 44 years ago, by making the Hyde amendment permanent. This bill would restrict access to reproductive health care for millions of women and disproportionately harm low-income women and women of color.

As if this isn't enough, H.R. 7 comes on the heels of a dramatic expansion of the global gag rule which denies life-saving health care to women around the world; not to mention continuous Republican attacks on contraceptive access, comprehensive sex education, and Planned Parenthood.

Madam Speaker, when I was a staffer on Capitol Hill when the Hyde amendment was passed, I remember the days very clearly of back-alley abortions.

Clearly, Republicans are trying to take us back to the days when women died from unsafe abortions in this country.

That is why I offered an amendment that would have recognized that women—not employers or politicians—have the right to make their own reproductive health choices.

Shamefully, the Rules Committee refused to make it in order and allow for a debate.

Madam Speaker, women should be able to make their own decisions about reproductive health care, including abortions, without Members of Congress or employers interfering.

Mrs. BLACK. Madam Speaker, I referenced in my opening remarks that there has been bipartisan support for this measure, the Hyde amendment, on a yearly basis. I just want to make mention that the former gentlewoman from California who just spoke did vote for this measure in the fiscal year 2016 omnibus bill.

Madam Speaker, it is my honor to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), who is the sponsor of the bill and is a champion for the unborn. It is really an honor for me to have served with him on this particular issue.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I want to first thank the distinguished gentlewoman, my good friend DIANE BLACK, for her extraordinary leadership. I also want to say to my colleagues—and I hope this really is accepted for the profound change that it underscores—the Hyde amendment has saved 2 million lives; 2 million survivors who would have died had Medicaid funding for abortion not been available.

This is over the course of 40 years, but 2 million lives, some of whom are 39, 38. It is about 60,000 children every year. And if you look at where this comes from, much of the mega-analysis comes from a peer review done by the Guttmacher Institute in 2009. They have found that there is a 25 percent

reduction in Medicaid abortions when Medicaid money is not available to effectuate the dismemberment and the chemical poisoning of an unborn child.

Defense of the unborn child is a human rights issue of our time, Madam Speaker. We talk about the unborn child, we degrade them, we treat them as if they are tumors or warts to be excised rather than children growing, developing, and maturing.

Ultrasound imaging, as we all know, has shattered the myth that somehow an unborn child is anything but human and alive. And I hope that the science, which is very readily available, catches up with the policy.

This makes Hyde and all of the other amendments permanent. We know that every year we have an annual battle over several of those amendments. It also, finally, title II, takes out of ObamaCare the facilitation and the funding of abortion.

When President Obama did his executive order in December of 2010, he said that the Hyde amendment would be applied to the ObamaCare exchanges. For months and years after that in-House debate, people have said that has happened. It did not. We know beyond any reasonable doubt—and we enlisted GAO to look at that—well over 1,000 plans pay for abortion on demand in the ObamaCare exchanges.

So that got the votes the pro-life Democrats needed to effectuate the passage of the Affordable Care Act. But, frankly, it hasn't happened. Title II of this bill says the Hyde amendment will be applied to the ObamaCare exchanges. Had that been done faithfully by the President, there would be no need for title II of this bill.

I remember when the President stood right there in September of 2009 and said: Under our plan, no taxpayer funding will be used to pay for abortion. Absolutely untrue. This language in H.R. 7 makes that true. We don't want to be complicit in the killing and the maiming of unborn children. As we know now, beyond any reasonable doubt, post-abortive women increasingly are coming forward and speaking out, those especially who found peace and reconciliation to say abortion also hurts women.

There are two victims in every abortion: mother and baby. Two million lives saved. That is what we should be all about, life affirming and the saving of human rights.

Ms. DEGETTE. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. JAYAPAL), one of our new Members.

Ms. JAYAPAL. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this bill. This weekend, millions of women made it clear that they demand respect.

Instead, for their efforts, they have received a trip to 1984 where, once again, a paternalistic White House signed executive orders infringing on a woman's right to choose.

H.R. 7, the bill we are considering here today, is the next notch in the Republican belt that will take away our control over our own bodies.

I have years of experience working in family planning, and I can tell you that this bill takes away our ability to plan our families properly and to make decisions about our own bodies, a decision that should be left to a woman and her physician.

Make no mistake, this isn't a healthcare issue. It is part of an extreme rightwing political agenda that puts women's rights on the chopping block.

H.R. 7 tells millions of women that their voices don't matter and their rights don't count. Passing this bill will create even more barriers for women, including women of color, trying to access quality health care.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this misguided and heavy-handed bill.

Mrs. BLACK. Madam Chair, it is my honor to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM), one of my Ways and Means colleagues and a long-time supporter of pro-life.

Mr. ROSKAM. Madam Speaker, I have got a prediction to make, and here is my prediction: In the course of this debate, the opponents of H.R. 7 will not acknowledge nor give voice to Congressman SMITH's claim of saving 2 million lives. Why? Because to acknowledge 2 million lives that are saved is to acknowledge the weakness of an argument; that is, those people are to be dismissed.

Madam Speaker, how do you dismiss 2 million people? How do you dismiss 2 million people, over 60,000 people every year?

If you can imagine what it would be like if someone came in here and with certainty, absolute confidence, said unambiguously, if you pass this law you are going to save 2 million lives, we would line up. We would be voting on that over and over and over again.

And yet, my prediction is, during the remainder of this debate—because we have not heard about it so far—the opponents will be silent about those 2 million lives.

We need to vote for this and save lives in the future.

Ms. DEGETTE. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. MOORE).

Ms. MOORE. Madam Speaker, I want to answer his question with a question.

Do you care about the 4 million children today that live off of less than $2 a day and live in extreme poverty and they are alive? No, you don't.

Let me quote our Founding Father Samuel Adams. ''. . . freedom of thought and the right of private judgement in matters of conscience direct their course to this happy country. . . .''

The First Amendment, the Fourth Amendment, the 14th Amendment, all sort of convene to this notion of rights of privacy in this country, except when it comes to women and their bodies.

Republicans continue to wreak havoc for women's health, operating as if they have some sort of moral imperative to tell us. Get your laws off our bodies.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

Mrs. BLACK. Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FRANKS), who has been a longstanding supporter of life.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Madam Speaker, I want to thank Congresswoman BLACK for this bill. It seems like whenever we talk about this issue, we always talk past each other. But the real question before us is: Does abortion kill a little baby?

If it doesn't, I am ready to quit talking about it. But if it does, then those of us sitting in the seat of freedom are also standing in the midst of the greatest human genocide in the history of humanity. And although we may not agree on all of the vicissitudes of abortion, one thing is certain: Some day, we, as a society, will look back, we will recognize the humanity of these little children of God and the inhumanity of what was being done to them, and we will regret these days.

Until then, at least can't we get together and say that we shouldn't force taxpayers to pay for the killing of innocent little human beings?

I pray that we can open our eyes to that truth.

Ms. DEGETTE. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentlewoman from California (Ms. JUDY CHU).

Ms. JUDY CHU of California. Madam Speaker, on Saturday, millions of people took a stand against the assault on women's rights. Today, I stand with them once again to say we have had enough.

Only 2 days after these historic marches, Republicans in Congress have introduced H.R. 7 to silence women by limiting their constitutional right to make personal choices about their reproductive health, without undue government interference.

H.R. 7 is a woman's health catastrophe. Not only would it codify the discriminatory Hyde amendment, it would penalize employers who offer healthcare plans with comprehensive coverage and prevent the 80 percent of ACA enrollees who receive subsidies from purchasing plans that cover abortion services. In effect, it makes abortion an option only for the wealthy.

The law of the land does not say that only some women have the right to choose; it says that all women have the right to choose.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this reckless legislation.

Mrs. BLACK. Madam Speaker, I want to once again mention that there has been longstanding bipartisan support for the support of the Hyde amendment.

As a matter of fact, the gentlewoman from California who just spoke voted for this on three different occasions;

most recently in the MACRA that was passed in 2015; the omnibus, which was passed in December of 2015 and also in December of 2016; and in the fiscal year 2017 CR.

It is now my honor to yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Alabama (Mrs. ROBY), a member of the Appropriations Committee and a strong supporter of pro-life.

Mrs. ROBY. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Tennessee for yielding me this time. Opponents of this bill are suggesting that we are against women's health care. What we are vehemently opposed to is the killing of innocent lives, innocent babies.

□ 1445

So let's call abortion abortion and be reminded that the one voice, Madam Speaker, not heard today is that of the baby. So it is my privilege, alongside my colleagues, to speak on behalf of those who are not here today to speak for themselves. No taxpayer dollars should ever go to fund abortions. This is a commonsense truth that even the most ardent pro-abortion activists have a hard time arguing.

I am unapologetically pro-life, and it is no secret that I believe in stronger protections for unborn children under the law, but I also believe that we must assign greater respect for life within our society. That is why it is so important for Congress to make a statement, once and for all, that there is no place in the Federal budget for abortion funding.

As an appropriator, I can tell you that the Hyde amendment has been indispensable to stopping funding for abortion throughout our government healthcare agencies. Now it is time to apply the same longstanding provision across the entire Federal Government.

Madam Speaker, for my pro-life colleagues and me, fighting on behalf of the unborn has been an uphill battle these last several years. The abortion industry's fierce allies in the Senate and the Obama administration have made sure that many worthy pro-life measures were defeated. However, with a unified Republican government, our hope is that our prospects have changed for the better. On just the second day of his Presidency, President Trump issued an executive order blocking Federal funding for international groups to provide or promote abortions. For the pro-life community, this long-overdue action was a welcome sign that the Trump administration will be a powerful ally in the fight for life.

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

Mrs. BLACK. Madam Speaker, I yield the gentlewoman an additional 30 seconds.

Mrs. ROBY. Madam Speaker, there are many policy improvements to pursue: reasonable limits on abortions after 5 months of pregnancy, stopping the shell game of title X funding at Planned Parenthood, improving access to adoption services, and more. But a great place to start is passing H.R. 7. It is our enduring responsibility to defend the unborn, and it is imperative we get this right.

Ms. DEGETTE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, the gentlewoman from Tennessee has attempted to imply that several of our speakers today support the Hyde amendment because they voted for very large omnibus spending bills that included the Hyde amendment. I would like to be really clear that none of the speakers on this side today do support the Hyde amendment, and, in fact, in the last Congress we had a bill, the EACH Woman Act, sponsored by a number of us, 129 cosponsors, which would repeal the Hyde amendment. Sometimes people vote for large pieces of legislation because they do things like keep our government open and build highways and roads. But we will do everything in our power to repeal this poorly thought-out and regressive amendment, and we will do everything we can to defeat this bill today.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER).

Ms. SPEIER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for her leadership.

Madam Speaker, President Trump once said his favorite book is the Bible. I think he is writing a new book for the Bible called the ''Apocalypse of Women.'' It is a reverse Genesis.

In the beginning, he divided the country in half with rightwing dog whistles in his inaugural address. On the second day, he ignored millions of people who marched across America and the world. On the third day, he pondered changes to NAFTA and which women's rights to trade away. On the fourth day, he reinstated and expanded the global gag rule, risking women's lives worldwide. Today he and his House mouthpieces are blocking access to domestic reproductive health coverage trumpeting alternative facts about legal abortions that have been somehow prevented, some 2 million of them.

Well, prove it.

I shudder to think what will happen tomorrow, and I doubt on the seventh day it will be devoted to rest.

Madam Speaker, we must fight this madness and oppose H.R. 7.

Mrs. BLACK. Madam Speaker, I yield 15 seconds to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. I thank my friend for yielding.

Madam Speaker, my distinguished colleague said ''prove it'' about the 2 million. Well, there is a very extensive study done by Michael J. New. The Review of Literature done in June of 2009 by the Guttmacher Institute found: ''Approximately one-fourth of women who would have had Medicaid-funded abortions instead gave birth when this funding was unavailable.''

Mrs. BLACK. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY), who is the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act. This bill is pro-life, it is pro-family, and it is pro-taxpayer. I want to thank Representatives CHRIS SMITH and DIANE BLACK for their unwavering leadership in bringing this bill forward.

Among other important actions, what I am excited about is this bill finally makes the Hyde amendment permanent. This important and longstanding policy prohibits taxpayer dollars from being used to fund abortions through Federal programs. For many years, it was the policy of America that, whether you were pro-choice or, as I am, strongly pro-life, your taxpayer dollars would not be used for the controversial act of abortion.

Taking this action now is especially important given that, under the Affordable Care Act, taxpayer-funded health insurance subsidies have been funneled toward health plans that do cover abortion services. The bill before us today will ensure that taxpayer dollars aren't used in any form to cover elective abortions. This policy will be permanent, and it will apply governmentwide, including to the Affordable Care Act.

Right now, House Republicans are working to repeal this failed law and put in place a 21st century healthcare system Americans deserve. By passing this bill, we can also take immediate action to protect life and taxpayer dollars from the law's harmful impacts.

For me, this is a family issue. My wife and I are proud parents of two adopted children. We have a family only because two women in two very difficult situations chose life. It is important that our government and the laws that represent us encourage those choices and encourage and protect innocent lives. This bill today takes such an important step forward.

Madam Speaker, I want to thank, again, Congressman SMITH and Representative DIANE BLACK for their leadership. I urge all my colleagues to join me in supporting its passage.

Ms. DEGETTE. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. FRANKEL).

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Colorado.

Madam Speaker, for women to thrive in the economic and social opportunities of our Nation, we must have the ability to control our own reproductive lives with full access to real healthcare choices.

Republican unrelenting efforts to force unwanted pregnancies and eradicate affordable, safe abortion will not save lives. Repealing the Affordable Care Act, defunding Planned Parenthood, and now driving insurance coverage for abortion into extinction will

return women to the days of coat hanger medicine. Allowing women to be killed and maimed in back alleys is not pro-life. It will not make America great again.

Women of America are on the march, and, Madam Speaker, we will not retreat.

Mrs. BLACK. Madam Speaker, once again, I want to talk about the longstanding bipartisan support for the Hyde amendment. The gentlewoman from Florida has supported this measure in the omnibus bill and also the CR of 2017.

Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. WAGNER), who is a member of the Financial Services Committee. She and her family have been fighting for pro-life issues for many, many, many years.

Mrs. WAGNER. Madam Speaker, I thank my friend and colleague, the gentlewoman from Tennessee, DIANE BLACK, for her wonderful leadership on this issue along with Congressman SMITH, also, for his wonderful leadership.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my support for the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act. The Hyde amendment has received bipartisan support for 40 years because it is a testimony to the freedom of conscience for all Americans and the dignity of the unborn.

I am heartbroken that opposition to the amendment has become a political gimmick. All human beings—the born, the unborn, the young, the old, the sick, and the healthy—are entitled to a government that promotes their dignity, their conscience, and their gift of life.

This bill spells out Congress' commitment to all people—including children—across our Nation that the profits of Big Abortion should not be pilfered off the hard work of the American citizen. No tax dollar should be spent on the destruction of human life.

In passing this bill and making the Hyde language permanent, we affirm that protecting children and mothers is our most precious duty as Members of Congress. Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote for life.

Ms. DEGETTE. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. CASTOR).

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Madam Speaker, I thank Congresswoman DEGETTE for yielding the time.

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 7 and urge the Republican-led Congress to hear the voices of the millions who marched on Saturday who proclaimed that women's rights must be respected, including a woman's right to choose her own health care.

I was part of that march, with many of my neighbors from Florida, to send a message to this Congress that our rights—our constitutional rights—must be preserved. Americans have a right to privacy, as we are reminded on this anniversary week of Roe v. Wade, but this Republican bill tramples on that right to privacy.

Women, their families, and their doctors have the right to make their personal healthcare decisions, not the mostly male politicians in Washington. It is especially appalling that the Republicans have targeted female veterans and those that serve in the military for reduction in care.

So, Madam Speaker, I urge a ''no'' vote on this unconstitutional bill and encourage Americans to continue to lift their voices.

Mrs. BLACK. Madam Speaker, once again, I want to say that there has been longstanding bipartisan support for the Hyde amendment, and the gentlewoman from Florida supported this measure back in 2015 on the H.R. 2 MACRA bill and the 2015 omnibus bill, H.R. 2029.

Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Utah (Mrs. LOVE).

Mrs. LOVE. Madam Speaker, let's talk about what this is really about. This is about the loss of human lives.

Each child potentially brings with him or her unique gifts and talents that can be used for the betterment of our society. An unborn child may be the doctor that cures cancer or Alzheimer's, may be the astronaut that lands us on Mars or the future leader that solves the problems of today. The list of our children's potential is infinite in value.

Any time a child's life is lost, there is something more that is lost. It is a loss for us, it is a loss for our society, and it is a loss for our Nation. If you want to invest in our future, in the words of Henry Hyde: ''We cannot in logic or in conscience help fund the execution of these innocent, defenseless human lives.''

A strong majority of Americans and a bipartisan majority in Congress opposes taxpayer-funded abortions. Because of this, there exists, currently, over 40 years of laws that prevent this practice. These laws have been deemed constitutional by the United States Supreme Court.

So this is not about women's health. I want you to know very clearly that I support women's health. I support a healthy, organic, and open healthcare system that gives women more care than they currently receive today. What this bill does is codifies something that we already have. It ends the patchwork and establishes permanent protections for our children and the future of our society.

I want you to know, Madam Speaker, that when I stand up and I meet with my Maker, I want you to know that I am not going to be ashamed. I am going to know that I stood up for the lives of these innocent children.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of our future, in favor of our unborn potential, and in favor of H.R. 7.

□ 1500

Ms. DEGETTE. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. FOSTER).

Mr. FOSTER. Madam Speaker, this weekend we saw millions of Americans march in cities and towns across the country and around the world—far more than attended the inauguration the day before.

I joined the march in Chicago, where one of the most visible concerns was women's reproductive freedom. Today, House Republicans, roughly 90 percent of them White males, responded by showing the women of America exactly how little they respect those rights.

Madam Speaker, a party that lost the popular vote by almost 3 million votes does not have a mandate to deny women the right to make their own healthcare decisions.

Perhaps I should remind my Republican colleagues that unless you are their doctor, they don't need your opinion. Women in the Federal workforce, low-income women, women in the military, women employed by small businesses are all perfectly capable of having a conversation with their doctor about their health.

So I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on the bill and ''no'' to disrespecting the women of America.

Mrs. BLACK. Madam Speaker I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOHO).

Mr. YOHO. Madam Speaker, life begins at conception. I believe it is our responsibility to protect the millions of unborn children whose voices go unheard.

As a Christian and a father of three, I believe the lives of all children, including the unborn, are just as important as yours or mine. That is why I stand here today in support of H.R. 7. This bill safeguards the lives of unborn children who are robbed of their opportunity to experience the marvels of life.

H.R. 7 closes loopholes that have permitted the subsidization of abortions by taxpayers who are morally opposed to the practice. Additionally, this bill also requires insurance providers who receive Federal subsidies through participation in the healthcare exchanges to report to consumers whether or not they will be subject to a surcharge that covers abortion services at the time of purchase.

It boggles the mind that our Federal Government had the arrogance to skirt longstanding laws in order to trick the American taxpayer into unknowingly contributing to abortions in the first place.

This bill has passed the House numerous times. The merits of the bill are clear. I urge my colleagues to support swift passage of H.R. 7.

Ms. DEGETTE. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ).

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, on Saturday, millions of Americans around the Nation

spoke with a collective voice, opposing President Trump's plans to trample women's rights. Yet here we are, the first week of the new administration, voting on a bill to scale back women's health benefits.

Let's be clear: this bill is not about preventing Federal funds from going to abortions. Sadly, current law already prevents that. In reality, this bill would affect millions of women who purchase coverage with their own money. It will make it nearly impossible for insurance providers to offer plans fully covering women's reproductive health. It would harm low-income women who need access to an abortion, turning back the clock on women's reproductive rights.

It is day five of the Trump Presidency and women are already being attacked at every corner. I promise my colleagues this: the American people are watching. They will remember this vote.

Vote ''no'' on this bill.

Mrs. BLACK. Madam Speaker, I want to remind everyone of the longstanding bipartisan support for the Hyde amendment. The gentlewoman from New York voted for this measure in the omnibus bill, H.R. 2029, in 2015, and then on the MACRA bill, also in 2015.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. RUSSELL).

Mr. RUSSELL. Madam Speaker, the carving up and commercial sale of dismembered unborn children ranks as one of the most horrific and barbaric acts in American and human history.

As an adoptive father, I speak today on behalf of the 55 million Americans that have had their lives brutally ended with the scalpel, the suction hose, and the callousness of the murderous culture that allows it to perpetuate.

These Americans had a right to choose life that they did not want to lose. We have the ability to restore to future Americans that choice. Until that day, no American should be forced to end the life of an innocent human being with their tax dollars.

We can carve up a child and call it a choice. We can destroy human life and call it health care. We can make the killing of children legal and pretend it is beneficial. We can cover acts of barbarity with the veneer of civility. But we cannot escape our accountability before the Creator of life.

Ms. DEGETTE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The gentlewoman from Tennessee keeps saying over and over that different people voted for H.R. 2029 and, therefore, they must be for the Hyde amendment. I would like to point out that she herself voted against H.R. 2029. I guess maybe that means she is against the Hyde amendment since she voted against that bill.

The point I am making is that all of us oppose the Hyde amendment. We are all cosponsoring the EACH Woman Act. Simply because you vote for or against a large omnibus bill does not mean you are necessarily in favor of or against the Hyde amendment.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN).

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

H.R. 7 will make permanent the harmful and discriminatory Hyde amendment, penalizing small businesses who want to provide comprehensive health coverage to their employees and, once again, trampling on the District of Columbia by prohibiting the District from spending its own local funds for abortion coverage.

Yet again, the GOP has put our bodies and the choices we should get to make about them in the middle of a political firestorm. With every exhaustingly repetitive argument about when, how, and where a woman should be able to make those decisions, our country suffers.

If my Republican colleagues are so concerned about the life of a child, why isn't there priority to put forth a plan for public education? Why haven't we seen a comprehensive plan to continue the job growth that President Barack Obama started?

Their motives are transparent and I refuse to let this White House or any elected official play politics with women's bodies. As we continue down this dangerous road, today, tomorrow, and every day thereafter will be a day of resistance.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to oppose this bill.

Mrs. BLACK. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MITCHELL) one of our newest Members.

Mr. MITCHELL. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion and Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act, which I proudly cosponsored.

Four years ago, my wife and I adopted a young child from an orphanage. People say it changed his life. It changed ours.

This year, the theme of the March for Life is ''The Power of One,'' meaning that every single person can change the course of history if given the chance to live. Every year, 1 million unborn babies are stripped of the right to life, which our Declaration of Independence calls unalienable.

Moreover, those opposed to abortion have been forced to violate their consciences through taxpayer-funded abortions. This legislation will reinforce a culture of life by making current prohibitions against taxpayer-funded abortions permanent.

Madam Speaker, I stand in the spirit of ''The Power of One'' to give voice to the voiceless, rights back to the unborn, and I urge passage of this legislation.

Ms. DEGETTE. Madam Speaker, may I inquire as to the time remaining on each side?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from Colorado has 14½ minutes remaining. The gentlewoman from Tennessee has 3½ minutes remaining.

Ms. DEGETTE. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN).

(Mr. LEVIN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Speaker, with H.R. 7, Republicans are again targeting American women's health care.

This bill limits financial assistance in order to restrict women's choices in the health insurance marketplaces, forcing women and their families to select only certain plans. The goal is to restrict the ability of a woman to make her own choices.

This bill comes up 1 day after President Trump reinstituted the Mexico rule. It prohibits U.S. foreign assistance to any organization which uses not those funds, but those from any other source for any activity related to abortion services.

When I was Assistant Administrator of the AID in the late seventies, I led the highly organized effort that established a strict process for cordoning off any U.S. funds from any activity related to abortions, in violation of the Hyde amendment.

What the Mexico rule means is that if any organization uses funds from any source related to abortion, it cannot receive any U.S. assistance, even if 99 percent of its activities related to women's health are totally unrelated to abortions and even programs in a nation where abortion is illegal.

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

Ms. DEGETTE. Madam Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. LEVIN. The result will be the absence of health care for millions of women in our Nation, as H.R. 7 will result for millions of women in our Nation. We are seeing 48 hours of reckless disregard for women's health.

Mrs. BLACK. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD).

Mr. LAHOOD. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion and Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act.

Unfortunately, in our Nation, the most vulnerable and the most helpless lives amongst us have had their lives ended unceremoniously and tragically through abortion. Since 1973, 57 million lives have been lost to abortion. Even more disheartening, taxpayer dollars have been funding these abortions, despite the fact that polls show that 60 percent of Americans believe that abortions should not be directly paid for with tax dollars.

Since 1976, the Hyde amendment has saved 2 million lives by prohibiting tax dollars from funding abortions. It is time to make this lifesaving amendment permanent and governmentwide. If signed by our new President, this

measure would do just that. Supporting comprehensive, life-affirming care is a better and more effective way to invest in women's health.

I am thankful to all those who will come to Washington, D.C., this week to March for Life on behalf of the unborn. As a practicing Catholic and the father of three, I am proud to be the voice for the unborn here in Congress.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 7 and stand up for life.

Ms. DEGETTE. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. DELBENE).

Ms. DELBENE. Madam Speaker, this weekend, millions of women marched across the country to send a clear signal to Congress and President Trump: Hear our voices and protect our rights.

Yet here we are, just 2 days later, voting on the same extremist policies that House leaders have been pushing for years.

Women will not be fooled. We know H.R. 7 is another direct attack on our health and our families. It creates sweeping new restrictions on abortion care for women who purchase coverage under the Affordable Care Act, with no meaningful exceptions to protect a woman's health.

That means women like Stephanie, from my district, who faced heartbreaking complications during her wanted pregnancy, would be left without coverage for the doctor-recommended care she needed.

We should not be injecting ideology into a woman's personal medical decisions. This bill is an insult to the millions of women who marched this weekend, and I urge my colleagues to vote ''no.''

Mrs. BLACK. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PITTENGER).

Mr. PITTENGER. Madam Speaker, just a few weeks ago, my family was blessed with the arrival of a beautiful baby girl, our 10th grandchild. If you have ever held a newborn, so defenseless and completely dependent on you, you will understand why the idea that some people advocate for the murder of little babies is unconscionable.

Since 1975, the Hyde amendment has saved an estimated 2 million innocent babies by prohibiting taxpayer dollars from being used for abortions. Unfortunately, ObamaCare ignores the Hyde amendment and uses your tax dollars as subsidies for insurance policies which offer abortion services.

Therefore, I urge my colleagues to join me in support of the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion and Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act, which will make the Hyde amendment governmentwide policy and ensure future government programs don't support abortion with your tax dollars.

God tells us that He knew us in our mother's womb. His gift of life is precious, unalienable, and must be protected.

□ 1515

Ms. DEGETTE. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN), another one of our excellent new Members.

Mr. RASKIN. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 7.

A few days ago, millions of Americans made history by marching for freedom and equality against an administration that keeps threatening to grab women by their privacy rights. H.R. 7 now tries to make it impossible for millions of women, like my constituents in Maryland, to have an abortion, even when their health is at stake and even to the point of manipulating the tax laws to force private insurers in the ACA not to offer complete coverage.

Here in Washington, D.C., the only capital of a democracy on Earth where residents are denied voting representation in their national legislature, this extreme legislation constitutes a special assault on liberty. The hundreds of thousands of taxpaying citizens living in D.C. have decided, like the people of Maryland, to offer Medicaid funding for poor women to have complete coverage. This legislation strips this modicum of democracy away in the District of Columbia, combining a cavalier attack on democracy with a vicious attack on health care.

If a foreign repressive power like Russia tried to deny women in our Capital City complete medical coverage, we would consider it an act of aggression against the United States. As a Representative from Maryland, the Free State, I reject this outrageous attempt to deprive women of their constitutionally protected choices, and as the next-door neighbor of the good people of Washington, D.C., I reject this brutal attack on democracy and health care.

Mrs. BLACK. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY), a gentleman who has been a champion of life.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. I thank my dear colleague and friend, DIANE BLACK, for her leadership on this most essential issue.

Madam Speaker, if you look behind us on this dais right here, it says, ''Peace, Liberty, Justice.'' We inscribe these words all around our Nation's Capitol and on our monuments, but in truth, we cannot find peace in a society that does not protect its most vulnerable members. We cannot find liberty when we are indifferent to one another, and we cannot claim justice when we throw away innocent life.

Madam Speaker, I find it very interesting that the early feminist movement was pro-life. They saw abortion for what it is: the abandonment of women. Once an abortion occurs, as Maddie Brinckerhoff, an early feminist lecturer, once said:

> It is evidence by either a lack of education or resources, she has been greatly wronged.

At the very least, I think, Madam Speaker, we can stand with the vast majority of Americans and not use our taxpayer dollars to subsidize the abortion industry and the violence against women.

Ms. DEGETTE. Madam Speaker, how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from Colorado has 11 minutes remaining. The gentlewoman from Tennessee has 30 seconds remaining.

Ms. DEGETTE. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COHEN).

Mr. COHEN. Madam Speaker, what this bill is about is taking women who can't afford to get an abortion and not allowing them to use taxpayer-funded money to get it. The assumption on the other side is they won't have money, because people who are in dire straits won't have money to get it, and therefore they will have these 2 million children they are talking about.

What we are talking about—let's make it clear—is they are talking about poor women who they think can't afford to get to a doctor or to an abortion provider and force them to have children that they can't have because of economics.

So women, poor women, do not forgive them for they know what they do. They are trying to put you at their mercy and make you have children because you are poor. If they get their ultimate desire—and that is the repeal of Roe v. Wade—then poor women will not be able to get an abortion, but wealthy women will.

Trump said, yes, if they outlaw abortion, go to another State. Easy to say when you are a billionaire, but not a thing to say to the middle class and poor women of this country whom they want to force, through their economic disparities, to bear children.

Mrs. BLACK. Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. ADERHOLT).

Mr. ADERHOLT. Madam Speaker, I know our time is short. I just want to say that this bill signifies our staunch support for life, and in spite of what has all been said, it just simply prevents taxpayer funds from being used to pay for abortions.

For years our government has had a patchwork approach to this issue. However, this bill, H.R. 7, would create a clear and unified policy across all Federal agencies.

Our Founding Fathers set forth in the Declaration of Independence ''that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights.'' One of those unalienable rights is life. Therefore, it follows that the right to life of each human being should be preserved and protected.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

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

Ms. DEGETTE. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER), an activist on this issue.

(Mr. NADLER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, there is obviously a difference of opinion in this country on the morality of abortion. I am appalled by the moral arrogance of the Republicans who would use political power to impose their views on the millions of women who disagree with them and want to make their own decisions.

Though the Supreme Court has determined that neither Congress nor a State may place an undue burden on a woman's right to terminate a pregnancy, the Hyde amendment makes abortion access virtually impossible for low-income women.

As unjust and despicable as the Hyde amendment is, this bill goes beyond it. For the first time, Republicans are attempting to restrict the right of women to use their own money to pay for abortions by denying normal tax deductions for medical expenses if those medical expenses include an abortion, by denying normal tax credits for health insurance if that insurance covers abortion, and by denying use of tax-free money from an FSA or an HSA for an abortion.

The intent of this bill is obvious: to end insurance coverage for all abortions, thereby making it nearly impossible for women to exercise their constitutional rights.

Republicans should pay heed to the millions of women who marched to protect their rights this weekend and are watching how we vote today.

Madam Speaker, there is obviously a difference of opinion in this country on the morality of abortion. I am appalled at the moral arrogance of the Republicans who would use political power to impose their views on the millions of women who disagree with them and want to make their own decisions.

If Saturday's protests are any indication, the women of America and the world are watching us. They are not going to stand silently by while Republicans in Congress and the White House take away their rights, their health care, their families, and their livelihoods. They sent this message loud and clear, but it seems my Republican colleagues have not heard it. Yesterday morning, President Trump signed an executive order reinstating the Global Gag Rule, which will deny thousands of women around the world access to reproductive health care, which will lead to a dramatic decline in maternal and infant health around the world.

Today, Republicans are bringing up a bill that will deny women the right to access comprehensive reproductive health care, a right protected by the Constitution.

The right of a woman to decide whether to become pregnant, to decide to continue her pregnancy, or to make the decision to terminate her pregnancy is protected by the Constitution. The Supreme Court has determined that neither Congress nor a state may place an ''undue burden'' on that right. Denial of Medicaid or other government funding that would be available for other medical procedures should be considered an ''undue burden.'' For decades, Congress has imposed the Hyde Amendment on every appropriations bill. This language disproportionately impacts poor women and women of color, effectively denying them their constitutional right to access abortion. Yet today, Republicans want to make that language permanent.

As unjust and despicable as the Hyde Amendment is, this bill goes beyond it. For the first time, Republicans are restricting the right of women to use their own money to pay for abortions. This bill will deny normal tax deductions for medical expenses if those expenses include abortion, normal tax credits for health insurance if that insurance includes abortion, and denying the ability to use tax-free money from an FSA or HSA for an abortion.

The bill does include an exception in cases of rape, incest, or the life of the mother. You may ask, how the IRS will know a woman's reason for getting an abortion. Well, under this bill, women will have to prove they are a victim of rape or incest or will have to provide detailed medical records to determine just how at risk their life was. Women will not only have to suffer the trauma of a sexual assault or the loss of a pregnancy because of life-threatening complications, they will now also have to face an IRS inquisition to get their own money back. So much for Republicans' pledge to get ''big government'' out of people's lives.

The intent of this bill is obvious: to end insurance coverage for all abortions thereby making it nearly impossible for women to exercise their constitutional rights. Republicans are clearly out of step with the millions of women who marched to protect their rights this weekend. Those women, and the millions more who stand with them, are watching and ready to fight back. I am proud to vote against this bill and to join their fight.

Ms. DEGETTE. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, these are the faces of innocent and wonderful women like Dakota and Chenoa, who indicate that, if they did not have Planned Parenthood, they would not be able to be where they are today, or Chenoa, who indicated, without Planned Parenthood and the Affordable Care Act, they wouldn't have access to health care.

That is what H.R. 7 intends to do, to deny these young, beautiful women an opportunity. But more importantly, my colleagues on the other side want to suggest they only—they only—have religion and faith. But as a mother, let me say that every child I have loved and every woman who has had a decision to make I have loved and respected for her choice of a faith, her God, and her doctor.

Rather than having this war on women by Republicans, we need to be dealing with the voting rights law. Rather than prohibiting individuals from receiving a refundable tax credit on cost-sharing reductions for purchasing a qualified health plan that encourages coverage for abortions or denying the District of Columbia their rights, we should be standing for rights. This is a constitutional right. It is also a choice by a woman of her God, her doctor, and her family.

Vote against H.R. 7. It is violence against women. It is not helping women or the unborn child.

Madam Speaker, I rise again in strong opposition to H.R. 7, the so-called ''No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act.''

I oppose this bill because it is unnecessary, puts the lives of women at risk, interferes with women's constitutionally guaranteed right of privacy, and diverts our attention from the real problems facing the American people.

A more accurate short title for this bill would be the ''Violating the Rights of Women Act of 2017.''

Instead of resuming their annual War on Women, our colleagues across the aisle should be working with Democrats to build upon the ''Middle-Class Economics'' championed by the Obama Administration that have succeeded in ending the economic meltdown it inherited in 2009 and revived the economy to the point where today we have the highest rate of growth and lowest rate of unemployment since the boom years of the Clinton Administration.

We could and should instead be voting to raise the minimum wage to $15.00 per hour so that people who work hard and play by the rules do not have to raise their families in poverty.

A far better use of our time would be to provide help to unemployed job-hunters by making access to community college affordable to every person looking to make a new start in life.

Instead of voting to abridge the constitutional rights of women for the umpteenth time, we should bring to the floor for a first vote comprehensive immigration reform legislation or legislations repairing the harm to the Voting Rights Act of 1965 by the Supreme Court's decision in Shelby County v. Holder.

Madam Speaker, the one thing we should not be doing is debating irresponsible ''messaging bills'' that abridge the rights of women and have absolutely no chance of overriding a presidential veto.

The version of H.R. 7 before us now is as bad today as it was when the House Republican leadership insisted on bringing it to a vote a year ago.

The other draconian provisions of that terrible bill are retained in H.R. 7, which would:

1. Prohibit federal funds from being used for any health benefits coverage that includes coverage of abortion. (Thus making permanent existing federal policies.)

2. Prohibit the inclusion of abortion in any health care service furnished by a federal or District of Columbia health care facility or by any physician or other individual employed by the federal government or the District.

3. Apply such prohibitions to District of Columbia funds.

4. Prohibit individuals from receiving a refundable federal tax credit, or any cost-sharing reductions, for purchasing a qualified health plan that includes coverage for abortions.

5. Prohibit small employers from receiving the small-employer health insurance credit provided by the health care law if the health plans or benefits that are purchased provide abortion coverage.

If H.R. 7 were enacted, millions of families and small businesses with private health insurance plans that offer abortion coverage would be faced with tax increases, making the cost of health care insurance even more expensive.

Under the Affordable Care Act, insurers are able to offer abortion coverage and receive

federal offsets for premiums as long as enrollees pay for the abortion coverage from separate, private funds.

If enacted, H.R. 7 would deny federal subsidies or credits to private health insurance plans that offer abortion coverage even if that coverage is paid for from private funds.

This would inevitably lead to private health insurance companies dropping abortion coverage leaving millions of women without access to affordable, comprehensive health care.

Currently, 87% of private insurance health care plans offered through employers cover abortion.

If H.R. 7 were to become law, consumer options for private health insurance plans would be unnecessarily restricted and the tax burden on these policy holders would increase significantly.

H.R. 7 would also deny tax credits to small businesses that offer their employees insurance plans that cover abortion, which would have a significant impact on millions of families across the nation who would no longer be able to take advantage of existing tax credits and deductions for the cost of their health care.

For example, small businesses that offer health plans that cover abortions would no longer be eligible for the Small Business Health Tax Credit—potentially worth 35%–50% of the cost of their premiums—threatening 4 million small businesses.

Self-employed Americans who are able to deduct the cost of their comprehensive health insurance from their taxable income will also be denied similar tax credits and face higher taxes.

H R. 7 would also undermine the District of Columbia's home rule by restricting its use of funds for abortion care to low-income women.

The Hyde Amendment stipulates that no taxpayer dollars are to be used for abortion care, and has narrow exceptions for rape, incest, and health complications that arise from pregnancy which put the mother's life in danger.

H.R. 7 would restrict women's access to reproductive health care even further by narrowing the already stringent requirements set forth in the Hyde Amendment.

When the Affordable Care Act was signed into law, the President issued an Executive Order to ''ensure that Federal funds are not used for abortion services.''

This version of H.R. 7 goes far beyond the safeguards established under the Affordable Care Act, and sets a dangerous precedent for the future of women's reproductive health in this country because it includes two new provisions that were added at the 11th hour but have never received a hearing or a mark-up.

These new provisions would (1) ban abortion coverage in multi-state health plans available under the ACA; and (2) mandate that health plans mislead consumers about abortion coverage by requiring all plans in the health-insurance exchanges that include abortion coverage to display that fact prominently in all advertising, marketing materials, or information from the insurer but interestingly, does not require the same disclosure from plans that do not cover abortion.

Madam Speaker, H.R. 7 would also force health plans to mislead consumers about the law's treatment of abortion.

As a concession to anti-choice lawmakers, the ACA requires insurance plans participating in the new health system to segregate monies used for abortion services from all other funds.

In order to aid in identifying these funds and simplify the process of segregating general premium dollars from those used to cover abortion services, the ACA requires that health plans estimate the cost of abortion coverage at no less than $1 per enrollee per month.

H.R. 7 would require plans covering abortion to misrepresent this practice as an ''abortion surcharge,'' which is to be disclosed and identified as a portion of the consumer's premium.

By describing abortion coverage in this way, H.R. 7 makes it look as though it is an added, extra cost, available only at an additional fee, when in fact it is not.

Taken together, the provisions in H.R. 7 have the effect, and possibly the intent, of arbitrarily infringing women's reproductive freedoms and pose a nationwide threat to the health and wellbeing of American women and a direct challenge to the Supreme Court's ruling in Roe v. Wade.

Madam Speaker, one of the most detestable aspects of this bill is that it would curb access to care for women in the most desperate of circumstances.

Women like Danielle Deaver, who was 22 weeks pregnant when her water broke. Tests showed that Danielle had suffered anhydramnios, a premature rupture of the membranes before the fetus has achieved viability.

This condition meant that the fetus likely would be born with a shortening of muscle tissue that results in the inability to move limbs. In addition, Danielle's fetus likely would suffer deformities to the face and head, and the lungs were unlikely to develop beyond the 22-week point.

There was less than a 10% chance that, if born, Danielle's baby would be able to breathe on its own and only a 2% chance the baby would be able to eat on its own.

H.R. 7 hurts women like Vikki Stella, a diabetic, who discovered months into her pregnancy that the fetus she was carrying suffered from several major anomalies and had no chance of survival. Because of Vikki's diabetes, her doctor determined that induced labor and Caesarian section were both riskier procedures for Vikki than an abortion.

Every pregnancy is different. No politician knows, or has the right to assume he knows, what is best for a woman and her family.

These are decisions that properly must be left to women to make, in consultation with their partners, doctors, and their God.

H.R. 7 lacks the necessary exceptions to protect the health and life of the mother.

H.R. 7 is an unconstitutional infringement on the right to privacy, as interpreted by the Supreme Court in a long line of cases going back to Griswold v. Connecticut in 1965 and Roe v. Wade decided in 1973.

In Roe v. Wade, the Court held that a state could not prohibit a woman from exercising her right to terminate a pregnancy in order to protect her health prior to viability.

While many factors go into determining fetal viability, the consensus of the medical community is that viability is acknowledged as not occurring prior to 24 weeks gestation.

Supreme Court precedents make it clear that neither Congress nor a state legislature can declare any one element—''be it weeks of gestation or fetal weight or any other single factor—as the determinant'' of viability. Colautti v. Franklin, 439 U.S. 379, 388–89 (1979).

The constitutionally protected right to privacy encompasses the right of women to choose to terminate a pregnancy before viability, and even later where continuing to term poses a threat to her health and safety.

This right of privacy was hard won and must be preserved inviolate.

The bill before us threatens this hard won right for women and must be defeated.

I urge all members to join me in opposing the bill.

Ms. DEGETTE. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. SWALWELL).

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Madam Speaker, I stand with women and men across our country in opposition to H.R. 7, the latest effort from Republican leaders to take the opportunity for women to make choices about their own healthcare decisions.

This weekend, my colleagues and I marched arm in arm with our constituents in women's marches across the country. I heard these Americans, and if you were listening, you would have heard them say, ''my body, my choice''; ''her body, her choice.'' This bill ignores the voices of women and male feminists in the United States.

Particularly disturbing, H.R. 7 prevents small businesses that use ACA tax credits from using them to pay for comprehensive health coverage for their employees that includes abortion services. Passage of this bill means the government, whom my colleagues claim is too big, will dramatically expand its role in a woman's healthcare decision.

As we have seen time and time again, restrictions like these disproportionately affect low-income women, younger women, and women of color. All women deserve the ability to make their own healthcare decisions without government interference. It is her body. It is her choice.

I urge my colleagues to recognize the intrusive, unfair, and unequal consequences of H.R. 7.

Ms. DEGETTE. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. BARRAGÁN), another one of our new, wonderful Members.

Ms. BARRAGÁN. Madam Speaker, women's reproductive rights are under attack. We have heard today H.R. 7 disproportionately affects women of color and low-income women, like my family.

Growing up in Carson, California, my two older sisters got pregnant as teenagers—one at 15 and one at 16—so I know from my own family experience and personal experience the importance of being able to make your own choices for your own body and your own beliefs. As a teenager without health insurance, I, like many women in my community, relied on services like Planned Parenthood to access contraception, which I would not have been able to afford otherwise.

Despite what the other side claims, taxpayer dollars do not fund abortion except in cases of rape, incest, or to preserve the life of a mother. Like millions of other women, I am grateful for these services and the opportunity to make decisions that are right for me. I oppose the attack on women's reproductive rights.

Ms. DEGETTE. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH).

Mr. DEUTCH. Madam Speaker, on Saturday, I proudly stood shoulder to shoulder with thousands of strong women and their allies in south Florida. It was one of hundreds of demonstrations across the country and the globe, millions of people in the streets sending a loud message that rang out all across the world.

But the GOP majority has chosen to ignore the calls for women to be able to control their own bodies and their own health care. This bill says to American women: your bodies, Washington's rules.

The majority uses talking points about getting Washington out of health care when they are fighting to kick 32 million people off their insurance, but when it comes to women's bodies, House Republicans are happy to step between a woman and her doctor.

As a man, I have never had to drive across State lines to find a doctor. I have never had my doctor silenced about a medical procedure. As a man, I have never had to endure an invasive and unnecessary procedure to satisfy someone else's twisted political desires. These experiences are all too common for women in America today.

While I and my male colleagues in Congress get to have an open and honest relationship with our doctors, this bill will deepen the ugly fight against women's control of their own bodies. Reproductive rights are women's rights and must be respected. Show that respect by voting ''no'' on H.R. 7.

Ms. DEGETTE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Madam Speaker, as I mentioned in my opening remarks, the fad, apparently, this week, is the idea of alternative facts. In other words, if politicians don't like the facts that they have been given or the reality of the situation, then what we should do is we should just come up with new facts; and apparently, the facts in this bill are that, apparently, the other side is worried about taxpayer funding for abortions.

As we have said repeatedly, we don't like this on this side of the aisle, but right now, because of the annual Hyde amendment, there is no taxpayer funding for abortion. We aim to change that because it is probably the most regressive legislation that we have for women's health.

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It says that rich women can get the full range of healthcare services they need, including abortion; but poor women, the women least equipped to be able to raise unwanted children, and certainly not with help from this Congress, are the ones who cannot get those services that they needed.

So I just want to say one more time because I keep hearing the alternative facts over and over, there are right now no taxpayer funding for abortions, something that we need to fix. But this bill takes us the opposite direction. What this bill does is it codifies the Hyde amendment in statute once and for all, and that would bar low-income women from receiving these much-needed services. It codifies the D.C. abortion ban, which would rob the D.C. City Council of giving the healthcare services D.C. women need, even with D.C. tax revenues. It codifies the Helms amendment, which is the same thing as the Hyde amendment for international programs. And perhaps the biggest ban here is it restricts people's ability to buy insurance policies on the healthcare exchanges with their own money that will cover abortion.

I heard from my colleagues on the other side of the aisle over and over again that there are a thousand policies. The lady from South Dakota said that government dollars were supporting abortive procedures. That is just simply not the case. There is no Federal money in the exchanges paying for abortive procedures.

What this bill does is it greatly expands restrictions on women's ability with their own money to buy insurance policies with legal healthcare coverage that they feel that they need. And it says that if you get a subsidy, then you can't get a policy with your own money. That is a vast expansion, and it is well beyond the pale.

It is also, by the way, beyond what the American public says. Because the American public, by 86 percent, says that if you are poor, then politicians should not put their personal views on you and you should be able to get the healthcare coverage that you need. We saw this with the millions of American women and men in Washington and around the country who marched this last weekend. But we see it in the polling. People say, if you are poor, you should be able to get the healthcare coverage you need, not what some politician in Washington tells you.

I have an idea. Every year, around the anniversary of Roe v. Wade and the time that the protestors come to Washington, I don't think that we should debate this futile exercise year after year. I think we should come together across the aisle, Democrats and Republicans, to figure out how we can prevent unwanted pregnancies.

I am getting ready to introduce a bill. I would urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, including the Republican side, to cosponsor this bill. This bill will expand contraception and family planning services and long-range contraception for all American women so that we can prevent unwanted pregnancies.

In Colorado, we have a program that is called LARC. And what it is is a program where the State helps teen and young women get long-acting contraception so they can prevent unwanted pregnancies. And here is what happened in Colorado when we enacted this very robust and helpful program. According to the data from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, both the birth rate and abortion rate for women ages 15 to 19 fell 48 percent from 2009 to 2014 because of long-acting contraception, and the same was true for women of the next age group up.

We can do this. We can do this together. Let's start talking about a way to improve women's health instead of to restrict their choices. Vote ''no'' on this ill-conceived bill.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TED LIEU of California. Madam Speaker, I will vote No on Roll Call No. 65, on H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion and Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act of 2017.

Today, just two days after the 44th anniversary of the Roe v. Wade Supreme Court ruling that protects the rights of women to control their own bodies, House Republicans have once again taken up a vote attacking the constitutionally-protected reproductive rights of women all across the nation.

As if this past weekend's Women's March on Washington (which was far more attended than President Trump's own inauguration) didn't signal anything to our elected leaders, President Trump took the GOP's war on women's rights and health a step further by signing an executive order reinstating the 'global gag rule' and blocking foreign aid for international non-governmental organizations that provide basic reproductive health services globally. This decision not only increases abortion rates, it will cause more maternal complications, injuries, and unintended pregnancies and provide less information on HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment programs worldwide.

Republicans continue their shameful, radical assault on women's reproductive health with today's vote on H.R. 7, a discriminatory bill that among other things would prohibit the use of federal funds to pay for any abortion services. Despite the fact that current law already requires that federal funds not be spent on abortions, this bill would prohibit individuals and small businesses from claiming tax credits for any private insurance plans obtained through the ACA Marketplace that include abortion coverage. Families buying their insurance in the Marketplace would also be ineligible to receive a premium tax credits if they enrolled in a health plan that covers abortion, likely resulting in no abortion coverage policies being offered in the Marketplaces. Furthermore, it undermines the District of Columbia's home rule, which allows D.C. to use its own Medicaid funds to offer abortion services. This is despite the fact that 17 states, including California, are currently allowed to do so.

Women should be able to make their own decisions about reproductive health care with dignity and respect, without the interference of politicians or their employers. We should not be in the business of telling women what they can and cannot do with their own bodies. Today's vote is just another step forward in the

Republican party's plan to Make America Sick Again and take away the comprehensive care women deserve.

Ms. DELAURO. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to this rule. This is about a woman's fundamental right to make her own family planning decisions. The courts have spoken: Roe v. Wade is settled law, and a majority of Americans support it. But the Majority would rather roll back the clock by decades, forcing women back into a reality when women could not make their own health care decisions, by restricting insurance coverage. Enough is enough.

We must promote and protect the rights of every woman, every family, every American to make their own family planning decisions, and to have access to a full range of healthcare services.

What we are facing now is not just an attack on the right to abortion. It is not just an attack on women's health. It is an assault on the health and wellbeing of millions of Americans. On Saturday, millions of people across the country marched in support of an agenda that puts women's health decisions in the hands of women and their families—and that ensures safe and affordable access to women's healthcare. This bill flies in the face of the mandate demonstrated this weekend, and I oppose it.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 7, the so-called ''No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act and Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act of 2017.''

The Majority marks the 44th anniversary of Roe v. Wade this week with its latest attempt to undo that decision's unequivocal recognition of a woman's constitutionally protected right to choose to terminate a pregnancy.

We must recognize this bill for what it really is. H.R. 7 is yet another attack by the Majority on women's health, a goal it accomplishes in several respects.

To begin with, H.R. 7 would make it virtually impossible for a woman to obtain abortion services even when paid for with purely private, non-Federal funds.

It achieves this end by denying Affordable Care Act tax credits to income-eligible women and small business employers who choose insurance coverage that includes abortion.

Through its novel tax penalty provisions, H.R. 7 departs radically from existing law, taking away women's existing health care and placing their health and lives at risk.

Despite the claims of its sponsors, H.R. 7 does not merely codify current law, but, rather, goes well beyond it to deny women basic health care services.

Moreover, to the extent it bans federal funding of abortion services, H.R. 7 is unnecessary, because such funding is already banned by the Hyde Amendment, and the Affordable Care Act maintains that ban.

For more than 30 years, Congress has prohibited federal funding of abortion, except in cases of rape, incest, or to save the life of the mother, through the Hyde Amendment and similar measures in annual appropriations bills.

Nothing in the Affordable Care Act changes this. That Act does not permit federal funding of abortion, and ensures that only private funds can be used to purchase abortion insurance coverage.

There is absolutely no risk that public money will be used to pay for abortion services.

So what is H.R. 7 really about? Plain and simple, it is part of the Majority's relentless war against women's health and constitutional freedoms.

Members should understand that a vote for H.R. 7 is not a vote to codify existing law. It is, instead, a vote to attack women's health and equality.

Finally, we should reject H.R. 7's permanent restriction on the District of Columbia's use of local funds that Congress has approved.

H.R. 7 not only infringes women's constitutional rights, but also intrudes deeply into local government decision-making by the District.

Women and families who live in the District should not be singled out for additional harm simply because of where they live.

Last Congress, the Obama Administration ''strongly oppose[d]'' a substantially similar bill, saying the legislation ''would intrude on women's reproductive freedom and access to health care; increase the financial burden on many Americans; [and] unnecessarily restrict the private insurance choices that consumers have today.''

I agree wholeheartedly with that analysis and, accordingly, I strongly urge my colleagues to oppose this dangerous bill.

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to H.R. 7—another radical attempt by House Republicans to attack women's health and limit women's access to comprehensive care.

The real purpose of this bill is to effectively eliminate insurance coverage for abortion services, not only for federally funded coverage, but also for private health insurance by raising taxes on women, their families, and small businesses.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle claim that this bill just codifies the Hyde Amendment, which already prohibits federal funding for abortion except in limited cases of rape, incest, or to save the life of the mother, and it is already enacted each year in appropriations.

But in reality, this bill goes much further than that. Instead of just limiting the Hyde Amendment's reach to federal funds, this bill would place sweeping restrictions on how women with private insurance can spend their own private dollars when obtaining insurance coverage.

Women and their families who have insurance through the health insurance marketplaces would no longer be entitled to premium tax credits if the plan in which they are enrolled includes abortion coverage. Small business employers would be prohibited from receiving small business tax credits if the insurance provided to employees includes abortion services.

This would mean that women would likely forgo comprehensive coverage in order to retain the premium tax credits they need, and small businesses may limit coverage to ensure they receive small business tax credits. But this is the true goal for proponents of this bill: to effectively eliminate insurance coverage for abortion.

As we speak, Republicans are actively working to dismantle the Affordable Care Act, to restrict access to contraception, and to defund the life-saving health care services provided by Planned Parenthood. It seems that this bill is another page in their playbook to attack women's health. Let me be clear: this bill isn't about ensuring federal finds are not used for abortion—this bill is about denying women access to coverage Republicans disagree with.

Bringing this bill to the floor only days after millions of women throughout the country marched on behalf of issues like reproductive rights just shows how tone-deaf House Republicans continue to be.

We should be working to protect and expand women's access to comprehensive health care, not considering ways to deny it.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my opposition to H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act.

Longstanding federal policy explicitly prohibits the use of federal funds for abortions, except for certain narrow circumstances of rape, incest, or severe health complications that threaten the life of the mother.

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) maintains this ban and a federal appeals court confirmed that no federal dollars may be used to pay for abortion services under the law.

Far more sweeping in scope than the title implies, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act goes well beyond codifying the Hyde Amendment and protecting public funds.

This bill intrudes on women's reproductive autonomy and access to health care, manipulates the tax code to put additional financial burdens on many women and small businesses, and unnecessarily restricts the private insurance choices available to consumers today.

The House of Representatives should be spending our time working to improve access to health care for all Americans, instead of deceptive legislation that interferes with a woman's ability to make personal, private medical decisions.

I urge my colleagues to stop the relentless attacks on women's health and vote against this damaging, unnecessary legislation.

Mr. CICILLINE. Madam Speaker, I was proud to join thousands of women in the Women's March, both here in DC and in my home state of Rhode Island.

We marched to demand that women's rights be respected and that women should be trusted to make their own decisions.

However, a mere three days later, the GOP seeks to trample on women's rights by considering H.R. 7, a bill that will deny access to basic healthcare to millions of women.

This bill is also just another pathetic attempt by some politicians in this town to get between a woman and her doctor.

Under current law, no federal money can be used to fund abortion. And it's been that way since 1976.

This bill is a Trojan horse that effectively bans abortion coverage even for women who use their own money to pay for health insurance.

It penalizes small business owners who offer their employees health care coverage for abortion.

And it tells doctors who are employed by the federal government that they can't provide the care that is in the best interests of their patients.

Madam Speaker, the women of this country do not need Congress telling them how to make their health care decisions.

Having an abortion is a decision that should be left between a woman and her doctor.

None of us has a license to legislate our own personal morality in this chamber.

I urge my colleagues to vote no on H.R. 7.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 55, the previous question is ordered on the bill.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentlewoman opposed to the bill?

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Yes, I am opposed to the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Ms. Schakowsky moves to recommit the bill H.R. 7 to the Committee on Energy and Commerce with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendment:

Add at the end of title I the following new section (and amend the table of contents accordingly):

SEC. 103. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.

Nothing in this Act may be construed to permit any health plan to charge women higher premiums than men for coverage under such health plan.

Mrs. BLACK (during the reading). Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Tennessee?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Illinois is recognized for 5 minutes in support of her motion.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, I rise to offer the motion to recommit on H.R. 7, the so-called No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion and Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act.

The motion to recommit is very simple. It would amend H.R. 7 to say that nothing in this legislation would allow an insurance company to charge women higher premiums than men just because they are women.

In the first few days of the Trump Presidency, we have seen one action after another to discriminate against women, restrict access to health services, and make their care more expensive. We also know that Republicans are determined to repeal the Affordable Care Act, which would, once again, allow insurance companies to discriminate against women.

Repealing the ACA would be a triple whammy for women. Not only would they have to pay more for their insurance, but their insurance would be less likely to cover the services they need. And these higher costs will take a bigger chunk out of their budget.

Before the ACA, insurers were able to exclude services critical to women's health. And we are not just talking about preexisting conditions, which, by the way, often included having a baby or being the victim of domestic violence.

The benefit package itself left out medical care critical to women. Only 12 percent of plans in the individual market offered maternity coverage. And some insurance plans that offered that coverage imposed waiting periods of a year or charges of up to $10,000 just for maternity care. And even when maternity care was excluded from any insurance plan, insurers still used gender rating to discriminate against women, charging women more just because they were women, regardless of their benefits. Being a woman was a preexisting condition.

Thankfully, the ACA prohibits gender rating. Before the ACA, women were forced to pay between 10 to 57 percent more than men for essentially the same insurance. In my home State of Illinois, women were charged 55 percent more than men for the same coverage. In fact, a 2012 National Women's Law Center study found that 92 percent of best-selling insurance plans were gender rated.

A 25-year-old woman in Arkansas was charged 81 percent more than a man for similar coverage. A 40-year-old woman in South Dakota was charged over $1,200 more a year than a 40-year-old man for the same coverage. In Kentucky, women were charged 57 percent more than men for the same coverage. In Texas, they were charged 56 percent more. In Indiana, they were charged 54 percent more. And the list goes on.

This study even found that over half of all insurance plans charged women who didn't smoke significantly higher premiums than men of the same age who did smoke. Overall, gender rating cost American women about $1 billion a year. It also harmed businesses with predominantly female employees who were routinely charged more for their insurance coverage.

Finally, charging women more for health care is even more devastating when you take into account that women still make only 77 cents to the dollar compared to men. We cannot go back to the days when insurance companies were free to discriminate against women. But that is exactly what Republicans want to do. They want women to pay more for insurance coverage that doesn't include the services they need.

So I am asking my colleagues to support the motion to recommit and protect women from discrimination by insurance companies.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. BLACK. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from Tennessee is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BLACK. Madam Speaker, today I am simply asking my colleagues across the aisle not to flip-flop on this issue. This legislation isn't just the right thing to do; it also has broad support.

Polling shows that 6 in 10 Americans agree that taxpayer dollars should not fund abortions. Despite this fact, a nonpartisan government study found that abortions could be funded with taxpayer dollars through ObamaCare, and this demands a response.

Today we have an opportunity to invest in women's health over abortion by passing H.R. 7 and making the Hyde amendment permanent and governmentwide.

I urge my colleagues to reject this motion to recommit and to vote ''yes'' on H.R. 7.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY RESEARCH AND INNOVATION ACT

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 589) to establish Department of Energy policy for science and energy research and development programs, and reform National Laboratory management and technology transfer programs, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 589

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Department of Energy Research and Innovation Act''.

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

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
Sec. 2. Definitions.
TITLE I—LABORATORY MODERNIZATION AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER
Sec. 101. Short title.
Sec. 102. Inclusion of early stage technology demonstration in authorized technology transfer activities.
Sec. 103. Sense of Congress on accelerating energy innovation.
Sec. 104. Restoration of laboratory directed research and development program.
Sec. 105. Research grants database.
Sec. 106. Technology transfer and transitions assessment.
Sec. 107. Agreements for commercializing technology pilot program.
Sec. 108. Short-term cost-share pilot program.
TITLE II—DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY RESEARCH COORDINATION
Sec. 201. Short title.

Sec. 202. Protection of information.
Sec. 203. Crosscutting research and development.
Sec. 204. Strategic research portfolio analysis and coordination plan.
Sec. 205. Strategy for facilities and infrastructure.
Sec. 206. Energy Innovation Hubs.

TITLE III—DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY OFFICE OF SCIENCE POLICY

Sec. 301. Short title.
Sec. 302. Mission.
Sec. 303. Basic energy sciences.
Sec. 304. Advanced scientific computing research.
Sec. 305. High-energy physics.
Sec. 306. Biological and environmental research.
Sec. 307. Fusion energy.
Sec. 308. Nuclear physics.
Sec. 309. Science laboratories infrastructure program.

TITLE IV—NUCLEAR ENERGY INNOVATION CAPABILITIES

Sec. 401. Short title.
Sec. 402. Nuclear energy innovation capabilities.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) DEPARTMENT.—The term ''Department'' means the Department of Energy.

(2) DIRECTOR.—The term ''Director'' means the Director of the Office of Science of the Department, except as otherwise indicated.

(3) NATIONAL LABORATORY.—The term ''National Laboratory'' has the meaning given that term in section 2 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 15801).

(4) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Energy.

TITLE I—LABORATORY MODERNIZATION AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

SEC. 101. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Laboratory Modernization and Technology Transfer Act''.

SEC. 102. INCLUSION OF EARLY STAGE TECHNOLOGY DEMONSTRATION IN AUTHORIZED TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER ACTIVITIES.

Section 1001 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16391) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (g) as subsection (h); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (f) the following:

''(g) EARLY STAGE TECHNOLOGY DEMONSTRATION.—The Secretary shall permit the directors of the National Laboratories to use funds authorized to support technology transfer within the Department to carry out early stage and precommercial technology demonstration activities to remove technology barriers that limit private sector interest and demonstrate potential commercial applications of any research and technologies arising from National Laboratory activities.''.

SEC. 103. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON ACCELERATING ENERGY INNOVATION.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) although important progress has been made in cost reduction and deployment of clean energy technologies, accelerating clean energy innovation will help meet critical competitiveness, energy security, and environmental goals;

(2) accelerating the pace of clean energy innovation in the United States calls for—

(A) supporting existing research and development programs at the Department and the world-class National Laboratories;

(B) exploring and developing new pathways for innovators, investors, and decision-makers to leverage the resources of the Department for addressing the challenges and comparative strengths of geographic regions; and

(C) recognizing the financial constraints of the Department, regularly reviewing clean energy programs to ensure that taxpayer investments are maximized;

(3) the energy supply, demand, policies, markets, and resource options of the United States vary by geographic region;

(4) a regional approach to innovation can bridge the gaps between local talent, institutions, and industries to identify opportunities and convert United States investment into domestic companies; and

(5) Congress, the Secretary, and energy industry participants should advance efforts that promote international, domestic, and regional cooperation on the research and development of energy innovations that—

(A) provide clean, affordable, and reliable energy for everyone;

(B) promote economic growth;

(C) are critical for energy security; and

(D) are sustainable without government support.

SEC. 104. RESTORATION OF LABORATORY DIRECTED RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsection (b), the Secretary shall ensure that laboratory operating contractors do not allocate costs of general and administrative overhead to laboratory directed research and development.

(b) EXCEPTION FOR NATIONAL SECURITY LABORATORIES.—This section shall not apply to the national security laboratories with respect to which section 3119 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 (Public Law 114-328) applies.

SEC. 105. RESEARCH GRANTS DATABASE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish and maintain a public database, accessible on the website of the Department, that contains a searchable listing of each unclassified research and development project contract, grant, cooperative agreement, task order for a federally funded research and development center, or other transaction administered by the Department.

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—Each listing described in subsection (a) shall include, at a minimum, for each listed project, the Department office carrying out the project, the project name, an abstract or summary of the project, funding levels, project duration, contractor or grantee name (including the names of any subcontractors), and expected objectives and milestones.

(c) RELEVANT LITERATURE AND PATENTS.—The Secretary shall provide information through the public database established under subsection (a) on relevant literature and patents that are associated with each research and development project contract, grant, or cooperative agreement, or other transaction, of the Department.

SEC. 106. TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AND TRANSITIONS ASSESSMENT.

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, and as often as the Secretary determines to be necessary thereafter, the Secretary shall transmit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report that includes recommended changes to the policy of the Department and legislative changes to section 1001 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16391) to improve the ability of the Department to successfully transfer new energy technologies to the private sector.

SEC. 107. AGREEMENTS FOR COMMERCIALIZING TECHNOLOGY PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out the Agreements for Commercializing Technology pilot program of the Department, as announced by the Secretary on December 8, 2011, in accordance with this section.

(b) TERMS.—Each agreement entered into pursuant to the pilot program referred to in subsection (a) shall provide to the contractor of the applicable National Laboratory, to the maximum extent determined to be appropriate by the Secretary, increased authority to negotiate contract terms, such as intellectual property rights, payment structures, performance guarantees, and multiparty collaborations.

(c) ELIGIBILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Any director of a National Laboratory may enter into an agreement pursuant to the pilot program referred to in subsection (a).

(2) AGREEMENTS WITH NON-FEDERAL ENTITIES.—To carry out paragraph (1) and subject to paragraph (3), the Secretary shall permit the directors of the National Laboratories to execute agreements with a non-Federal entity, including a non-Federal entity already receiving Federal funding that will be used to support activities under agreements executed pursuant to paragraph (1), provided that such funding is solely used to carry out the purposes of the Federal award.

(3) RESTRICTION.—The requirements of chapter 18 of title 35, United States Code (commonly known as the ''Bayh-Dole Act'') shall apply if—

(A) the agreement is a funding agreement (as that term is defined in section 201 of that title); and

(B) at least one of the parties to the funding agreement is eligible to receive rights under that chapter.

(d) SUBMISSION TO SECRETARY.—Each affected director of a National Laboratory shall submit to the Secretary, with respect to each agreement entered into under this section—

(1) a summary of information relating to the relevant project;

(2) the total estimated costs of the project;

(3) estimated commencement and completion dates of the project; and

(4) other documentation determined to be appropriate by the Secretary.

(e) CERTIFICATION.—The Secretary shall require the contractor of the affected National Laboratory to certify that each activity carried out under a project for which an agreement is entered into under this section—

(1) is not in direct competition with the private sector; and

(2) does not present, or minimizes, any apparent conflict of interest, and avoids or neutralizes any actual conflict of interest, as a result of the agreement under this section.

(f) EXTENSION.—The pilot program referred to in subsection (a) shall be extended until September 30, 2019.

(g) REPORTS.—

(1) OVERALL ASSESSMENT.—Not later than 60 days after the date described in subsection (f), the Secretary, in coordination with directors of the National Laboratories, shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report that—

(A) assesses the overall effectiveness of the pilot program referred to in subsection (a);

(B) identifies opportunities to improve the effectiveness of the pilot program;

(C) assesses the potential for program activities to interfere with the responsibilities of the National Laboratories to the Department; and

(D) provides a recommendation regarding the future of the pilot program.

(2) TRANSPARENCY.—The Secretary, in coordination with directors of the National Laboratories, shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress an annual report that accounts for all incidences of, and provides a justification for, non-Federal entities using funds derived from a Federal contract or award to carry out agreements pursuant to this section.

SEC. 108. SHORT-TERM COST-SHARE PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 988(b) of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16352(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking ''Except as provided in paragraphs (2) and (3)'' and inserting ''Except as provided in paragraphs (2), (3), and (4)''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(4) EXEMPTION FOR INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND OTHER NONPROFIT INSTITUTIONS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (1) shall not apply to a research or development activity performed by an institution of higher education or nonprofit institution (as defined in section 4 of the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980 (15 U.S.C. 3703)).

''(B) TERMINATION DATE.—The exemption under subparagraph (A) shall apply during the 2-year period beginning on the date of enactment of this paragraph.''.

(b) REPORTS.—

(1) INITIAL REPORT.—As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report that describes the use of cost-sharing waivers by the Department under section 988(b) of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16352(b)) during the 2-year period ending on the date of enactment of this Act.

(2) ANNUAL REPORTS.—Annually during the 2-year period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report that describes the use of cost-sharing waivers by the Department under section 988(b) of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16352(b)) during the period covered by the report.

TITLE II—DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY RESEARCH COORDINATION

SEC. 201. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Department of Energy Research Coordination Act''.

SEC. 202. PROTECTION OF INFORMATION.

Section 5012 of the America Competes Act (42 U.S.C. 16538) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(3), by striking ''subsection (n)(1)'' and inserting ''subsection (o)(1)'';

(2) by redesignating subsection (n) as subsection (o); and

(3) by inserting after subsection (m) the following:

''(n) PROTECTION OF INFORMATION.—The following types of information collected by ARPA–E from recipients of financial assistance awards shall be considered commercial and financial information obtained from a person and privileged or confidential and not subject to disclosure under section 552(b)(4) of title 5, United States Code:

''(1) Plans for commercialization of technologies developed under the award, including business plans, technology-to-market plans, market studies, and cost and performance models.

''(2) Investments provided to an awardee from third parties (such as venture capital firms, hedge funds, and private equity firms), including amounts and the percentage of ownership of the awardee provided in return for the investments.

''(3) Additional financial support that the awardee—

''(A) plans to or has invested into the technology developed under the award; or

''(B) is seeking from third parties.

''(4) Revenue from the licensing or sale of new products or services resulting from research conducted under the award.''.

SEC. 203. CROSSCUTTING RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall use the capabilities of the Department to identify strategic opportunities for collaborative research, development, demonstration, and commercial application of innovative science and technologies.

(b) EXISTING PROGRAMS; COORDINATION OF ACTIVITIES.—To the maximum extent practicable, the Secretary shall seek—

(1) to leverage existing programs of the Department; and

(2) to consolidate and coordinate activities throughout the Department to promote collaboration and crosscutting approaches within programs of the Department.

(c) ADDITIONAL ACTIONS.—The Secretary shall—

(1) prioritize activities that use all affordable domestic resources;

(2) develop a planning, evaluation, and technical assessment framework for setting objective long-term strategic goals and evaluating progress that—

(A) ensures integrity and independence; and

(B) provides the flexibility to adapt to market dynamics;

(3) ensure that activities shall be undertaken in a manner that does not duplicate other activities within the Department or other Federal Government activities; and

(4) identify programs that may be more effectively left to the States, industry, nongovernmental organizations, institutions of higher education, or other stakeholders.

SEC. 204. STRATEGIC RESEARCH PORTFOLIO ANALYSIS AND COORDINATION PLAN.

The Energy Policy Act of 2005 is amended by striking section 994 (42 U.S.C. 16358) and inserting the following:

''SEC. 994. STRATEGIC RESEARCH PORTFOLIO ANALYSIS AND COORDINATION PLAN.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall periodically review all of the science and technology activities of the Department in a strategic framework that takes into account—

''(1) the frontiers of science to which the Department can contribute;

''(2) the national needs relevant to the statutory missions of the Department; and

''(3) global energy dynamics.

''(b) COORDINATION ANALYSIS AND PLAN.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—As part of the review under subsection (a), the Secretary shall develop a plan to improve coordination and collaboration in research, development, demonstration, and commercial application activities across organizational boundaries of the Department.

''(2) PLAN CONTENTS.—The plan developed under paragraph (1) shall describe—

''(A) crosscutting scientific and technical issues and research questions that span more than 1 program or major office of the Department;

''(B) ways in which the applied technology programs of the Department are coordinating activities and addressing the questions referred to in subparagraph (A);

''(C) ways in which the technical interchange within the Department, particularly between the Office of Science and the applied technology programs, could be enhanced, including ways in which the research agendas of the Office of Science and the applied programs could better interact and assist each other;

''(D) ways in which the Secretary would ensure that the overall research agenda of the Department includes, in addition to fundamental, curiosity-driven research, fundamental research related to topics of concern to the applied programs, and applications in Departmental technology programs of research results generated by fundamental, curiosity-driven research;

''(E) critical assessments of any ongoing programs that have experienced subpar performance or cost overruns of 10 percent or more over 1 or more years;

''(F) any activities that may be more effectively left to the States, industry, nongovernmental organizations, institutions of higher education, or other stakeholders; and

''(G) detailed evaluations and proposals for innovation hubs, institutes, and research centers of the Department, including—

''(i) an affirmation that the hubs, institutes, and research centers will—

''(I) advance the mission of the Department; and

''(II) prioritize research, development, and demonstration; and

''(ii) an affirmation that any hubs, institutes, or research centers that are established or renewed within the Office of Science are consistent with the mission of the Office of Science described in subsection (c) of section 209 of the Department of Energy Organization Act (42 U.S.C. 7139).

''(c) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—Every 4 years, the Secretary shall submit to Congress—

''(1) the results of the review under subsection (a); and

''(2) the coordination plan under subsection (b).''.

SEC. 205. STRATEGY FOR FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE.

(a) AMENDMENTS.—Section 993 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16357) is amended—

(1) by striking the section heading and inserting the following: ''strategy for facilities and infrastructure''; and

(2) in subsection (b)(1), by striking ''2008'' and inserting ''2018''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 is amended by striking the item relating to section 993 and inserting the following:

''Sec. 993. Strategy for facilities and infrastructure.''.

SEC. 206. ENERGY INNOVATION HUBS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ADVANCED ENERGY TECHNOLOGY.—The term ''advanced energy technology'' means—

(A) an innovative technology—

(i) that produces energy from solar, wind, geothermal, biomass, tidal, wave, ocean, or other renewable energy resources;

(ii) that produces nuclear energy;

(iii) for carbon capture and sequestration;

(iv) that enables advanced vehicles, vehicle components, and related technologies that result in significant energy savings;

(v) that generates, transmits, distributes, uses, or stores energy more efficiently than conventional technologies, including through Smart Grid technologies; or

(vi) that enhances the energy independence and security of the United States by enabling improved or expanded supply and production of domestic energy resources, including coal, oil, and natural gas;

(B) a research, development, demonstration, or commercial application activity necessary to ensure the long-term, secure, and sustainable supply of an energy-critical element; or

(C) any other innovative energy technology area identified by the Secretary.

(2) HUB.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ''Hub'' means an Energy Innovation Hub established under this section.

(B) INCLUSION.—The term ''Hub'' includes any Energy Innovation Hub in existence on the date of enactment of this Act.

(3) QUALIFYING ENTITY.—The term ''qualifying entity'' means—

(A) an institution of higher education;

(B) an appropriate State or Federal entity, including a federally funded research and development center of the Department;

(C) a nongovernmental organization with expertise in advanced energy technology research, development, demonstration, or commercial application; or

(D) any other relevant entity the Secretary determines appropriate.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out a program to enhance the economic, environmental, and energy security of the United States by making awards to consortia for establishing and operating hubs, to be known as ''Energy Innovation Hubs'', to conduct and support, at, if practicable, 1 centralized location, multidisciplinary, collaborative research, development, demonstration, and commercial application of advanced energy technologies.

(2) TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT FOCUS.—The Secretary shall designate for each Hub a unique advanced energy technology or basic research focus.

(3) COORDINATION.—The Secretary shall ensure the coordination of, and avoid unnecessary duplication of, the activities of each Hub with the activities of—

(A) other research entities of the Department, including the National Laboratories, the Advanced Research Projects Agency—Energy, and Energy Frontier Research Centers; and

(B) industry.

(c) APPLICATION PROCESS.—

(1) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible to receive an award for the establishment and operation of a Hub under subsection (b)(1), a consortium shall—

(A) be composed of not fewer than 2 qualifying entities;

(B) operate subject to a binding agreement, entered into by each member of the consortium, that documents—

(i) the proposed partnership agreement, including the governance and management structure of the Hub;

(ii) measures the consortium will undertake to enable cost-effective implementation of activities under the program described in subsection (b)(1); and

(iii) a proposed budget, including financial contributions from non-Federal sources; and

(C) operate as a nonprofit organization.

(2) APPLICATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—A consortium seeking to establish and operate a Hub under subsection (b)(1) shall submit to the Secretary an application at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require, including a detailed description of each element of the consortium agreement required under paragraph (1)(B).

(B) REQUIREMENT.—If the consortium members will not be located at 1 centralized location, the application under subparagraph (A) shall include a communications plan that ensures close coordination and integration of Hub activities.

(3) SELECTION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall select consortia for awards for the establishment and operation of Hubs through a competitive selection process.

(B) CONSIDERATIONS.—In selecting consortia under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall consider—

(i) the information disclosed by the consortium under this subsection; and

(ii) any existing facilities a consortium will provide for Hub activities.

(d) TERM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—An award made to a Hub under this section shall be for a period of not more than 5 years, subject to the availability of appropriations, after which the award may be renewed, subject to a rigorous merit review.

(2) EXISTING HUBS.—A Hub already in existence on, or undergoing a renewal process on, the date of enactment of this Act—

(A) may continue to receive support during the 5-year period beginning on the date of establishment of that Hub; and

(B) shall be eligible for renewal of that support at the end of that 5-year period.

(e) HUB OPERATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Each Hub shall conduct or provide for multidisciplinary, collaborative research, development, demonstration, and commercial application of advanced energy technologies within the technology development focus designated under subsection (b)(2).

(2) ACTIVITIES.—Each Hub shall—

(A) encourage collaboration and communication among the member qualifying entities of the consortium and awardees;

(B) develop and publish proposed plans and programs on a publicly accessible website;

(C) submit an annual report to the Department summarizing the activities of the Hub, including—

(i) detailing organizational expenditures; and

(ii) describing each project undertaken by the Hub; and

(D) monitor project implementation and coordination.

(3) CONFLICTS OF INTEREST.—Each Hub shall maintain conflict of interest procedures, consistent with the conflict of interest procedures of the Department.

(4) PROHIBITION ON CONSTRUCTION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B)—

(i) no funds provided under this section may be used for construction of new buildings or facilities for Hubs; and

(ii) construction of new buildings or facilities shall not be considered as part of the non-Federal share of a Hub cost-sharing agreement.

(B) TEST BED AND RENOVATION EXCEPTION.—Nothing in this paragraph prohibits the use of funds provided under this section or non-Federal cost share funds for the construction of a test bed or renovations to existing buildings or facilities for the purposes of research if the Secretary determines that the test bed or renovations are limited to a scope and scale necessary for the research to be conducted.

TITLE III—DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY OFFICE OF SCIENCE POLICY

SEC. 301. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Department of Energy Office of Science Policy Act''.

SEC. 302. MISSION.

Section 209 of the Department of Energy Organization Act (42 U.S.C. 7139) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(c) MISSION.—The mission of the Office of Science shall be the delivery of scientific discoveries, capabilities, and major scientific tools to transform the understanding of nature and to advance the energy, economic, and national security of the United States.''.

SEC. 303. BASIC ENERGY SCIENCES.

(a) ENERGY FRONTIER RESEARCH CENTERS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall carry out a program to provide awards, on a competitive, merit-reviewed basis, to multi-institutional collaborations or other appropriate entities to conduct fundamental and use-inspired energy research to accelerate scientific breakthroughs.

(2) COLLABORATIONS.—A collaboration receiving an award under this subsection may include multiple types of institutions and private sector entities.

(3) SELECTION AND DURATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—A collaboration under this subsection shall be selected for a period of 4 years.

(B) EXISTING CENTERS.—An Energy Frontier Research Center in existence and supported by the Director on the date of enactment of this Act may continue to receive support for a period of 4 years beginning on the date of establishment of that center.

(C) REAPPLICATION.—After the end of the period described in subparagraph (A) or (B), as applicable, a recipient of an award may reapply for selection on a competitive, merit-reviewed basis.

(D) TERMINATION.—Consistent with the existing authorities of the Department, the Director may terminate an underperforming center for cause during the performance period.

(4) NO FUNDING FOR CONSTRUCTION.—No funding provided pursuant to this subsection may be used for the construction of new buildings or facilities.

(b) BASIC ENERGY SCIENCES USER FACILITIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall carry out a program for the development, construction, operation, and maintenance of national user facilities.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—To the maximum extent practicable, the national user facilities developed, constructed, operated, or maintained under paragraph (1) shall serve the needs of the Department, industry, the academic community, and other relevant entities to create and examine materials and chemical processes for the purpose of improving the competitiveness of the United States.

(3) INCLUDED FACILITIES.—The national user facilities developed, constructed, operated, or maintained under paragraph (1) shall include—

(A) x-ray light sources;

(B) neutron sources;

(C) nanoscale science research centers; and

(D) such other facilities as the Director considers appropriate, consistent with section 209 of the Department of Energy Organization Act (42 U.S.C. 7139).

(c) ACCELERATOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.—The Director shall carry out research and development on advanced accelerator and storage ring technologies relevant to the development of basic energy sciences user facilities, in consultation with the High Energy Physics and Nuclear Physics programs of the Office of Science.

(d) SOLAR FUELS RESEARCH INITIATIVE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 973 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16313) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 973. SOLAR FUELS RESEARCH INITIATIVE.

''(a) INITIATIVE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out a research initiative, to be known as the 'Solar Fuels Research Initiative' (referred to in this section as the 'Initiative') to expand theoretical and fundamental knowledge of photochemistry, electrochemistry, biochemistry, and materials science useful for the practical development of experimental systems to convert solar energy to chemical energy.

''(2) LEVERAGING.—In carrying out programs and activities under the Initiative, the Secretary shall leverage expertise and resources from—

''(A) the Basic Energy Sciences Program and the Biological and Environmental Research Program of the Office of Science; and

''(B) the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy.

''(3) TEAMS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the Initiative, the Secretary shall organize activities among multidisciplinary teams to leverage, to the maximum extent practicable, expertise from the National Laboratories, institutions of higher education, and the private sector.

''(B) GOALS.—The multidisciplinary teams described in subparagraph (A) shall pursue aggressive, milestone-driven, basic research goals.

''(C) RESOURCES.—The Secretary shall provide sufficient resources to the multidisciplinary teams described in subparagraph (A) to achieve the goals described in subparagraph (B) over a period of time to be determined by the Secretary.

''(4) ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES.—The Secretary may organize additional activities under this subsection through Energy Frontier Research Centers, Energy Innovation Hubs, or other organizational structures.

''(b) ARTIFICIAL PHOTOSYNTHESIS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out under the Initiative a program to support research needed to bridge scientific barriers to, and discover knowledge relevant to, artificial photosynthetic systems.

''(2) ACTIVITIES.—As part of the program described in paragraph (1)—

''(A) the Director of the Office of Basic Energy Sciences shall support basic research to pursue distinct lines of scientific inquiry, including—

''(i) photoinduced production of hydrogen and oxygen from water; and

''(ii) the sustainable photoinduced reduction of carbon dioxide to fuel products including hydrocarbons, alcohols, carbon monoxide, and natural gas; and

''(B) the Assistant Secretary for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy shall support translational research, development, and validation of physical concepts developed under the program.

''(3) STANDARD OF REVIEW.—The Secretary shall review activities carried out under the program described in paragraph (1) to determine the achievement of technical milestones.

''(4) PROHIBITION.—No funds allocated to the program described in paragraph (1) may be obligated or expended for commercial application of energy technology.

''(c) BIOCHEMISTRY, REPLICATION OF NATURAL PHOTOSYNTHESIS, AND RELATED PROCESSES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out under the Initiative a program to support research needed to replicate natural photosynthetic processes by use of artificial photosynthetic components and materials.

''(2) ACTIVITIES.—As part of the program described in paragraph (1)—

''(A) the Director of the Office of Basic Energy Sciences shall support basic research to expand fundamental knowledge to replicate natural synthesis processes, including—

''(i) the photoinduced reduction of dinitrogen to ammonia;

''(ii) the absorption of carbon dioxide from ambient air;

''(iii) molecular-based charge separation and storage;

''(iv) photoinitiated electron transfer; and

''(v) catalysis in biological or biomimetic systems;

''(B) the Associate Director of Biological and Environmental Research shall support systems biology and genomics approaches to understand genetic and physiological pathways connected to photosynthetic mechanisms; and

''(C) the Assistant Secretary for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy shall support translational research, development, and validation of physical concepts developed under the program.

''(3) STANDARD OF REVIEW.—The Secretary shall review activities carried out under the program described in paragraph (1) to determine the achievement of technical milestones.

''(4) PROHIBITION.—No funds allocated to the program described in paragraph (1) may be obligated or expended for commercial application of energy technology.''.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of contents for the Energy Policy Act of 2005 is amended by striking the item relating to section 973 and inserting the following:

''Sec. 973. Solar fuels research initiative.''.

(e) ELECTRICITY STORAGE RESEARCH INITIATIVE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 975 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16315) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 975. ELECTRICITY STORAGE RESEARCH INITIATIVE.

''(a) INITIATIVE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out a research initiative, to be known as the 'Electricity Storage Research Initiative' (referred to in this section as the 'Initiative')—

''(A) to expand theoretical and fundamental knowledge to control, store, and convert—

''(i) electrical energy to chemical energy; and

''(ii) chemical energy to electrical energy; and

''(B) to support scientific inquiry into the practical understanding of chemical and physical processes that occur within systems involving crystalline and amorphous solids, polymers, and organic and aqueous liquids.

''(2) LEVERAGING.—In carrying out programs and activities under the Initiative, the Secretary shall leverage expertise and resources from—

''(A) the Basic Energy Sciences Program, the Advanced Scientific Computing Research Program, and the Biological and Environmental Research Program of the Office of Science; and

''(B) the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy.

''(3) TEAMS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the Initiative, the Secretary shall organize activities among multidisciplinary teams to leverage, to the maximum extent practicable, expertise from the National Laboratories, institutions of higher education, and the private sector.

''(B) GOALS.—The multidisciplinary teams described in subparagraph (A) shall pursue aggressive, milestone-driven, basic research goals.

''(C) RESOURCES.—The Secretary shall provide sufficient resources to the multidisciplinary teams described in subparagraph (A) to achieve the goals described in subparagraph (B) over a period of time to be determined by the Secretary.

''(4) ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES.—The Secretary may organize additional activities under this subsection through Energy Frontier Research Centers, Energy Innovation Hubs, or other organizational structures.

''(b) MULTIVALENT SYSTEMS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out under the Initiative a program to support research needed to bridge scientific barriers to, and discover knowledge relevant to, multivalent ion materials in electric energy storage systems.

''(2) ACTIVITIES.—As part of the program described in paragraph (1)—

''(A) the Director of the Office of Basic Energy Sciences shall investigate electrochemical properties and the dynamics of materials, including charge transfer phenomena and mass transport in materials; and

''(B) the Assistant Secretary for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy shall support translational research, development, and validation of physical concepts developed under the program.

''(3) STANDARD OF REVIEW.—The Secretary shall review activities carried out under the program described in paragraph (1) to determine the achievement of technical milestones.

''(4) PROHIBITION.—No funds allocated to the program described in paragraph (1) may be obligated or expended for commercial application of energy technology.

''(c) ELECTROCHEMISTRY MODELING AND SIMULATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out under the Initiative a program to support research to model and simulate organic electrolytes, including the static and dynamic electrochemical behavior and phenomena of organic electrolytes at the molecular and atomic level in monovalent and multivalent systems.

''(2) ACTIVITIES.—As part of the program described in paragraph (1)—

''(A) the Director of the Office of Basic Energy Sciences, in coordination with the Associate Director of Advanced Scientific Computing Research, shall support the development of high performance computational tools through a joint development process to maximize the effectiveness of current and projected high performance computing systems; and

''(B) the Assistant Secretary for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy shall support translational research, development, and validation of physical concepts developed under the program.

''(3) STANDARD OF REVIEW.—The Secretary shall review activities carried out under the program described in paragraph (1) to determine the achievement of technical milestones.

''(4) PROHIBITION.—No funds allocated to the program described in paragraph (1) may be obligated or expended for commercial application of energy technology.

''(d) MESOSCALE ELECTROCHEMISTRY.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out under the Initiative a program to support research needed to reveal electrochemistry in confined mesoscale spaces, including scientific discoveries relevant to—

''(A) bio-electrochemistry and electrochemical energy conversion and storage in confined spaces; and

''(B) the dynamics of the phenomena described in subparagraph (A).

''(2) ACTIVITIES.—As part of the program described in paragraph (1)—

''(A) the Director of the Office of Basic Energy Sciences and the Associate Director of Biological and Environmental Research shall investigate phenomena of mesoscale electrochemical confinement for the purpose of replicating and controlling new electrochemical behavior; and

''(B) the Assistant Secretary for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy shall support translational research, development, and validation of physical concepts developed under the program.

''(3) STANDARD OF REVIEW.—The Secretary shall review activities carried out under the program described in paragraph (1) to determine the achievement of technical milestones.

''(4) PROHIBITION.—No funds allocated to the program described in paragraph (1) may be obligated or expended for commercial application of energy technology.''.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of contents for the Energy Policy Act of 2005 is amended by striking the item relating to section 975 and inserting the following:

''Sec. 975. Electricity storage research initiative.''.

SEC. 304. ADVANCED SCIENTIFIC COMPUTING RESEARCH.

(a) AMERICAN SUPER COMPUTING LEADERSHIP.—

(1) RENAMING OF ACT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Section 1 of the Department of Energy High-End Computing Revitalization Act of 2004 (15 U.S.C. 5501 note; Public Law 108–423) is amended by striking ''Department of Energy High-End Computing Revitalization Act of 2004'' and inserting ''American Super Computing Leadership Act of 2017''.

(B) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 976(a)(1) of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16316(1)) is amended by striking ''Department of Energy High-End Computing Revitalization Act of 2004'' and inserting ''American Super Computing Leadership Act of 2017''.

(2) DEFINITIONS.—Section 2 of the American Super Computing Leadership Act of 2017 (15 U.S.C. 5541) is amended—

(A) by redesignating paragraphs (2) through (5) as paragraphs (3) through (6), respectively;

(B) by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

''(1) DEPARTMENT.—The term 'Department' means the Department of Energy.

''(2) EXASCALE COMPUTING.—The term 'exascale computing' means computing through the use of a computing machine that performs near or above 10 to the 18th power operations per second.''; and

(C) in paragraph (6) (as redesignated by subparagraph (A)), by striking '', acting through the Director of the Office of Science of the Department of Energy''.

(3) DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY HIGH-END COMPUTING RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.—Section 3 of the American Super Computing Leadership Act of 2017 (15 U.S.C. 5542) is amended—

(A) in subsection (a)(1), by striking ''program'' and inserting ''coordinated program across the Department'';

(B) in subsection (b)(2), by striking '', which may'' and all that follows through ''architectures''; and

(C) by striking subsection (d) and inserting the following:

''(d) EXASCALE COMPUTING PROGRAM.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall conduct a research program (referred to in this subsection as the 'Program') for exascale computing, including the development of 2 or more exascale computing machine architectures, to promote the missions of the Department.

''(2) EXECUTION.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the Program, the Secretary shall—

''(i) establish 2 or more National Laboratory partnerships with industry partners and institutions of higher education for the research and development of 2 or more exascale computing architectures across all applicable organizations of the Department;

''(ii) conduct mission-related codesign activities in developing the exascale computing architectures under clause (i);

''(iii) develop such advancements in hardware and software technology as are required to fully realize the potential of an exascale production system in addressing Department target applications and solving scientific problems involving predictive modeling and simulation and large scale data analytics and management;

''(iv) explore the use of exascale computing technologies to advance a broad range of science and engineering; and

''(v) provide, as appropriate, on a competitive, merit-reviewed basis, access for researchers in industries in the United States, institutions of higher education, National Laboratories, and other Federal agencies to the exascale computing systems developed pursuant to clause (i).

''(B) SELECTION OF PARTNERS.—The Secretary shall select the partnerships with the computing facilities of the Department under subparagraph (A) through a competitive, peer-review process.

''(3) CODESIGN AND APPLICATION DEVELOPMENT.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall—

''(i) carry out the Program through an integration of applications, computer science, applied mathematics, and computer hardware architecture using the partnerships established pursuant to paragraph (2) to ensure that, to the maximum extent practicable, 2 or more exascale computing machine architectures are capable of solving Department target applications and broader scientific problems, including predictive modeling and simulation and large scale data analytics and management; and

''(ii) conduct outreach programs to increase the readiness for the use of such platforms by domestic industries, including manufacturers.

''(B) REPORT.—The Secretary shall submit to Congress a report describing—

''(i) how the integration under subparagraph (A) is furthering application science data and computational workloads across application interests, including national security, material science, physical science, cybersecurity, biological science, the Materials Genome and BRAIN Initiatives of the President, advanced manufacturing, and the national electric grid; and

''(ii) the roles and responsibilities of National Laboratories and industry, including the definition of the roles and responsibilities within the Department to ensure an integrated program across the Department.

''(4) PROJECT REVIEW.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The exascale architectures developed pursuant to partnerships established pursuant to paragraph (2) shall be reviewed through a project review process.

''(B) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on—

''(i) the results of the review conducted under subparagraph (A); and

''(ii) the coordination and management of the Program to ensure an integrated research program across the Department.

''(5) ANNUAL REPORTS.—At the time of the budget submission of the Department for each fiscal year, the Secretary, in consultation with the members of the partnerships established pursuant to paragraph (2), shall submit to Congress a report that describes funding for the Program as a whole by functional element of the Department and critical milestones.''.

(b) HIGH-PERFORMANCE COMPUTING AND NETWORKING RESEARCH.—The Director shall support research in high-performance computing and networking relevant to energy applications, including modeling, simulation, and advanced data analytics for basic and applied energy research programs carried out by the Secretary.

(c) APPLIED MATHEMATICS AND SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT FOR HIGH-END COMPUTING SYSTEMS.—The Director shall carry out activities to develop, test, and support—

(1) mathematics, models, and algorithms for complex systems and programming environments; and

(2) tools, languages, and operating systems for high-end computing systems (as defined in section 2 of the American Super Computing Leadership Act of 2017 (15 U.S.C. 5541)).

SEC. 305. HIGH-ENERGY PHYSICS.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the Director should incorporate the findings and recommendations of the report of the Particle Physics Project Prioritization Panel entitled ''Building for Discovery: Strategic Plan for U.S. Particle Physics in the Global Context'' into the planning process of the Department; and

(2) the nations that lead in particle physics by hosting international teams dedicated to a common scientific goal attract the world's best talent and inspire future generations of physicists and technologists.

(b) INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION.—The Director, as practicable and in coordination with other appropriate Federal agencies as necessary, shall ensure the access of United States researchers to the most advanced accelerator facilities and research capabilities in the world, including the Large Hadron Collider.

(c) NEUTRINO RESEARCH.—The Director shall carry out research activities on rare decay processes and the nature of the neutrino, which may include collaborations with the National Science Foundation or international collaborations.

(d) DARK ENERGY AND DARK MATTER RESEARCH.—The Director shall carry out research activities on the nature of dark energy and dark matter, which may include collaborations with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration or the National Science Foundation; or international collaborations.

SEC. 306. BIOLOGICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH.

(a) BIOLOGICAL SYSTEMS.—The Director shall carry out research and development activities in fundamental, structural, computational, and systems biology to increase systems-level understanding of the complex biological systems, which may include activities—

(1) to accelerate breakthroughs and new knowledge that would enable the cost-effective, sustainable production of—

(A) biomass-based liquid transportation fuels;

(B) bioenergy; and

(C) biobased materials;

(2) to improve understanding of the global carbon cycle, including processes for removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, through photosynthesis and other biological processes, for sequestration and storage; and

(3) to understand the biological mechanisms used to transform, immobilize, or remove contaminants from subsurface environments.

(b) LIMITATION FOR RESEARCH FUNDS.—The Director shall not approve new climate science-related initiatives without making a determination that such work is well-coordinated with any relevant work carried out by other Federal agencies.

(c) LOW-DOSE RADIATION RESEARCH PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall carry out a research program on low-dose radiation.

(2) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the program is to enhance the scientific understanding of, and reduce uncertainties associated with, the effects of exposure to low-dose radiation to inform improved risk-management methods.

SEC. 307. FUSION ENERGY.

(a) FUSION MATERIALS RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.—As part of the activities authorized in section 978 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16318)—

(1) the Director, in coordination with the Assistant Secretary for Nuclear Energy of the Department, shall carry out research and

development activities to identify, characterize, and demonstrate materials that can endure the neutron, plasma, and heat fluxes expected in a fusion power system; and

(2) the Director shall provide an assessment of—

(A) the need for 1 or more facilities that can examine and test potential fusion and next generation fission materials and other enabling technologies relevant to the development of fusion power; and

(B) whether a single new facility that substantially addresses magnetic fusion and next generation fission materials research needs is feasible, in conjunction with the expected capabilities of facilities operational as of the date of enactment of this Act.

(b) TOKAMAK RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.—The Director shall support research and development activities and facility operations to optimize the tokamak approach to fusion energy.

(c) INERTIAL FUSION ENERGY RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.—The Director shall support research and development activities for inertial fusion for energy applications.

(d) ALTERNATIVE AND ENABLING CONCEPTS.—The Director shall support research and development activities and facility operations at institutions of higher education, National Laboratories, and private facilities in the United States for a portfolio of alternative and enabling fusion energy concepts that may provide solutions to significant challenges to the establishment of a commercial magnetic fusion power plant, prioritized based on the ability of the United States to play a leadership role in the international fusion research community.

(e) COORDINATION WITH ARPA–E.—The Director shall coordinate with the Director of the Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy (referred to in this subsection as ''ARPA–E'') to—

(1) assess the potential for any fusion energy project supported by ARPA–E to represent a promising approach to a commercially viable fusion power plant;

(2) determine whether the results of any fusion energy project supported by ARPA–E merit the support of follow-on research activities carried out by the Office of Science; and

(3) avoid the unintentional duplication of activities.

(f) FAIRNESS IN COMPETITION FOR SOLICITATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL PROJECT ACTIVITIES.—Section 33 of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 (42 U.S.C. 2053) is amended by inserting before the first sentence the following: ''In this section, with respect to international research projects, the term 'private facilities or laboratories' means facilities or laboratories located in the United States.''.

(g) IDENTIFICATION OF PRIORITIES.—

(1) REPORT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the fusion energy research and development activities that the Department proposes to carry out over the 10-year period following the date of the report under not fewer than 3 realistic budget scenarios, including a scenario based on 3-percent annual growth in the non-ITER portion of the budget for fusion energy research and development activities.

(B) INCLUSIONS.—The report required under subparagraph (A) shall—

(i) identify specific areas of fusion energy research and enabling technology development in which the United States can and should establish or solidify a lead in the global fusion energy development effort;

(ii) identify priorities for initiation of facility construction and facility decommissioning under each of the 3 budget scenarios described in subparagraph (A); and

(iii) assess the ability of the fusion workforce of the United States to carry out the activities identified under clauses (i) and (ii), including the adequacy of programs at institutions of higher education in the United States to train the leaders and workers of the next generation of fusion energy researchers.

(2) PROCESS.—In order to develop the report required under paragraph (1)(A), the Secretary shall leverage best practices and lessons learned from the process used to develop the most recent report of the Particle Physics Project Prioritization Panel of the High Energy Physics Advisory Panel.

(3) REQUIREMENT.—No member of the Fusion Energy Sciences Advisory Committee shall be excluded from participating in developing or voting on final approval of the report required under paragraph (1)(A).

SEC. 308. NUCLEAR PHYSICS.

(a) ISOTOPE DEVELOPMENT AND PRODUCTION FOR RESEARCH APPLICATIONS.—The Director—

(1) may carry out a program for the production of isotopes, including the development of techniques to produce isotopes, that the Secretary determines are needed for research, medical, industrial, or related purposes; and

(2) shall ensure that isotope production activities carried out under the program under this paragraph do not compete with private industry unless the Director determines that critical national interests require the involvement of the Federal Government.

(b) RENAMING OF THE RARE ISOTOPE ACCELERATOR.—Section 981 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16321) is amended—

(1) in the section heading, by striking ''**RARE ISOTOPE ACCELERATOR**'' and inserting ''**FACILITY FOR RARE ISOTOPE BEAMS**''; and

(2) by striking ''Rare Isotope Accelerator'' each place it appears and inserting ''Facility for Rare Isotope Beams''.

SEC. 309. SCIENCE LABORATORIES INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall carry out a program to improve the safety, efficiency, and mission readiness of infrastructure at laboratories of the Office of Science.

(b) INCLUSIONS.—The program under subsection (a) shall include projects—

(1) to renovate or replace space that does not meet research needs;

(2) to replace facilities that are no longer cost effective to renovate or operate;

(3) to modernize utility systems to prevent failures and ensure efficiency;

(4) to remove excess facilities to allow safe and efficient operations; and

(5) to construct modern facilities to conduct advanced research in controlled environmental conditions.

TITLE IV—NUCLEAR ENERGY INNOVATION CAPABILITIES

SEC. 401. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act''.

SEC. 402. NUCLEAR ENERGY INNOVATION CAPABILITIES.

(a) NUCLEAR ENERGY.—Section 951 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16271) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 951. NUCLEAR ENERGY.

''(a) MISSION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out programs of civilian nuclear research, development, demonstration, and commercial application, including activities under this subtitle.

''(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—The programs carried out under paragraph (1) shall take into consideration the following objectives:

''(A) Providing research infrastructure to promote scientific progress and enable users from academia, the National Laboratories, and the private sector to make scientific discoveries relevant for nuclear, chemical, and materials science engineering.

''(B) Maintaining nuclear energy research and development programs at the National Laboratories and institutions of higher education, including infrastructure at the National Laboratories and institutions of higher education.

''(C) Providing the technical means to reduce the likelihood of nuclear proliferation.

''(D) Increasing confidence margins for public safety of nuclear energy systems.

''(E) Reducing the environmental impact of activities relating to nuclear energy.

''(F) Supporting technology transfer from the National Laboratories to the private sector.

''(G) Enabling the private sector to partner with the National Laboratories to demonstrate novel reactor concepts for the purpose of resolving technical uncertainty associated with the objectives described in subparagraphs (A) through (F).

''(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this subtitle:

''(1) ADVANCED NUCLEAR REACTOR.—The term 'advanced nuclear reactor' means—

''(A) a nuclear fission reactor with significant improvements over the most recent generation of nuclear fission reactors, which may include—

''(i) inherent safety features;

''(ii) lower waste yields;

''(iii) greater fuel utilization;

''(iv) superior reliability;

''(v) resistance to proliferation;

''(vi) increased thermal efficiency; and

''(vii) the ability to integrate into electric and nonelectric applications; or

''(B) a nuclear fusion reactor.

''(2) COMMISSION.—The term 'Commission' means the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

''(3) FAST NEUTRON.—The term 'fast neutron' means a neutron with kinetic energy above 100 kiloelectron volts.

''(4) NATIONAL LABORATORY.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the term 'National Laboratory' has the meaning given the term in section 2.

''(B) LIMITATION.—With respect to the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, the Los Alamos National Laboratory, and the Sandia National Laboratories, the term 'National Laboratory' means only the civilian activities of the laboratory.

''(5) NEUTRON FLUX.—The term 'neutron flux' means the intensity of neutron radiation measured as a rate of flow of neutrons applied over an area.

''(6) NEUTRON SOURCE.—The term 'neutron source' means a research machine that provides neutron irradiation services for—

''(A) research on materials sciences and nuclear physics; and

''(B) testing of advanced materials, nuclear fuels, and other related components for reactor systems.''.

(b) NUCLEAR ENERGY RESEARCH PROGRAMS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 952 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16272) is amended—

(A) by striking subsection (c); and

(B) by redesignating subsections (d) and (e) as subsections (c) and (d), respectively.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 641(b)(1) of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16021(b)(1)) is amended by striking ''section 942(d)'' and inserting ''section 952(c)''.

(c) ADVANCED FUEL CYCLE INITIATIVE.—Section 953(a) of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16273(a)) is amended by striking '', acting through the Director of the Office of Nuclear Energy, Science and Technology,''.

(d) UNIVERSITY NUCLEAR SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING SUPPORT.—Section 954(d)(4) of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16274(d)(4)) is amended by striking ''as part of a taking into consideration effort that emphasizes'' and inserting ''that emphasize''.

(e) DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY CIVILIAN NUCLEAR INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES.—Section 955 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16275) is amended—

(1) by striking subsections (c) and (d); and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(c) VERSATILE NEUTRON SOURCE.—

''(1) MISSION NEED.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than December 31, 2017, the Secretary shall determine the mission need for a versatile reactor-based fast neutron source, which shall operate as a national user facility.

''(B) CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED.—In carrying out subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall consult with the private sector, institutions of higher education, the National Laboratories, and relevant Federal agencies to ensure that the user facility described in subparagraph (A) will meet the research needs of the largest practicable majority of prospective users.

''(2) ESTABLISHMENT.—As soon as practicable after determining the mission need under paragraph (1)(A), the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a detailed plan for the establishment of the user facility.

''(3) FACILITY REQUIREMENTS.—

''(A) CAPABILITIES.—The Secretary shall ensure that the user facility will provide, at a minimum, the following capabilities:

''(i) Fast neutron spectrum irradiation capability.

''(ii) Capacity for upgrades to accommodate new or expanded research needs.

''(B) CONSIDERATIONS.—In carrying out the plan submitted under paragraph (2), the Secretary shall consider the following:

''(i) Capabilities that support experimental high-temperature testing.

''(ii) Providing a source of fast neutrons at a neutron flux, higher than that at which current research facilities operate, sufficient to enable research for an optimal base of prospective users.

''(iii) Maximizing irradiation flexibility and irradiation volume to accommodate as many concurrent users as possible.

''(iv) Capabilities for irradiation with neutrons of a lower energy spectrum.

''(v) Multiple loops for fuels and materials testing in different coolants.

''(vi) Additional pre-irradiation and post-irradiation examination capabilities.

''(vii) Lifetime operating costs and lifecycle costs.

''(4) DEADLINE FOR ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall, to the maximum extent practicable, complete construction of, and approve the start of operations for, the user facility by not later than December 31, 2025.

''(5) REPORTING.—The Secretary shall include in the annual budget request of the Department an explanation for any delay in the progress of the Department in completing the user facility by the deadline described in paragraph (4).

''(6) COORDINATION.—The Secretary shall leverage the best practices for management, construction, and operation of national user facilities from the Office of Science.''.

(f) SECURITY OF NUCLEAR FACILITIES.—Section 956 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16276) is amended by striking '', acting through the Director of the Office of Nuclear Energy, Science and Technology,''.

(g) HIGH-PERFORMANCE COMPUTATION AND SUPPORTIVE RESEARCH.—Section 957 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16277) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 957. HIGH-PERFORMANCE COMPUTATION AND SUPPORTIVE RESEARCH.

''(a) MODELING AND SIMULATION.—The Secretary shall carry out a program to enhance the capabilities of the United States to develop new reactor technologies through high-performance computation modeling and simulation techniques.

''(b) COORDINATION.—In carrying out the program under subsection (a), the Secretary shall coordinate with relevant Federal agencies as described by the National Strategic Computing Initiative established by Executive Order 13702 (80 Fed. Reg. 46177 (July 29, 2015)), while taking into account the following objectives:

''(1) Using expertise from the private sector, institutions of higher education, and the National Laboratories to develop computational software and capabilities that prospective users may access to accelerate research and development of advanced nuclear reactor systems and reactor systems for space exploration.

''(2) Developing computational tools to simulate and predict nuclear phenomena that may be validated through physical experimentation.

''(3) Increasing the utility of the research infrastructure of the Department by coordinating with the Advanced Scientific Computing Research program within the Office of Science.

''(4) Leveraging experience from the Energy Innovation Hub for Modeling and Simulation.

''(5) Ensuring that new experimental and computational tools are accessible to relevant research communities, including private sector entities engaged in nuclear energy technology development.

''(c) SUPPORTIVE RESEARCH ACTIVITIES.—The Secretary shall consider support for additional research activities to maximize the utility of the research facilities of the Department, including physical processes—

''(1) to simulate degradation of materials and behavior of fuel forms; and

''(2) for validation of computational tools.''.

(h) ENABLING NUCLEAR ENERGY INNOVATION.—Subtitle E of title IX of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16271 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 958. ENABLING NUCLEAR ENERGY INNOVATION.

''(a) NATIONAL REACTOR INNOVATION CENTER.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized a program to enable the testing and demonstration of reactor concepts to be proposed and funded by the private sector.

''(2) PARTICIPATION.—Nothing in this section shall prevent a private sector entity that has received Federal grants from participating in this program.

''(b) TECHNICAL EXPERTISE.—In carrying out the program under subsection (a), the Secretary shall leverage the technical expertise of relevant Federal agencies and the National Laboratories in order to minimize the time required to enable construction and operation of privately funded experimental reactors at National Laboratories or other Department-owned sites.

''(c) OBJECTIVES.—The reactors described in subsection (b) shall operate to meet the following objectives:

''(1) Enabling physical validation of advanced nuclear reactor concepts.

''(2) Resolving technical uncertainty and increasing practical knowledge relevant to safety, resilience, security, and functionality of advanced nuclear reactor concepts.

''(3) General research and development to improve nascent technologies.

''(d) SHARING TECHNICAL EXPERTISE.—In carrying out the program under subsection (a), the Secretary may enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Chairman of the Commission in order to share technical expertise and knowledge through—

''(1) enabling the testing and demonstration of advanced nuclear reactor concepts to be proposed and funded by the private sector;

''(2) operating a database to store and share data and knowledge relevant to nuclear science and engineering between Federal agencies and the private sector;

''(3) developing and testing electric and nonelectric integration and energy conversion systems relevant to advanced nuclear reactors;

''(4) leveraging expertise from the Commission with respect to safety analysis; and

''(5) enabling technical staff of the Commission to actively observe and learn about technologies developed under the program.

''(e) AGENCY COORDINATION.—The Chairman of the Commission and the Secretary shall enter into a memorandum of understanding regarding the following:

''(1) Ensuring that—

''(A) the Department has sufficient technical expertise to support the timely research, development, demonstration, and commercial application by the civilian nuclear industry of safe and innovative advanced nuclear reactor technology; and

''(B) the Commission has sufficient technical expertise to support the evaluation of applications for licenses, permits, and design certifications and other requests for regulatory approval for advanced nuclear reactors.

''(2) The use of computers and software codes to calculate the behavior and performance of advanced nuclear reactors based on mathematical models of the physical behavior of advanced nuclear reactors.

''(3) Ensuring that—

''(A) the Department maintains and develops the facilities necessary to enable the timely research, development, demonstration, and commercial application by the civilian nuclear industry of safe and innovative reactor technology; and

''(B) the Commission has access to the facilities described in subparagraph (A), as needed.

''(f) REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act of 2017, the Secretary, in consultation with the National Laboratories, relevant Federal agencies, and other stakeholders, shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report assessing the capabilities of the Department to authorize, host, and oversee privately funded experimental advanced nuclear reactors as described in subsection (b).

''(2) CONTENTS.—The report submitted under paragraph (1) shall address—

''(A) the safety review and oversight capabilities of the Department, including options to leverage expertise from the Commission and the National Laboratories;

''(B) options to regulate privately proposed and funded experimental reactors hosted by the Department;

''(C) potential sites capable of hosting privately funded experimental advanced nuclear reactors;

''(D) the efficacy of the available contractual mechanisms of the Department to partner with the private sector and Federal agencies, including cooperative research and development agreements, strategic partnership projects, and agreements for commercializing technology;

''(E) the liability of the Federal Government with respect to the disposal of low-level radioactive waste, spent nuclear fuel, or high-level radioactive waste (as those

terms are defined in section 2 of the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 (42 U.S.C. 10101));

''(F) the impact on the aggregate inventory in the United States of low-level radioactive waste, spent nuclear fuel, or high-level radioactive waste (as those terms are defined in section 2 of the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 (42 U.S.C. 10101));

''(G) potential cost structures relating to physical security, decommissioning, liability, and other long-term project costs; and

''(H) other challenges or considerations identified by the Secretary.

''(3) UPDATES.—Once every 2 years, the Secretary shall update relevant provisions of the report submitted under paragraph (1) and submit to the appropriate committees of Congress the update.

''(g) SAVINGS CLAUSES.—

''(1) LICENSING REQUIREMENT.—Nothing in this section authorizes the Secretary or any person to construct or operate a nuclear reactor for the purpose of demonstrating the suitability for commercial application of the nuclear reactor unless licensed by the Commission in accordance with section 202 of the Energy Reorganization Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5842).

''(2) FINANCIAL PROTECTION.—Any activity carried out under this section that involves the risk of public liability shall be subject to the financial protection or indemnification requirements of section 170 of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 (42 U.S.C. 2210) (commonly known as the 'Price-Anderson Act').''.

(i) BUDGET PLAN.—Subtitle E of title IX of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16271 et seq.) (as amended by subsection (h)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 959. BUDGET PLAN.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act of 2017, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives 2 alternative 10-year budget plans for civilian nuclear energy research and development by the Secretary, as described in subsections (b) through (d).

''(b) BUDGET PLAN ALTERNATIVE 1.—One of the budget plans submitted under subsection (a) shall assume constant annual funding for 10 years at the appropriated level for the civilian nuclear energy research and development of the Department for fiscal year 2016.

''(c) BUDGET PLAN ALTERNATIVE 2.—One of the budget plans submitted under subsection (a) shall be an unconstrained budget.

''(d) INCLUSIONS.—Each alternative budget plan submitted under subsection (a) shall include—

''(1) a prioritized list of the programs, projects, and activities of the Department to best support the development of advanced nuclear reactor technologies;

''(2) realistic budget requirements for the Department to implement sections 955(c), 957, and 958; and

''(3) the justification of the Department for continuing or terminating existing civilian nuclear energy research and development programs.''.

(j) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—The table of contents for the Energy Policy Act of 2005 is amended by striking the item relating to section 957 and inserting the following:

''957. High-performance computation and supportive research.
''958. Enabling nuclear energy innovation.
''959. Budget plan.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. PERLMUTTER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 589, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, H.R. 589, Department of Energy Research and Innovation Act, is the product of over 3 years of work by the Science, Space, and Technology Committee to advance basic research and set clear science priorities for the Department of Energy.

I thank my colleagues on the Science, Space, and Technology Committee who cosponsored this legislation, particularly Ranking Member EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON.

The Department of Energy Research and Innovation Act prioritizes basic research and science at the DOE national labs. This legislation also requires DOE to coordinate research across the Department and provides private industry with more access to the national labs so they can develop next generation technology.

Title I of H.R. 589 enables DOE to partner with the private sector and cuts red tape and bureaucracy in the DOE technology transfer process. The innovative early stage research performed at the labs can have great value to the private sector.

Because of a communication gap between the labs and the private sector, ideas and technology created in the national labs are often slow to reach the market. And Federal Government bureaucracy further discourages the private sector from using the unique state-of-the-art facilities at the national labs.

I thank the gentleman from Illinois, Representative RANDY HULTGREN, and the gentleman from Colorado, Representative ED PERLMUTTER, for their initiative on this issue and for sponsoring similar legislation in the last Congress to advance these important reforms for our national labs.

□ 1545

Title II of the legislation requires the DOE to better manage and coordinate research efforts at the Department of Energy. This title also requires the DOE to provide a regular strategic analysis of science and technology activities within the Department. This will help identify key areas for collaboration across science and applied research programs. This review allows the Secretary to pinpoint programs that cost too much and that could be better accomplished by the private sector.

Title III of the bill provides statutory direction and priorities for the basic research programs within the DOE's Office of Science. This includes research and basic energy sciences, biological and environmental research, high performance computing, nuclear physics, high energy physics, and fusion energy. These basic research programs are the core mission of the Department and lead to scientific discovery that can provide benefits across the economy. This title specifically authorizes basic research programs in solar fuels, electricity storage, exascale computing, and low-dose radiation.

In the last Congress, the House separately passed Science, Space, and Technology Committee legislation to authorize these four key basic research programs. I again thank Representative HULTGREN, as well as the gentlemen from California—Representative STEVE KNIGHT and Representative ERIC SWALWELL—and the gentleman from Illinois, Representative DAN LIPINSKI, for sponsoring legislation authorizing these programs in the last Congress.

Finally, title IV of the legislation is the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act. I thank my Texas colleagues, Representative RANDY WEBER and committee Ranking Member JOHNSON, for advancing this bipartisan, bicameral legislation both in this Congress and in the last.

This title authorizes nuclear R&D activities at the DOE and harnesses and combines the strengths of the national labs, universities, and the private sector in a joint innovation initiative. Advanced nuclear reactor technology provides a great opportunity to make reliable, emission-free electricity available throughout the industrialized and developing world. The nuclear energy innovation language also provides a clear timeline for the DOE to complete a research reactor user facility within 10 years. This research reactor will enable proprietary and academic research to develop supercomputing models and also design next generation nuclear energy technology.

In summary, H.R. 589 represents a bipartisan, bicameral agreement to modernize and increase the productivity of the DOE national lab system, streamline DOE research programs, prioritize basic scientific research, and enable the development of next generation nuclear technology.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I thank the chairman and the ranking member, EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON, for bringing this bill to the floor today. It has been a long time in coming.

I rise in support of H.R. 589, the Department of Energy Research and Innovation Act. This bill would authorize important research and development at the Department of Energy to push the frontiers of science and find new ways to innovate and power our economy.

This bill would authorize comprehensive policy guidance for the DOE's Office of Science for the first time in its history. The Office of Science manages a portfolio, including research in supercomputing, materials science, nuclear physics, advanced biofuels, fusion energy, climate modeling, high energy physics, and a number of other areas across the spectrum of fundamental and applied research.

Additionally, the Office of Science is home to world-class user facilities used by private industry to collaborate with our national laboratories and provide our scientists with access to tools and resources to test the most pressing research questions in a variety of fields. The neutron sources, particle accelerators, and light sources, among many other Office of Science user facilities, are home to some of the most important scientific work conducted in America and represent some of the best partnerships our labs have with private industry. These activities and capabilities have never been given the proper statutory authority by this Congress, so this bill represents a landmark bipartisan effort.

H.R. 589 also includes the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act, which I cosponsored again this year. By providing the tools and resources to nuclear scientists and engineers, this bill lays the groundwork for a future where reliable, clean nuclear energy is a major source of our electricity generation. This research could lead to advanced and safer nuclear reactors with the potential to use less nuclear fuel and produce far less waste.

H.R. 589 is not only bipartisan, but, as the chairman said, it represents a bicameral agreement that was reached last year during conference negotiations with the Senate on the comprehensive energy package. Given the urgent challenge of climate change and the growing competition around the world in many of these key research areas, we must keep working together with the Senate to get this bill signed into law this year.

I thank Chairman SMITH and Ranking Member JOHNSON for working together to get this bipartisan legislation before us today, and I urge all of my colleagues to support this bill.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Madam Speaker, I thank Mr. PERLMUTTER for his comments and again thank him for his work on this legislation.

I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. KNIGHT), who is the vice chairman of the Energy Subcommittee of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee.

Mr. KNIGHT. I thank the chairman and the ranking member for their leadership on this.

Madam Speaker, H.R. 589, the Department of Energy Research and Innovation Act, sets congressional priorities for basic science research and nuclear energy R&D.

This legislation also includes text from my bill from the last Congress, H.R. 5638, the Solar Fuels Innovation Act. This language directs the Department of Energy to establish a basic research initiative in solar fuels. The solar fuel process, also known as artificial photosynthesis, harnesses energy from sunlight to create a range of storable chemical fuels, overcoming the biggest obstacle to maximizing the benefits of renewable technologies.

Researchers up and down the coast of California are undertaking this research from universities in southern California to the Berkeley lab in the Bay area. The research authorized in this legislation could solve this key scientific challenge and open the door for American entrepreneurs to develop the next generation of solar technology and train the next generation of researchers in chemistry, physics, and materials science.

H.R. 589 reaffirms the Federal Government's key role in research and development. My home State of California has long been a world leader in advanced science and high tech and is home to millions of entrepreneurs who are eager to engage and take advantage of the latest breakthroughs. Today we hear a lot of enthusiasm for clean energy, but the focus is on today's technology, not on fundamentally new approaches to energy technology that we make possible through early-stage research. In Congress, it is our responsibility to take the long-term view and be patient and make smart investments in basic research that can lead to the next big discovery. H.R. 589 establishes those long-term priorities.

This bill makes other important adjustments to the flexibility and utilization of DOE assets to give the U.S.' private sector a stronger edge, from the national laboratory partnerships with research groups to allowing the nuclear energy businesses to do their early-stage work on DOE sites, giving a huge boost to an industry that is about to take off.

I encourage my colleagues to support this very bipartisan, very supported piece of legislation.

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

I thank Mr. KNIGHT and especially my cosponsor, Mr. HULTGREN, for the work that they have done on this bill generally, but particularly on title I of the bill, the Laboratory Modernization and Technology Transfer Act.

As Mr. KNIGHT said, on this committee, we find places where there is common ground and where there is an ability to advance the interests of the United States of America. Sometimes we argue, sometimes we debate, sometimes we don't agree, but often we do. I appreciate their work as well as the chairman's work on a number of subjects that face us. I was proud to work with my friend Mr. HULTGREN of Illinois to introduce this bill, the Modernization and Technology Transfer Act, in the last Congress.

Title I provides important tools to accelerate the commercialization of new technologies that are developed at our national labs. It extends the Agreement for Commercializing Technology pilot program while expanding the range of companies that are eligible to participate. We also allow labs to use their technology transfer funds as an incubator investment for projects that are developed in-house which demonstrate potential commercial opportunities.

Additionally, the bill encourages the further collaboration between university researchers and our national labs by creating a pilot program to reduce the financial burdens on our universities. I hope this pilot program unleashes the talent at our universities, like the Colorado School of Mines, the University of Colorado, and Colorado State University, to discover the next successful technology.

Madam Speaker, one may remember I represent Golden, Colorado, and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory. NREL is the premier energy efficiency and renewable energy lab in the world, and title I of this bill provides labs like NREL more tools to bring life-changing innovations to consumers by partnering with private industry.

When revolutionary research is harnessed by our entrepreneurs and business leaders, startups with one or two employees can grow into companies that can create hundreds of quality jobs. I am proud to support this legislation, and I am proud to have worked with Mr. HULTGREN in giving scientists and researchers in both the public and private sectors the tools and the freedom they need to unlock a new wave of innovation.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HULTGREN), an active member of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee.

Mr. HULTGREN. Madam Speaker, I want to give a sincere thank-you to our distinguished chairman, Mr. SMITH—the chairman of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology—for his work in this Congress and in past Congresses in bringing this bipartisan package of legislation to the floor.

I also thank my good friend and colleague Congressman PERLMUTTER from Colorado, who has been just an active joint member in moving this forward. I am so grateful for his efforts and his work.

Madam Speaker, the DOE Research and Innovation Act contains a number of bipartisan provisions that put in place clear research and development priorities so that Americans can maintain their leadership position on the world stage and continue attracting the best and the brightest to the only place they can do their work.

While I have the pleasure of representing Fermilab, our Nation's only dedicated high energy physics laboratory, I have also had the opportunity

to visit with and to meet researchers from across the Nation who rely on our national laboratory system to do their work. More than 30,000 researchers a year visit the DOE user facilities, such as the Advanced Photon Source at Argonne National Laboratory, just outside my district. These facilities are normally operating 24/7, with researchers blocking off time—sometimes just minutes—to use equipment that no one university or business could build and maintain on its own. This is why our national labs are truly the crown jewel in our research ecosystem.

The DOE Research and Innovation Act includes key provisions from my prior legislation of improving technology transfer and helping get research from the ''valley of death'' to a point at which the private sector can pick it up and run with it. This legislation also frees up the labs to be more nimble and work more easily with outside entities, such as with nonprofits and universities.

Another provision in this legislation should, hopefully, be a key priority for the incoming administration. Right now, China not only has the fastest computer in the world, but the two fastest computers in the world. Legislation which this body previously passed and is included in this bill would call on the DOE to carry out a program to build an exascale computer, which is close to the speed of the human brain. The United States' computing capabilities have a wide-ranging use and applications, and the DOE has led the way in developing this technology.

One of the primary missions at the DOE is the maintenance of our current nuclear stockpile. This is largely carried out through complex simulations which require these increasingly powerful machines, but the crosscutting benefits of this research may have the greatest impact.

When the NIH began its work on sequencing the human genome, it was only a moonshot mission that many thought was not yet feasible. Computing facilities at the DOE basically proved the concept and allowed this work to be completed. In the era of precision medicine and with the recent passage of the 21st Century Cures, our computing facilities must be tapped to realize the benefits of targeted treatments and cures.

Among other research priorities, this legislation also calls on the DOE to resume its low dose radiation research program. This is something I supported in the last Congress, working off recommendations from the scientific community to fill the gaps in our knowledge of the human health impacts from low dose radiation.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this important bill. I thank the chairman and the ranking member for their bipartisan work to begin this Congress by passing pro-growth, pro-science legislation.

□ 1600

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I have no other speakers, so I am going to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH OF Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WEBER), who is the chairman of the Energy Subcommittee of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 589, the Department of Energy Research and Innovation Act.

H.R. 589 provides policy direction to the Department of Energy on basic science research, nuclear energy R&D, research coordination and priorities, as well as important additional reforms to streamline national labs management.

I want to particularly highlight title IV, which is the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act. I introduced the same legislation in the 114th and 115th Congress, and it does a lot of good things. It lays out a clear timeline and parameters for DOE to complete a research reactor, which is a crucial part for us.

Right now, we are behind, Mr. Speaker. The Russians are outpacing us on the next design of nuclear reactors. That is simply unacceptable.

We need a versatile neutron source, and title IV of this will produce a situation where we will have the ability for the national labs to partner with private industry and be able to do that so that they don't get built overseas, which is totally unacceptable.

Mr. Speaker, the Science, Space, and Technology Committee has spent a long time developing this. There is lots of bipartisan buy-in, I might add, and I appreciate that.

So it is time, Mr. Speaker, in my opinion, for us to get this bill passed and make sure that we remain on the cutting edge. It helps us with economics, and it helps us actually with nuclear proliferation as far as that goes.

So I encourage all of my colleagues to join in supporting H.R. 589.

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill. It is the product of a lot of hard work over the last 3 years. It helps our laboratories and our private industry stay at the forefront of science. I thank Chairman SMITH of Texas for bringing this bill to the floor.

I urge passage of this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 589 provides basic research direction and good government reforms to ongoing DOE programs. This legislation establishes congressional priorities for the Department, and I look forward to working with my colleagues in the Senate to quickly send this bill to the President's desk.

I thank the members of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee who provided valuable input into this legislation. This includes the cosponsors of the bill, Ranking Member JOHNSON, and Representatives RANDY WEBER, STEVE KNIGHT, RANDY HULTGREN, FRANK LUCAS, DAN LIPINSKI, DANA ROHRABACHER, ELIZABETH ESTY, BRIAN BABIN, MARC VEASEY, BARBARA COMSTOCK, ED PERLMUTTER, MO BROOKS, PAUL TONKO, JIM BANKS, ERIC SWALWELL, ANDY BIGGS, ZOE LOFGREN, NEAL DUNN, and CLAY HIGGINS, Republicans and Democrats alike.

Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of H.R. 589.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support H.R. 589, the Department of Energy Research and Innovation Act, which I am very pleased to cosponsor.

This bill comprises a significant set of provisions that resulted from constructive negotiations with our Majority and with the Senate as part of the energy conference last year. I am also proud to note that many of these provisions were actually first proposed in the version of the American Competes Reauthorization Act that was sponsored by every Democratic Member of the Committee in the last Congress.

The bill includes what would be the first comprehensive authorization of the DOE Office of Science, which is the largest supporter of physical sciences research in the country. This is a nearly $6 billion office that manages 10 of our national laboratories, often called the crown jewels of our national research infrastructure. Yet thus far, unlike NSF, NASA, and nearly every other major scientific research agency stewarded by the federal government, the Office of Science has not received the statutory guidance and support that its capabilities and mission warrant. So passing this portion of the bill into law alone would be a big step in the right direction.

The bill also includes a number of important technology transfer provisions that previously passed the House as part of a bipartisan bill that I and many of my colleagues on the Committee co-sponsored. In addition, it would provide the first authorization of the promising Innovation Hub model for energy research, and it would enable greater private sector engagement with ARPA-E. Finally, this bill includes an updated and improved version of the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act, which I was happy to co-sponsor with my friend Mr. WEBER in the last Congress.

I would like to thank Chairman SMITH and his staff for working closely with us and our Senate counterparts to move beyond what began as, frankly, a rather contentious process to find common ground on a wide range of areas that will be critical to ensuring our nation's competitiveness and our clean energy future.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WOMACK). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 589, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

DIGITAL GLOBAL ACCESS POLICY ACT OF 2017

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 600) to promote Internet access in developing countries and update foreign policy toward the Internet, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 600

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Digital Global Access Policy Act of 2017'' or the ''Digital GAP Act''.

SEC. 2. PURPOSE.

The purpose of this Act is to—

(1) encourage the efforts of developing countries to improve mobile and fixed access to the Internet in order to catalyze innovation, spur economic growth and job creation, improve health, education, and financial services, reduce poverty and gender inequality, mitigate disasters, promote democracy and good governance, and strengthen cybersecurity;

(2) promote build once policies and approaches and the multi-stakeholder approach to Internet governance; and

(3) ensure the effective use of United States foreign assistance resources toward this end.

SEC. 3. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) The number of Internet users worldwide has more than tripled from 1 billion to 3.2 billion since 2005, yet the growth rate of Internet access is slowing: An estimated 4.2 billion people, or 60 percent of the world's population, remain offline, an estimated 75 percent of the offline population lives in just 20 countries, and rural, female, elderly, illiterate, and low-income populations are being left behind.

(2) Studies suggest that women across the developing world are disproportionately affected by a digital gap, and that bringing an additional 600 million women online would contribute $13 billion to $18 billion to annual GDP across 144 developing countries.

(3) Internet access in developing countries is most often hampered by a lack of infrastructure and a poor regulatory environment for investment.

(4) Build once policies and approaches, which seek to coordinate public and private sector investments in roads and other critical infrastructure, can minimize the number and scale of excavation and construction activities when installing telecommunications infrastructure in rights-of-way, thereby reducing installation costs for high-speed Internet networks and serving as a development best practice.

SEC. 4. STATEMENT OF POLICY.

Congress declares that it is the policy of the United States to consult, partner, and coordinate with the governments of foreign countries, international organizations, regional economic communities, businesses, civil society, and other stakeholders in a concerted effort to close the digital gap by promoting—

(1) first-time Internet access to mobile or broadband Internet for at least 1.5 billion people in developing countries by 2020 in both urban and rural areas;

(2) Internet deployment and related coordination, capacity building, and build once policies and approaches in developing countries, including actions to encourage—

(A) standardization of build once policies and approaches for the inclusion of broadband conduit in rights-of-way projects that are funded, co-funded, or partially financed by the United States or any international organization that includes the United States as a member, in consultation with telecommunications providers, unless a cost-benefit analysis determines that the cost of such approach outweighs the benefits;

(B) adoption and integration of build once policies and approaches into the development and investment strategies of national and local government agencies of developing countries and donor governments and organizations that will enhance coordination with the private sector for road building, pipe laying, and other major infrastructure projects; and

(C) provision of increased financial support by international organizations, including through grants, loans, and technical assistance, to expand information and communications access and Internet connectivity;

(3) policy changes that encourage first-time affordable access to the Internet in developing countries, including actions to encourage—

(A) integration of universal and gender-equitable Internet access goals, to be informed by the collection of related gender disaggregated data, and Internet tools into national development plans and United States Government country-level development strategies;

(B) reforms of competition laws and spectrum allocation processes that may impede the ability of companies to provide Internet services; and

(C) efforts to improve procurement processes to help attract and incentivize investment in Internet infrastructure;

(4) the removal of tax and regulatory barriers to Internet access;

(5) the use of the Internet to increase economic growth and trade, including—

(A) policies and strategies to remove restrictions to e-commerce, cross-border information flows, and competitive marketplaces; and

(B) entrepreneurship and distance learning enabled by access to technology;

(6) use of the Internet to bolster democracy, government accountability, transparency, and human rights, including through the establishments of policies, initiatives, and investments that—

(A) support the development of national Internet plans that are consistent with United States human rights goals, including freedom of expression, religion, assembly, and association;

(B) expand online access to government information and services to enhance government accountability and service delivery, including for areas in which government may have limited presence;

(C) advance the principles of responsible Internet governance, including commitments to maintain open and equitable access; and

(D) support programs, research, and technologies that safeguard human rights and fundamental freedoms online, and enable political organizing and activism, free speech, and religious expression that are in compliance with international human rights standards;

(7) Internet access and inclusion into Internet policymaking for women, people with disabilities, minorities, low-income and marginalized groups, and underserved populations;

(8) cybersecurity and data protection, including international use of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Framework for Improving Critical Infrastructure Cybersecurity, that are industry-led and globally recognized cybersecurity standards and best practices; and

(9) inter-agency coordination and cooperation across all executive branch agencies regarding the construction and promotion of Internet initiatives as a greater part of United States foreign policy.

SEC. 5. LEVERAGING INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT.

In pursuing the policy described in section 4, the President should direct United States representatives to appropriate international bodies to use the influence of the United States, consistent with the broad development goals of the United States, to advocate that each such body—

(1) commit to increase efforts and coordination to promote affordable and gender-equitable Internet access, in partnership with stakeholders and consistent with host countries' absorptive capacity;

(2) integrate affordable and gender-equitable Internet access data into existing economic and business assessments, evaluations, and indexes such as the Millennium Challenge Corporation constraints analysis, the Doing Business Report, International Monetary Fund Article IV assessments and country reports, the Open Data Barometer, and the Affordability Drivers Index;

(3) standardize inclusion of broadband conduit as part of highway or comparable construction projects in developing countries, in consultation with telecommunications providers, unless such inclusion would create an undue burden, is not necessary based on the availability of existing broadband infrastructure, or a cost-benefit analysis determines that the cost outweighs the benefits;

(4) provide technical assistance to the regulatory authorities in developing countries to remove unnecessary barriers to investment in otherwise commercially viable projects and strengthen weak regulations or develop new regulations to support market growth and development;

(5) utilize clear, accountable, and metric-based targets, including targets with gender-disaggregated data, to measure the effectiveness of efforts to promote Internet access; and

(6) promote and protect human rights online, such as the freedoms of expression, religion, assembly, and association, through resolutions, public statements, projects, and initiatives, and advocate that other member states of such bodies are held accountable when major violations are uncovered.

SEC. 6. DEPARTMENT OF STATE ORGANIZATION.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the Secretary of State should seek to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of United States foreign assistance efforts to carry out the policies and objectives established by this Act, including by redesignating an existing Assistant Secretary position in the Department of State to be the Assistant Secretary for Cyberspace to lead the Department's diplomatic cyberspace policy generally, including for cybersecurity, Internet access, Internet freedom, and to promote an open, secure, and reliable information and communications technology infrastructure.

(b) ACTIVITIES.—In recognition of the added value of technical knowledge and expertise in the policymaking and diplomatic channels, the Secretary of State shall—

(1) update existing training programs relevant to policy discussions;

(2) promote the recruitment of candidates with technical expertise into the Civil Service and the Foreign Service; and

(3) work to improve inter-agency coordination and cooperation on cybersecurity and Internet initiatives.

(c) OFFSET.—To offset any costs incurred by the Department of State to carry out the designation of an Assistant Secretary for Cyberspace in accordance with subsection (a), the Secretary of State shall eliminate

such positions within the Department of State, unless otherwise authorized or required by law, as the Secretary determines to be necessary to fully offset such costs.

(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—The redesignation of the Assistant Secretary position in the Department of State described in subsection (a) may not be construed as increasing the number of Assistant Secretary positions at the Department above the current level of 24 as authorized in section 1(c)(1) of the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 (22 U.S.C. 2651a(c)(1)).

SEC. 7. USAID.

It is the sense of Congress that the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development should—

(1) integrate efforts to expand Internet access, develop appropriate technologies, and enhance digital literacy into the education, development, and economic growth programs of the agency, where appropriate;

(2) expand the utilization of information and communications technologies in humanitarian aid and disaster relief responses and United States operations involving stabilization and security to improve donor coordination, reduce duplication and waste, capture and share lessons learned, and augment disaster preparedness and risk mitigation strategies; and

(3) establish and promote guidelines for the protection of personal information of individuals served by humanitarian, disaster, and development programs implemented directly through the United States Government, through contracts funded by the United States Government, and by international organizations.

SEC. 8. PEACE CORPS.

Section 3 of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2502) is amended by—

(1) redesignating subsection (h) as subsection (e); and

(2) adding at the end the following new subsections:

''(f) It is the sense of Congress that access to technology can transform agriculture, community economic development, education, environment, health, and youth development which are the sectors in which Peace Corps currently develops positions for Volunteers.

''(g) In giving attention to the programs, projects, training, and other activities referred to in subsection (f), the Peace Corps should develop positions for Volunteers that are focused on leveraging technology for development, education, and social and economic mobility.''.

SEC. 9. PARTNERSHIP FRAMEWORK.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall transmit to the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate plans to promote partnerships by United States development agencies, including the United States Agency for International Development and the Millennium Challenge Corporation, and international agencies funded by the United States Government with the private sector and other stakeholders to expand affordable and gender equitable access to the Internet in developing countries, including the following elements:

(1) Methods for stakeholders to partner with such agencies in order to provide Internet access or Internet infrastructure in developing countries.

(2) Methods of outreach to stakeholders to explore partnership opportunities for expanding Internet access or Internet infrastructure, including coordination with the private sector, when financing roads and telecommunications infrastructure.

(3) Methods for early consultation with stakeholders concerning projects in telecommunications and road construction to provide Internet access or Internet infrastructure.

SEC. 10. REPORTING REQUIREMENT ON IMPLEMENTATION EFFORTS.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall transmit to the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate a report on efforts to implement the policies specified in this Act and a discussion of the plans and existing efforts by the United States Government in developing countries to accomplish the following:

(1) Developing a technical and regulatory road map for promoting Internet access in developing countries and a path to implementing such road map.

(2) Identifying the regulatory barriers that may unduly impede Internet access, including regulation of wireline broadband deployment or the infrastructure to augment wireless broadband deployment.

(3) Strengthening and supporting development of regulations that incentivize market growth and sector development.

(4) Encouraging further public and private investment in Internet infrastructure, including broadband networks and services.

(5) Increasing gender-equitable Internet access and otherwise encourage or support Internet deployment, competition, and adoption.

(6) Improving the affordability of Internet access.

(7) Promoting technology and cybersecurity capacity building efforts and consult technical experts for advice regarding options to accelerate the advancement of Internet deployment, adoption, and usage.

(8) Promoting Internet freedom globally and include civil society and the private sector in the formulation of policies, projects, and advocacy efforts to protect human rights online.

(9) Promoting and strengthening the multi-stakeholder model of Internet governance and actively participate in multi-stakeholder international fora, such as the Internet Governance Forum.

(10) Advancing a strategy to promote—

(A) global cybersecurity policy consistent with the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Framework for Improving Critical Infrastructure Cybersecurity;

(B) global Internet freedom principles, such as the freedoms of expression, religion, assembly, and association, while combating efforts to impose restrictions on such freedoms; and

(C) improved inter-agency coordination and cooperation on cybersecurity and Internet initiatives.

SEC. 11. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) BROADBAND.—The term ''broadband'' means an Internet Protocol-based transmission service that enables users to send and receive voice, video, data, graphics, or a combination thereof.

(2) BROADBAND CONDUIT.—The term ''broadband conduit'' means a conduit for fiber optic cables that support broadband or wireless facilities for broadband service.

(3) BUILD ONCE POLICIES AND APPROACHES.—The term ''build once policies and approaches'' means policies or practices that minimize the number and scale of excavation and construction activities when installing telecommunications infrastructure in rights-of-way.

(4) CYBERSPACE.—The term ''cyberspace'' means the interdependent network of information technology infrastructures, and includes the Internet, telecommunications networks, computer systems, and embedded processors and controllers in critical industries, and includes the virtual environment of information and interactions between people.

(5) STAKEHOLDERS.—The term ''stakeholders'' means the private sector, the public sector, cooperatives, civil society, the technical community that develops Internet technologies, standards, implementation, operations, and applications, and other groups that are working to increase Internet access or are impacted by the lack of Internet access in their communities.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous materials in the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Today, more than 60 percent of the world's population lacks access to broadband, lacks access to the Internet. That means 3 billion people have been left out of the biggest technological revolution of our time. Three billion people are being denied the benefits of the free flow of information and game-changing innovations in health, education, and commerce; and 3 billion consumers remain out of the reach of American goods and services.

Women and girls are disproportionately affected by this digital gap, despite serving as the principal consumers, caregivers, educators, peacemakers, and income earners across the developing world. Bringing women online is going to deepen the benefit of existing investments in governance and global health, and it is going to accelerate economic growth.

So this bill closes that digital gap. It promotes efforts by developing countries to accelerate Internet deployment through the standardization of cost-effective, build-once policies. It partners with the private sector, and it creates a favorable investment climate.

At the same time, it reduces duplication of effort among U.S. Government agencies by demanding improved interagency coordination and collaboration with the private sector. And it calls on the State Department to consolidate the responsibilities held by three separate coordinators for cyber policy, technology, and information under a single Assistant Secretary for Cyberspace.

So let me explain something here, Mr. Speaker, if the U.S. Agency for International Development is helping

to finance the construction of a rural road in Ghana, the private sector should be invited to lay down broadband conduit before the concrete is poured, obviously. Why dig the same road twice? The bottom line is that, as this infrastructure expansion is going on right now, we have the ability to get the private sector in to lay that broadband, and that is what this bill does. It is smart economics, smart development. It advances key U.S. values. And, frankly, it is good for American industry as well.

So I thank my cosponsors—Representatives CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS, ELIOT ENGEL, and GRACE MENG—for their efforts on this bill, which, by the way, the predecessor bill passed unanimously last September here.

I strongly urge Members to support the Digital GAP Act here again this year so we can get it to the President's desk without delay.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. I rise in support of this bill.

I want to thank Chairman ED ROYCE, and I am pleased to cosponsor this bill that he has introduced to make it easier for people around the world to harness the power of the Internet. This bill passed in the last Congress but didn't make it through the Senate, so I am glad we are taking it up again.

Mr. Speaker, we know the way this incredible tool has shaped the world in the last generation. The Internet can instantaneously connect people across the world from each other who a few years ago would never cross paths in a lifetime. It allows citizens and journalists living under oppressive regimes or in war zones to get information out to the world. It allows entrepreneurs in emerging markets to sell their products in global markets.

To be sure, the power of the Internet can cut both way. ISIS has proved all too adept at using social media to recruit fighters and spread its hateful message. But put to its highest purpose, the Internet can help drive economic growth and spread stability and prosperity.

Unfortunately, too few people around the world have access to this tool. Roughly 60 percent of the world's population is not online, and the growth rate of Internet access is slowing. If you live in a poor community or a rural area, sometimes just because you are a woman, it is harder to take advantage of the Internet.

We know where that lack of access is holding populations back. Three-quarters of those who are offline live in just 20 countries. If we could close that gap, think of what it might mean for all of those people struggling to make ends meet, and that is exactly what this bill aims to do.

Chairman ROYCE's legislation calls on the administration to ramp up efforts around the world to expand access to the Internet. It encourages the State Department, USAID, and the Peace Corps to focus on Internet access as a diplomatic and development priority. And it states clearly that expanding Internet access, especially in the developing world, is an American foreign policy priority.

So I am glad to support this measure. I thank the chairman for all his hard work.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. BASS).

Ms. BASS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5537, the Digital Global Access Policy Act or the Digital GAP Act. I commend Chairman ROYCE's timely piece of legislation, which aims to facilitate greater coordination between the U.S. and foreign governments, international organizations, regional economic communities, businesses, and civil society regarding the promotion of information technology and cybersecurity in developing economies.

The focus of the critical IT sector, particularly in developing countries, is the goal of not only Chairman ROYCE's Digital GAP bill but also of a possible companion bill in the Senate sponsored last year by Senator MARKEY.

I understand that Senator MARKEY plans to reintroduce his bill in the Senate, and it is my hope that we can work with the Senate in support of this legislation. Both bills address the critical issue of the U.S. working with developing economies on the core issue of information technology and cybersecurity.

In many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, the information technology sector has literally taken off and enabled young, innovative, and talented entrepreneurs to develop IT-related solutions to everyday problems.

Last summer, I traveled with Senator MARKEY and Representative MALONEY to Nigeria and Senegal where we met with a number of local IT experts. What was clear from our in-depth discussions is that Internet access has quickly become a critical component of economies and economic growth throughout the developing world.

Many developing economies, which have traditionally had to navigate institutional or infrastructural impediments, are able to utilize information technology to resolve everyday problems. Case in point, telephone land lines in some developing economies are often in need of constant repair and maintenance. As a result, over the years, land lines became the preserve of the middle class and affluent sectors of capital cities.

This is no longer the case because astute entrepreneurs have found a way to circumvent this impediment by buying and/or renting out cell phones for public use. Today, in just about any country you visit in Sub-Saharan Africa, you will see countless men, women, and children using cell phones.

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

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California.

Ms. BASS. On our codel, our visit to Senegal included a meeting with the CEO of Wari, an 8-year-old company providing an innovative platform offering convenient service and an aggregation of products and services of various partners. Wari has over 220 million users of the platform throughout 40 countries.

We also met with the director of Millennium Connect Africa. Formerly with Hughes Satellite Systems, Mr. Diop was educated at Wharton and UCLA and worked in the U.S. for 20 years. His company is a subsidiary of Wari.

In Kenya, IT entrepreneurs have excelled in the development of a host of innovative apps. For example, a young Kenyan innovator developed an app called iCow to better enable dairy farmers to keep current with market prices.

Throughout Sub-Saharan Africa, there are many examples of IT expertise. The importance of an IT-literate population complements the ongoing push for capability training.

To the degree the U.S. Government can actively participate in this important process is to the mutual benefit of this country and a spectrum of developing countries worldwide.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to reclaim the balance of my time.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California has 17 minutes remaining.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

In closing, when we talk about the world becoming more interconnected, one of the main drivers of that trend is the Internet. Our enemies have taken advantage of this tool for destructive purposes. As we push back against that threat, our foreign policy should also help as many people as possible to use this tool in a positive way.

So this bill, again, helps move us in the right direction. I want to, again, say I am grateful to Chairman ROYCE for bringing it forward.

I am glad to support this bill, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say, as the author of this bill, it does take a lot of work, a lot of research, to put together legislation like this. And I did want to thank Joan Condon of the staff, and I wanted to thank Jessica Kelch, certainly Margot Sullivan, and Taylor Clausen for their efforts here.

I think that as you get involved in this legislation and you see some of the lost opportunities in the past—I would just give one example. NetHope, an NGO, made a compelling case for this build-once policy that this puts in place.

It was several years ago, as they explained, and ELIOT ENGEL and I have been out to Liberia. There was a $100 million project for a road where there is no Internet use, and there is very little across Liberia. Had the donors had the foresight to just invite the private sector to lay the fiber-optic cable under that road while it was being constructed—and, as you know, you do that at a fraction of the cost. That is when they want to lay the cable—the cost would have been 1 percent of the total investment. It would have been $1 million.

But what is the consequence of that lack of foresight?

You fast forward to 2014. I will tell you the consequences. Ebola ravaged Liberia, 10,000 people over the course of a single year; it crossed international borders, finally included the United States. There was a reason why the information did not get out, and that reason was because there was not Internet access in this region across Liberia, which was the same region where they would have put the Internet access. That is what physicians tell us.

It is not a surprise that experts agree that the lack of Internet infrastructure hampered Ebola response efforts, according to the physicians, as donors and community health centers struggled to track the disease. They could not even coordinate their efforts, for those of you who remember that struggle.

Now, all of a sudden there is renewed interest in improving the Internet architecture in Liberia, and now we find that the cost is so many, many, many multiples of what it had been had this bill been law, and that we had simply let those know in industry that that opportunity was there to lay that cable back when the road was originally being built.

So we need this build-once strategy. We have got to have smart development. We can do better. We will. And I urge the Members to support this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, as the House considers this legislation, I stand in support of expanding Internet access around the globe. In this fast growing and ever changing world, the gap between those who have and have not will be made even more dramatic for those without internet access. Internet access is a valuable commodity that helps millions of lives, and everyone should have access to it.

In the 21st century, one thing is crystal clear: Access to the internet is critical. 4.2 billion people worldwide don't have access to the internet. This includes children starting school, young women starting businesses, and communities looking for ways to compete in the global market.

Women are particularly impacted and left behind, something that shouldn't go unnoticed by this body. UNICEF reports that nearly 90% of the income women bring in is reinvested into their family, more than double what men reinvest. Women build up their communities, and we must do whatever we can to ensure they have the resources necessary to succeed.

Not only will this bill reach those women who live in the dark without web services, it will promote the rights and values that make America exceptional. The freedoms of expression and assembly are fundamental rights, and the Internet can be a critical medium for promoting democracy. A report by the McKinsey Global Institute put it best when it said "The Internet has fundamentally empowered the consumer [. . .] It saves the consumer time and gives customers access to products." In this great body, I hope we continue to stand for democracy, its values, and support those who wish to stand up for their rights.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 600.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

Motion to recommit on H.R. 7, by the yeas and nays, and passage of H.R. 7, if ordered.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. The second electronic vote will be conducted as a 5-minute vote.

NO TAXPAYER FUNDING FOR ABORTION AND ABORTION INSURANCE FULL DISCLOSURE ACT OF 2017

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to recommit on the bill (H.R. 7) to prohibit taxpayer funded abortions, offered by the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY), on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk will redesignate the motion.

The Clerk redesignated the motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 187, nays 235, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 64]

YEAS—187

Adams	Barragán	Beatty
Aguilar	Bass	Bera
Beyer	Green, Al	O'Halleran
Bishop (GA)	Green, Gene	O'Rourke
Blunt Rochester	Grijalva	Pallone
Bonamici	Gutiérrez	Panetta
Boyle, Brendan F.	Hanabusa	Pascrell
	Hastings	Payne
Brady (PA)	Heck	Pelosi
Brown (MD)	Higgins (NY)	Perlmutter
Brownley (CA)	Himes	Peters
Bustos	Hoyer	Peterson
Butterfield	Huffman	Pingree
Capuano	Jackson Lee	Pocan
Carbajal	Jayapal	Polis
Cárdenas	Jeffries	Price (NC)
Carson (IN)	Johnson (GA)	Quigley
Cartwright	Kaptur	Raskin
Castor (FL)	Keating	Rice (NY)
Castro (TX)	Kelly (IL)	Richmond
Chu, Judy	Kennedy	Rosen
Cicilline	Khanna	Roybal-Allard
Clark (MA)	Kihuen	Ruiz
Clarke (NY)	Kildee	Ruppersberger
Clay	Kilmer	Ryan (OH)
Cleaver	Kind	Sánchez
Clyburn	Krishnamoorthi	Sarbanes
Cohen	Kuster (NH)	Schakowsky
Connolly	Langevin	Schiff
Conyers	Larsen (WA)	Schneider
Cooper	Larson (CT)	Schrader
Correa	Lawrence	Scott (VA)
Courtney	Lawson (FL)	Scott, David
Crist	Lee	Serrano
Crowley	Levin	Sewell (AL)
Cuellar	Lewis (GA)	Shea-Porter
Cummings	Lieu, Ted	Sherman
Davis (CA)	Lipinski	Sinema
Davis, Danny	Loebsack	Sires
DeFazio	Lofgren	Smith (WA)
DeGette	Lowenthal	Soto
Delaney	Lowey	Speier
DeLauro	Lujan Grisham, M.	Suozzi
DelBene		Swalwell (CA)
Demings	Luján, Ben Ray	Takano
DeSaulnier	Lynch	Thompson (CA)
Deutch	Maloney, Carolyn B.	Thompson (MS)
Dingell		Titus
Doggett	Maloney, Sean	Tonko
Doyle, Michael F.	Matsui	Torres
	McCollum	Tsongas
Ellison	McEachin	Vargas
Engel	McGovern	Veasey
Eshoo	McNerney	Vela
Espaillat	Meeks	Velázquez
Esty	Meng	Visclosky
Evans	Moore	Walz
Foster	Moulton	Wasserman Schultz
Frankel (FL)	Murphy (FL)	
Fudge	Nadler	Waters, Maxine
Gallego	Napolitano	Watson Coleman
Garamendi	Neal	Welch
Gonzalez (TX)	Nolan	Wilson (FL)
Gottheimer	Norcross	Yarmuth

NAYS—235

Abraham	Chabot	Fortenberry
Aderholt	Chaffetz	Foxx
Allen	Cheney	Franks (AZ)
Amash	Coffman	Frelinghuysen
Amodei	Cole	Gaetz
Arrington	Collins (GA)	Gallagher
Babin	Collins (NY)	Garrett
Bacon	Comer	Gibbs
Banks (IN)	Comstock	Gohmert
Barletta	Conaway	Goodlatte
Barr	Cook	Gosar
Barton	Costello (PA)	Gowdy
Bergman	Cramer	Granger
Biggs	Crawford	Graves (GA)
Bilirakis	Culberson	Graves (LA)
Bishop (MI)	Curbelo (FL)	Graves (MO)
Bishop (UT)	Davidson	Griffith
Black	Davis, Rodney	Grothman
Blackburn	Denham	Guthrie
Blum	Dent	Harper
Bost	DeSantis	Harris
Brady (TX)	DesJarlais	Hartzler
Brat	Diaz-Balart	Hensarling
Bridenstine	Donovan	Herrera Beutler
Brooks (AL)	Duffy	Hice, Jody B.
Brooks (IN)	Duncan (SC)	Higgins (LA)
Buchanan	Duncan (TN)	Hill
Buck	Dunn	Holding
Bucshon	Emmer	Hollingsworth
Budd	Farenthold	Hudson
Burgess	Faso	Huizenga
Byrne	Ferguson	Hultgren
Calvert	Fitzpatrick	Hunter
Carter (GA)	Fleischmann	Hurd
Carter (TX)	Flores	Issa

Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger
Knight
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Lewis (MN)
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Marshall
Massie
Mast
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Murphy (PA)
Newhouse
Noem
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Posey
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (SC)
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney, Francis
Rooney, Thomas J.
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce (CA)
Russell
Rutherford
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smucker
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NOT VOTING—10

Blumenauer
Costa
Gabbard
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Mulvaney
Price, Tom (GA)
Rush
Slaughter
Zinke

□ 1640

Messrs. TURNER, MOONEY of West Virginia, SANFORD, BRADY of Texas, YOUNG of Alaska, BILIRAKIS, SHIMKUS, CHABOT, and WALDEN changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Mr. SUOZZI, Ms. JAYAPAL, and Mr. CONNOLLY changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. WAGNER). The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Ms. DEGETTE. Madam Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 238, noes 183, not voting 11, as follows:

[Roll No. 65]

AYES—238

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Banks (IN)
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bergman
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Budd
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Cheney
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comer
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Cuellar
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davidson
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Dunn
Emmer
Farenthold
Faso
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flores
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garrett
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guthrie
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Holding
Hollingsworth
Hudson
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger
Knight
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Lewis (MN)
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Marshall
Massie
Mast
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Murphy (PA)
Newhouse
Noem
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Pittenger
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Posey
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (SC)
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney, Francis
Rooney, Thomas J.
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce (CA)
Russell
Rutherford
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smucker
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NOES—183

Adams
Aguilar
Barragán
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (MD)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capuano
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Correa
Courtney
Crist
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Espaillat
Esty
Evans
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gallego
Garamendi
Gonzalez (TX)
Gottheimer
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hanabusa
Hastings
Heck
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Hoyer
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Halleran
O'Rourke
Pallone
Panetta
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Rosen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Smith (WA)
Soto
Speier
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—11

Blumenauer
Costa
Gabbard
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Lieu, Ted
Mulvaney
Price, Tom (GA)
Rush
Slaughter
Zinke

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1648

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and missed rollcall vote numbers 62, 63, 64, and 65. Had I been present, I would have voted ''no'' on vote numbers 62, 63, and 65. I would have voted ''aye'' on vote number 64.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I was unable to vote during the following rollcall votes. Had I been present, I would have voted: ''No'' on rollcall 62, Motion on Ordering the Previous Question on the Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 7. ''No'' on rollcall 63, Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 7—No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion and Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act of 2017. ''Yea'' on rollcall 64, on Democratic Motion to Recommit H.R. 7. ''No'' on rollcall 65, Passage of H.R. 7—No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion and Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act of 2017.

ELECTING MEMBERS TO CERTAIN STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. CROWLEY. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Democratic Caucus, I offer a privileged resolution and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 59

Resolved, That the following named Members be and are hereby elected to the following standing committees of the House of Representatives:

(1) COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE.—Ms. Shea-Porter and Mr. Espaillat.

(2) COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS.—Mr. Lawson of Florida.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ADJOURNMENT FROM TUESDAY, JANUARY 24, 2017, TO FRIDAY, JANUARY 27, 2017; AND ADJOURNMENT FROM FRIDAY, JANUARY 27, 2017, TO MONDAY, JANUARY 30, 2017

Mr. ROYCE of California. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 2 p.m. on Friday, January 27, 2017; and further, when the House adjourns on that day, it adjourn to meet on Monday, January 30, 2017, when it shall convene at noon for morning-hour debate and 2 p.m. for legislative business.

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

There was no objection.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on the additional motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record vote on the postponed question will be taken later.

REINFORCING EDUCATION ACCOUNTABILITY IN DEVELOPMENT ACT

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 601) to enhance the transparency and accelerate the impact of assistance provided under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to promote quality basic education in developing countries, to better enable such countries to achieve universal access to quality basic education and improved learning outcomes, to eliminate duplication and waste, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 601

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Reinforcing Education Accountability in Development Act'' or the ''READ Act''.

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

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
Sec. 2. Definitions.
Sec. 3. Assistance to promote sustainable, quality basic education.
Sec. 4. Comprehensive integrated United States strategy to promote basic education.
Sec. 5. Improving coordination and oversight.
Sec. 6. Monitoring and evaluation of programs.
Sec. 7. Transparency and reporting to Congress.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

(a) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—In this Act, the term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(1) the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate;

(2) the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate;

(3) the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives; and

(4) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives.

(b) OTHER DEFINITIONS.—In this Act, the terms ''basic education'', ''marginalized children and vulnerable groups'', ''national education plan'', ''partner country'', and ''relevant Executive branch agencies and officials'' have the meanings given such terms in section 105(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as added by section 3.

SEC. 3. ASSISTANCE TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE, QUALITY BASIC EDUCATION.

Section 105 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151c) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(c) ASSISTANCE TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE, QUALITY BASIC EDUCATION.—

''(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

''(A) BASIC EDUCATION.—The term 'basic education' includes—

''(i) measurable improvements in literacy, numeracy, and other basic skills development that prepare an individual to be an active, productive member of society and the workforce;

''(ii) workforce development, vocational training, and digital literacy informed by real market needs and opportunities and that results in measurable improvements in employment;

''(iii) programs and activities designed to demonstrably improve—

''(I) early childhood, preprimary education, primary education, and secondary education, which can be delivered in formal or nonformal education settings; and

''(II) learning for out-of-school youth and adults; and

''(iv) capacity building for teachers, administrators, counselors, and youth workers that results in measurable improvements in student literacy, numeracy, or employment.

''(B) COMMUNITIES OF LEARNING.—The term 'communities of learning' means a holistic approach to education and community engagement in which schools act as the primary resource center for delivery of a service to the community at large, leveraging and maximizing the impact of other development efforts and reducing duplication and waste.

''(C) GENDER PARITY IN BASIC EDUCATION.—The term 'gender parity in basic education' means that girls and boys have equal access to quality basic education.

''(D) MARGINALIZED CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE GROUPS.—The term 'marginalized children and vulnerable groups' includes girls, children affected by or emerging from armed conflict or humanitarian crises, children with disabilities, children in remote or rural areas (including those who lack access to safe water and sanitation), religious or ethnic minorities, indigenous peoples, orphans and children affected by HIV/AIDS, child laborers, married adolescents, and victims of trafficking.

''(E) NATIONAL EDUCATION PLAN.—The term 'national education plan' means a comprehensive national education plan developed by partner country governments in consultation with other stakeholders as a means for wide-scale improvement of the country's education system, including explicit, credible strategies informed by effective practices and standards to achieve quality universal basic education.

''(F) NONFORMAL EDUCATION.—The term 'nonformal education' means organized educational activities outside the established formal system, whether operating separately or as an important feature of a broader activity, that are intended to provide students with measurable improvements in literacy, numeracy, and other basic skills development that prepare an individual to be an active, productive member of society and the workforce.

''(G) PARTNER COUNTRY.—The term 'partner country' means a developing country that participates in or benefits from basic education programs under this subsection pursuant to the prioritization criteria described in paragraph (4), including level of need, opportunity for impact, and the availability of resources.

''(H) RELEVANT EXECUTIVE BRANCH AGENCIES AND OFFICIALS.—The term 'relevant Executive branch agencies and officials' means the Department of State, the United States Agency for International Development, the Department of the Treasury, the Department of Labor, the Department of Education, the Department of Agriculture, and the Department of Defense, the Chief Executive Officer of the Millennium Challenge Corporation, the National Security Advisor, and the Director of the Peace Corps.

''(I) SUSTAINABILITY.—The term 'sustainability' means, with respect to any basic education program that receives funding pursuant to this section, the ability of a service delivery system, community, partner, or beneficiary to maintain, over time, such basic education program without the use of foreign assistance.

''(2) POLICY.—In carrying out this section, it shall be the policy of the United States to work with partner countries, as appropriate, other donors, multilateral institutions, the private sector, and nongovernmental and civil society organizations, including faith-based organizations and organizations that represent teachers, students, and parents, to promote sustainable, quality basic education through programs and activities that—

''(A) take into consideration and help respond to the needs, capacities, and commitment of developing countries to achieve measurable improvements in literacy, numeracy, and other basic skills development that prepare an individual to be an active, productive member of society and the workforce;

''(B) strengthen educational systems, promote communities of learning, as appropriate, expand access to safe learning environments, including by breaking down specific barriers to basic education for women and girls, ensure continuity of education, including in conflict settings, measurably improve teacher skills and learning outcomes, and support the engagement of parents in the education of their children to help partner countries ensure that all children, including marginalized children and other vulnerable groups, have access to and benefit from quality basic education;

''(C) promote education as a foundation for sustained economic growth and development within a comprehensive assistance strategy that places partner countries on a trajectory

toward graduation from assistance provided under this section with clearly defined benchmarks of success that are used as requirements for related procurement vehicles, such as grants, contracts, and cooperative agreements; and

''(D) monitor and evaluate the effectiveness and quality of basic education programs in partner countries.

''(3) PRINCIPLES.—In carrying out the policy referred to in paragraph (2), the United States shall be guided by the following principles of aid effectiveness:

''(A) ALIGNMENT.—Assistance provided under this section to support programs and activities under this subsection shall be aligned with and advance United States foreign policy and economic interests.

''(B) COUNTRY OWNERSHIP.—To the greatest extent practicable, assistance provided under this section to support programs and activities under this subsection should be aligned with and support the national education plans and country development strategies of partner countries, including activities that are appropriate for and meet the needs of local and indigenous cultures.

''(C) COORDINATION.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—Assistance provided under this section to support programs and activities under this subsection should be coordinated with and leverage the unique capabilities and resources of local and national governments in partner countries, other donors, multilateral institutions, the private sector, and nongovernmental and civil society organizations, including faith-based organizations and organizations that represent teachers, students, and parents.

''(ii) MULTILATERAL PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES.—Assistance provided under this section to support programs and activities under this subsection should be coordinated with and support proven multilateral education programs and financing mechanisms, which may include the Global Partnership for Education, that demonstrate commitment to efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, and accountability.

''(D) EFFICIENCY.—The President shall seek to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of assistance provided under this section to support programs and activities under this subsection by coordinating the related efforts of relevant Executive branch agencies and officials.

''(E) EFFECTIVENESS.—Programs and activities supported under this subsection—

''(i) shall be consistent with the policies and principles set forth in this subsection;

''(ii) shall be designed to achieve specific, measurable goals and objectives that are directly related to the provision of basic education (as defined in this section); and

''(iii) shall include appropriate targets, metrics, and indicators that—

''(I) move a country along the path to graduation from assistance provided under this subsection; and

''(II) can be applied with reasonable consistency across such programs and activities to measure progress and outcomes.

''(F) TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY.—Programs and activities supported under this subsection shall be subject to rigorous monitoring and evaluation, which may include impact evaluations, the results of which shall be made publically available in a fully searchable, electronic format.

''(4) PRIORITY AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS.—The President shall ensure that assistance provided under this section to support programs and activities under this subsection is aligned with the foreign policy and economic interests of the United States and, subject to such alignment, priority is given to developing countries in which—

''(A) there is the greatest need and opportunity to expand access to basic education and to improve learning outcomes, including for marginalized and vulnerable groups, particularly women and girls to ensure gender parity in basic education, or populations affected by conflict or crisis; and

''(B) such assistance can produce a substantial, measurable impact on children and educational systems.''.

SEC. 4. COMPREHENSIVE INTEGRATED UNITED STATES STRATEGY TO PROMOTE BASIC EDUCATION.

(a) STRATEGY REQUIRED.—Not later than October 1, 2017, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a comprehensive United States strategy to be carried out during fiscal years 2018 through 2022 to promote quality basic education in partner countries by—

(1) seeking to equitably expand access to basic education for all children, particularly marginalized children and vulnerable groups; and

(2) measurably improving the quality of basic education and learning outcomes.

(b) REQUIREMENT TO CONSULT.—In developing the strategy required under subsection (a), the President shall consult with—

(1) the appropriate congressional committees;

(2) relevant Executive branch agencies and officials;

(3) partner country governments; and

(4) local and international nongovernmental organizations, including faith-based organizations and organizations representing students, teachers, and parents, and other development partners engaged in basic education assistance programs in developing countries.

(c) PUBLIC COMMENT.—The President shall provide an opportunity for public comment on the strategy required under subsection (a).

(d) ELEMENTS.—The strategy required under subsection (a)—

(1) shall be developed and implemented consistent with the principles set forth in section 105(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as added by section 3; and

(2) shall seek—

(A) to prioritize assistance provided under this subsection to countries that are partners of the United States and whose populations are most in need of improved basic education, as determined by indicators such as literacy and numeracy rates;

(B) to build the capacity of relevant actors in partner countries, including in government and in civil society, to develop and implement national education plans that measurably improve basic education;

(C) to identify and replicate successful interventions that improve access to and quality of basic education in conflict settings and in partner countries;

(D) to project general levels of resources needed to achieve stated program objectives;

(E) to develop means to track implementation in partner countries and ensure that such countries are expending appropriate domestic resources and instituting any relevant legal, regulatory, or institutional reforms needed to achieve stated program objectives;

(F) to leverage United States capabilities, including through technical assistance, training, and research; and

(G) to improve coordination and reduce duplication among relevant Executive branch agencies and officials, other donors, multilateral institutions, nongovernmental organizations, and governments in partner countries.

SEC. 5. IMPROVING COORDINATION AND OVERSIGHT.

(a) SENIOR COORDINATOR OF UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL BASIC EDUCATION ASSISTANCE.—There is established within the United States Agency for International Development a Senior Coordinator of United States International Basic Education Assistance (referred to in this section as the ''Senior Coordinator''). The Senior Coordinator shall be appointed by the President, shall be a current USAID employee serving in a career or noncareer position in the Senior Executive Service or at the level of a Deputy Assistant Administrator or higher, and shall serve concurrently as the Senior Coordinator.

(b) DUTIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Senior Coordinator shall have primary responsibility for the oversight and coordination of all resources and activities of the United States Government relating to the promotion of international basic education programs and activities.

(2) SPECIFIC DUTIES.—The Senior Coordinator shall—

(A) facilitate program and policy coordination of international basic education programs and activities among relevant Executive branch agencies and officials, partner governments, multilateral institutions, the private sector, and nongovernmental and civil society organizations;

(B) develop and revise the strategy required under section 4;

(C) monitor, evaluate, and report on activities undertaken pursuant to the strategy required under section 4; and

(D) establish due diligence criteria for all recipients of funds provided by the United States to carry out activities under this Act and the amendments made by this Act.

(c) OFFSET.—In order to eliminate duplication of effort and activities and to offset any costs incurred by the United States Agency for International Development in appointing the Senior Coordinator under subsection (a), the President shall, after consulting with appropriate congressional committees, eliminate a position within the United States Agency for International Development (unless otherwise authorized or required by law) that the President determines to be necessary to fully offset such costs and eliminate duplication.

SEC. 6. MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF PROGRAMS.

The President shall seek to ensure that programs carried out under the strategy required under section 4 shall—

(1) apply rigorous monitoring and evaluation methodologies to determine if programs and activities provided under this subsection accomplish measurable improvements in literacy, numeracy, or other basic skills development that prepare an individual to be an active, productive member of society and the workforce;

(2) include methodological guidance in the implementation plan and support systemic data collection using internationally comparable indicators, norms, and methodologies, to the extent practicable and appropriate;

(3) disaggregate all data collected and reported by age, gender, marital status, disability, and location, to the extent practicable and appropriate;

(4) include funding for both short- and long-term monitoring and evaluation to enable assessment of the sustainability and scalability of assistance programs; and

(5) support the increased use and public availability of education data for improved decision making, program effectiveness, and monitoring of global progress.

SEC. 7. TRANSPARENCY AND REPORTING TO CONGRESS.

(a) ANNUAL REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGY.—Not later than each

March 31 immediately following a fiscal year during which the strategy developed pursuant to section 4(a) was carried out, the President shall—

(1) submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees that describes the implementation of such strategy; and

(2) make the report described in paragraph (1) available to the public.

(b) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—The report required under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) a description of the efforts made by relevant Executive branch agencies and officials to implement the strategy developed pursuant to section 4, with a particular focus on the activities carried out under the strategy;

(2) a description of the extent to which each partner country selected to receive assistance for basic education meets the priority criteria specified in section 105(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act, as added by section 3; and

(3) a description of the progress achieved over the reporting period toward meeting the goals, objectives, benchmarks, and timeframes specified in the strategy developed pursuant to section 4 at the program level, as developed pursuant to monitoring and evaluation specified in section 6, with particular emphasis on whether there are demonstrable student improvements in literacy, numeracy, or other basic skills development that prepare an individual to be an active, productive member of society and the workforce.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. YODER). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include any extraneous material in the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 601, the Reinforcing Education Accountability and Development Act, or the READ Act. This bill passed the House at the end of the last Congress in essentially the same form as H.R. 4481. I am pleased the House has moved to take it up again today.

We all recognize the importance of education as a driver of economic growth, social mobility, and overall stability. Education is what increases the productivity of the workforce. This is what empowers men and women to better care for themselves and their families. It increases civic participation.

Even 1 extra year of schooling significantly increases a worker's earnings over her or his lifespan. For women in particular, a primary school education is directly correlated very strongly with improved maternal-child health and improved survival rates.

Yet, around the world, as we know here, there are 120 million children that are not in school. More than one-third of these children, as NITA LOWEY can testify, come from countries that are embroiled in war, embroiled in conflict, and many of these recent conflicts have lasted for over a decade.

We are now seeing entire generations of these young children who are failing to receive even the most basic education.

You want to talk about a humanitarian crisis?

This is it. There are clear implications for global stability and for our security.

When children remain out of school, what do they face?

Well, certainly great increased risk of abuse at the hands of traffickers, forced marriage or marriage as a child bride, and recruitment by criminal or terrorist organizations.

Nowhere is this harsh reality more clear than in Syria, where 4 million Syrian children are currently out of school. We have had the opportunity to talk to many of these children on the border and see what their circumstances are like.

Inside Syria, these children are being shaped by violence and by a lack of alternatives that place them at high risk of exploitation and radicalization. As refugees—if you talk to our friends and allies in the region—they are placing tremendous strain on the education system in Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey.

Despite these growing challenges, it has been decades since Congress reviewed and updated the authorities on which U.S. international basic education efforts are based.

This bill, the READ Act, introduces the new guidelines and the increased accountability for existing U.S. efforts to improve access to basic education in developing and conflict-torn countries. It requires strategic planning. It requires the prioritization of resources relative to needs on the ground in these countries and relative to the potential for impact. It requires alignment with U.S. diplomatic development and security interests.

Particular emphasis is given to those areas in crisis and those countries that are partners of the United States that face this critical challenge, whose populations are most in need, who have committed their own resources to ensure the success and sustainability of these efforts, but need our assistance.

It also requires increased attention to what is most important here, and that is to the specific barriers to education that are faced by women and girls.

The bill formalizes a senior coordinator position within USAID to oversee the development and implementation of a strategic plan across Federal agencies to ensure coordination and eliminate duplication and waste.

I thank Representative LOWEY for her continued bipartisan leadership on this issue, as well as my committee's ranking member, Mr. ENGEL, and the chair of our Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations, Mr. SMITH, for their work on this legislation.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this legislation.

Again, I thank our chairman, ED ROYCE, for his leadership and working together.

I want to acknowledge my good friend from New York (Mrs. LOWEY), who authored this bill. For years and years, she has been a champion for access to education here in the United States and around the world.

Like the other bills before us today, we passed this legislation in the last Congress. I am glad we are taking it up so early this year so that, hopefully, the Senate can act.

Mr. Speaker, research tells us that more than a quarter billion young people around the world are not in school. For millions more, the educational opportunities are substandard. This lack of access puts so many young people at a tremendous disadvantage. Children should be in classrooms. They should be aspiring to their highest potential, thinking about what they want to be when they grow up.

□ 1700

The payoff of a few years of quality education is huge. Every year of primary school increases an individual's earning potential by 5 to 15 percent. It is not just those students who reap the benefits, it is really all of us.

Consider public health and economics. More educated populations are healthier and more productive. Consider threats to our security. In places like Afghanistan and South Sudan, where roughly half of children are not in school, we know that violent extremists and others are ready to fill the vacuum, leading these vulnerable young people down a dark, dark path. Research has also told us that in high-risk places like Somalia, where young people can learn about certain issues like nonviolent civic engagement, participation in violence drops by 14 percent and support for violence drops by 20 percent.

That is why education needs to be a foreign policy priority and why we need to be very careful as a new administration urges to make major changes in America's foreign assistance. This legislation calls for a 5-year strategy for expanding opportunities for kids to go to school all over the world, especially where children are most vulnerable. It would put a new point person in charge of making sure that our efforts across government are coordinated and effective, and it would place a special emphasis on monitoring and evaluation so that we know we are getting the best bang for the buck when it comes to our investments in basic education.

This bill would help to put children in classrooms around the world. It would give more young people a better shot at a full and successful life. I am proud to support it. I commend Mrs. LOWEY.

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

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. LOWEY), the author of this bill.

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in full support of bipartisan legislation that would increase transparency and congressional oversight of U.S. basic education programs around the world.

H.R. 601, the Reinforcing Education Accountability in Development—READ—Act, which I introduced with my colleague, Representative David Reichert, would elevate the importance of education while improving USAID's efforts and ensuring that taxpayer dollars are well spent.

The challenge is clear. Nearly 60 million primary school-age children and 65 million adolescents are out of school around the world. Millions more are expected to never enroll. Women and girls are disproportionately out of school. The United States has a clear moral, economic, and security interest in promoting universal basic education as a fundamental human right.

The bill before us today enhances Congress' oversight of USAID's work with foreign governments, NGOs, and multilateral organizations to help nations develop and implement quality programs, address key barriers to school attendance, and increase completion rates for the poorest and most vulnerable children worldwide. It calls on USAID to develop a comprehensive strategy and appoint a senior coordinator tasked with ensuring that our programs expand access to millions of children who are not in school and improve the quality of education for millions who are.

These efforts will not only help students read and write, they will ultimately help protect vulnerable children from poverty, disease, hunger, and even extremism.

There is no greater force multiplier than education. An education is the fundamental tool with which girls and boys are empowered to increase their economic potential, improve their health outcomes, provide for their families, address cultural biases, participate in their communities, and contribute to democratic societies.

First introduced in 2004 and passed by the House last year, the bill before us today represents many years of hard work to elevate the importance of global education, bipartisan compromise, and the support of over 30 nonprofit and advocacy organizations, including RESULTS, the ONE Campaign, the Basic Education Coalition, the Global Campaign for Education, Global Citizen, the Malala Fund, and many other vital partners.

In closing, I thank Chairman ROYCE, Ranking Member ENGEL, their hard-working staff—Joan, Jessica, Janice, and Mark, and, of course, Marin Stein, who has been working around the clock on this bill.

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

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentlewoman.

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank them all. We have been working on this bill a very long time. I, again, thank Chairman ROYCE for his leadership and Ranking Member ENGEL. Their diligent efforts to bring the READ Act before the House today is so vital, and I urge immediate passage. In closing, thanks again to Marin Stein.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

In closing, I read a few weeks ago that the new administration was planning to retool the State Department to focus more on terrorism. The article suggested that the State Department might do away with some of our smart power efforts. That would be a mistake. I look at an effort like this one, expanding access to education, and I know that it isn't taking away from our ability to combat terrorism. In fact, it is critical to that fight.

When we help more young people get access to a good education, we are giving them the tools to think critically and resist those who mean us harm. We are helping give people an alternative, a path forward for their lives.

When kids don't have these skills, who do you think shows up? When children are told from a young age, with no competing message, that America is their enemy, how does that shape their lives?

So I hope that this bill gets to the new President's desk and that he sees the value not just in expanding access to education, but in the wide range of foreign policy priorities that help to project stability and make communities stronger, that show the world that the United States is a friend and a partner, and not an enemy.

Again, I thank Congresswoman LOWEY for her hard work. I thank Chairman ROYCE for his hard work and collegiality, as always. I support this bill. I urge all Members to do the same.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I concur with those arguments that Mr. ENGEL just made. Congresswoman NITA LOWEY and I have talked about this, and if my colleagues will think on this for a minute, the reality today is that we face a situation where there are 65 million men, women, and children around the globe who have been displaced by conflict. I would just like the Members to think about the fact that this is more people than were displaced during World War II. This is the highest level, highest on record of human beings who have been displaced by conflict. Think about what that means to the children who are those most victimized.

The United States is doing important work around the world, trying to help our allies, trying to help organizations—and there are many good NGOs working on this—to address this massive education deficit that so many of these children face. But Congress, I think, has to demand a greater degree, yes, of transparency and accountability for these activities to ensure our investments are as effective as possible in line with our strategic interests.

There is one more thing that we have to ask of our partners in this, and that is equal access to every young girl for education. That has got to be up there at the top of that priority list.

This Reinforcing Education Accountability in Development Act outlines clear priorities for this work with that emphasis that I talked about and asking those partners to carry out their end of this bargain. This bill also requires aggressive monitoring and evaluation and an annual report that justifies the investment on a country-by-country basis, but holds with it the accountability for the education of girls and for the rest of this work.

I urge Members to support this measure. Again, I thank Representative LOWEY. I thank the rest of the Members who worked on this for working on such a bipartisan basis on its provisions.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 601. As a parent who was very involved in my children's education and served as President of the Southfield Public Schools Board of Education, I firmly believe the importance of promoting education to all regions of the world. Education is a universal human right that should be obtained by every young mind of the world.

Access to basic education is a human right that must be guaranteed to all children. In my role as the Vice Chair of the Bipartisan Congressional Women's Caucus during the 115th Congress, I will work with my colleagues in a bipartisan manner to highlight barriers to basic education, specifically focusing on girls' education in the developing world. Providing girls with an education helps break the cycle of poverty. Educated women are less likely to get married, more likely to have healthy babies, and are more likely to understand the value of education.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation would ensure that aid is prioritized for the most vulnerable populations, particularly those living in conflict zones. We must take the necessary steps to see that these children are provided with the rights to develop their full potential in order to be contributing members of their societies.

The enforcement of this bill will help bridge the gap with some global issues that we still see today with marginalized groups seeking education. Young children, regardless of gender have the right to gain a quality education.

Children with disabilities or illnesses should not be shunned away from trying to learn because they are considered different.

I am grateful that our Chamber has taken this important step to ensure that the United States dedicates our time and resources to helping the future of the world gain an education. I want to thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for their continued support of universal education for all.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 601.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

BENEFITS OF RENEWABLE FUELS

(Mr. YOUNG of Iowa asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak about an issue of great importance to my district and the State of Iowa, renewable fuels.

On January 31, a renewable fuels summit will allow Iowans to gather together and highlight the essential role Iowa plays when it comes to our energy needs.

The renewable fuels industry boasts good-paying jobs for our economy, not only in my State of Iowa, but across the country. Renewable fuels increase choice for consumers and lower prices at the pump. A U.S. Department of Agriculture report also showed how the renewable fuels contribute to reducing emissions and our Nation's reliance on foreign fuels.

This new Congress provides a lot of opportunity to both renewable fuels advocates and opponents. I look forward to engaging in meaningful discussions with my colleagues to inform them of the benefits of renewable fuels: energy independence, good-paying jobs, enhancing national security, environmental benefits, consumer choice with lower prices, and ensuring the strength and history of the family farm.

I will also work with the Trump administration and anyone else to help protect the Renewable Fuels Standard and consumer access to conventional and advanced biofuels. The renewable fuels industry plays such a key role in so many of our Nation's needs.

PRESIDENT TRUMP'S CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge our new President to drain the swamp, to address his own myriad conflicts of interest. President Trump's financial disclosure stated he had a holding of at least $15,000 in Energy Transfer Partners, the lead developer on the Dakota Access Pipeline. We also know he has at least $100,000 invested in Phillips 66, which has a 25 percent stake in the same project. His spokesperson claims he has sold his stake, but how do we know? We still don't have his tax returns.

Additionally, news stories indicate he has a holding in TransCanada, the developer of the Keystone XL pipeline. With the White House's action to push these pipelines forward, I fear that today we have the first of many indications of impropriety and conflict of interest. Without disclosure of his tax returns, Mr. Trump's personal financial interests are a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma. They appear to compromise honorable governance with insider deals.

The President should know the American people are watching, and they do care. The peaceful protests he saw on Saturday are only the beginning if he cannot live up to the ethical requirements of his new office and the legitimate expectations of the American people.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LEWIS of Minnesota). Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

□ 1715

CONGRATULATING CLEMSON UNIVERSITY FOOTBALL TEAM

(Mr. RICE of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RICE of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Clemson University football team on their 2017 national championship.

In a nail-biting rematch of the 2016 national championship game between the Clemson Tigers and the Alabama Crimson Tide, the Tigers came back with something to prove—and boy did they, with their 35–31 win.

While every member of the team played their hearts out, I would like to recognize a very special player who hails from the Seventh District of South Carolina, wide receiver Hunter Renfrow. A native of Horry County and graduate of Socastee High School, Mr. Renfrow has had an outstanding season, catching 44 passes, including 6 touchdowns, for a total of 495 yards this season. He joined the Tigers as a walk-on, earned a scholarship, and last week, with 1 second left, caught the game-winning touchdown in the championship game.

I would also like to extend special congratulations to two of Clemson's finest alumni: my wife, Wrenzie, and my friend, Congressman JEFF DUNCAN. I know few people who take more pride in their alma mater and enjoyed this win as much as they did.

This national title is a win for all of the great State of South Carolina. In fact, two national titles currently reside in South Carolina: the NCAA football championship in Clemson and the NCAA College World Series at Coastal Carolina University.

Congratulations Clemson, and go Tigers.

LET'S WORK TOGETHER TO IMPROVE THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT, NOT END IT

(Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, today, in the House Budget Committee, we heard testimony that, if the repeal mission that our Republican colleagues have been on now for the past 7 years is successful, 29.8 million Americans would lose their health insurance.

Now, Mr. Speaker, keep in mind that, for all of the rhetoric, here are the facts:

Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, we have more people with health insurance today in our country than at any time in our Nation's history. What was once a 16 percent uninsured rate has been cut in half. It is now 8 percent.

Why in the world would we want to throw away that progress?

Now, we hear from the other side repeal and replace, repeal and replace. Well, we have now had 65 votes to repeal the Affordable Care Act, and how many votes have we had on their replace plan? Zero. Not one.

It would be criminal to throw away the progress that has been made through the Affordable Care Act. It is not perfect. No law is. No piece of legislation is. Let's work together to improve it, not end it.

AMERICANS' TAX DOLLARS SHOULD NEVER BE USED TO END THE LIFE OF A CHILD

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

Mr. MOOLENAAR. Mr. Speaker, today, the House voted to end taxpayer support for abortion.

A majority of Americans believe abortion is wrong, and they do not wish to see their tax dollars pay for this gruesome procedure that ends the life of another human being. This legislation permanently puts into law a long-standing policy that has been renewed by Congress every year. It will reassure Americans that the hard-earned money they pay to the government will never be used to fund abortions.

This is necessary because the Affordable Care Act, a law that has been unaffordable for so many Americans, actually paid subsidies for healthcare plans that include abortion. This is unacceptable. A child in a mother's womb is a blessing. Americans expect their tax dollars will never be used to pay to end the life of an innocent child.

Today's legislation will protect taxpayers and, most importantly, our society's most vulnerable—the unborn.

SUPPORT FOR IMMIGRANTS ACROSS OUR COUNTRY

(Ms. JAYAPAL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of immigrants across our country.

As an immigrant myself, I understand the sacrifices and hardships that immigrants experience. My parents sacrificed their very small life savings to send me to the United States at the age of 16 by myself to pursue college. That is why I stayed in my district last Friday to host an immigration roundtable with directly impacted constituents.

Like many of us, Mr. Speaker, they have heard reports that this new administration intends to deport millions of people across our country rather than working towards a comprehensive reform of our immigration system, similar to the one that was passed in the other Chamber with 68 bipartisan votes, unfortunately, never brought to the floor of this Chamber.

I heard from children, Mr. Speaker, afraid to go to school out of fear that their parents will be taken away while they are at school. I heard from people whose lives are still in limbo because they have no idea what is going to happen next.

But despite their fear, they still are ready to stand together and fight for their futures, and their courage and resilience is truly inspiring. We owe it to them to fight alongside them.

TAKE YOUR CRIMINAL ALIENS BACK OR LOSE VISAS

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, illegal Haitian immigrant Jean Jacques spent 17 years in a U.S. prison for attempted murder. After his release, ICE officials tried to deport him, but Haiti would not take him back, so he was let go. Five months later, he murdered Casey Chadwick of Connecticut, brutally stabbing her in the face and neck 15 times.

U.S. law says that illegals who have committed serious crimes will be deported. But if the country of origin won't take their citizen back, they are released back on the streets of America. There are thousands of criminal aliens who have been turned loose on our streets because their home country won't take them back.

I have introduced legislation to fix this. My bill codifies number seven of President Trump's immigration plan, which states that we should ''ensure that other countries take their people back when we order them deported.''

My legislation would prohibit visas for these countries that refuse to take their crooks back. No more American lives like Casey's should be lost because foreign criminals just won't go home.

And that is just the way it is.

DEFENDING CHOICE

(Mr. SCHNEIDER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, 44 years ago this week, the Supreme Court ruled in Roe v. Wade in favor of a woman's right to make her own decisions about her own body. It is outrageous that today, more than four decades later, President Trump and my Republican colleagues have made restricting choice their first order of business.

Yesterday, President Trump signed an executive order banning health organizations that receive U.S. funding from even mentioning abortion as a medical option for their patients. And today, this House is launching a radical assault on women's health care that penalizes women and small businesses that choose private health insurance plans that cover abortion services.

The effect of these unprecedented restrictions is clear: restricting the comprehensive health coverage available for women.

Terminating a pregnancy is a personal choice that should be a woman's alone, made in consultation with her family and her physician. Politicians have no role in this process.

I urge my colleagues to end this backward attack on women's rights and start tackling the real challenges voters sent us here to address.

44TH ANNIVERSARY OF ROE V. WADE

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

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to give voice to the millions of lives that have been lost in the aftermath of Roe v. Wade.

In the 44 years since that disgraceful decision, an unconscionable 58 million abortions have been performed. That represents 58 million children who will never grow up, never make their own decisions, and never influence the world around them, but whose lives are cut short.

The House took a vital step today with the passage of H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion and Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act. I am proud to be a cosponsor of this bill that permanently prohibits taxpayers from funding abortion through the Hyde amendment.

Since its original passage, this amendment has saved over 2 million babies. Congress must make permanent these protections to honor the conscience rights of a strong majority of Americans who do not want their taxpayer dollars paying for abortions.

This week, we gather to mourn the tragic loss of life and to seek God's forgiveness for the stain of abortion on our Nation's conscience.

May God have mercy on our country.

HONORING ROLETTE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPUTY, COLT ALLERY

(Mr. CRAMER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise with a heavy heart to honor the life of Rolette County Sheriff's Deputy Colt Allery. On January 18, Deputy Allery made the ultimate sacrifice when he was shot and killed in the line of duty following a high-speed pursuit of a stolen vehicle near Belcourt, North Dakota. He was only 29 years old.

Mr. Speaker, people from across North Dakota and the country gathered today in Belcourt to pay tribute to Deputy Allery, who has been described by his friends and his colleagues as someone ''full of spunk, cheerful, and always smiling.''

He grew up and lived in St. John, North Dakota, where he dedicated his adult life to selflessly serving and defending his community through a career in law enforcement. In 2011, he became a correctional officer for Rolette County, and later served with the Rolla Police Department and Turtle Mountain Tribal Police Department before joining the Rolette County Sheriff's Office as a deputy, just 3 months ago.

Our State is heartbroken over the loss of another hero taken from us way too soon, and we will never forget Deputy Allery's service and sacrifice in defense of the citizens of North Dakota. My wife, Kris, and I offer our prayers on behalf of Deputy Allery's family, and express our condolences and our profound gratefulness to all police officers who put their lives on the line every day to protect our communities and country.

God bless them, and God bless the memory of Deputy Colt Allery.

SUPPORTING HEAD START

(Mr. YODER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of Head Start, a program which serves many Kansas families and children to be prepared for modern education.

Many supporters of Head Start came to Capitol Hill today to spread a message, which I believe wholeheartedly: everyone should have the opportunity to pursue the American Dream. For so many, that starts with quality education and Head Start.

We know the importance of getting kids exposed to learning at young ages, but many disadvantaged families lack the resources to do this for their own children. Without Head Start, these

children are at risk of falling behind and never catching up.

Mr. Speaker, I believe this issue should unite this Congress. It goes without saying that this is a time of deep divisions in our country. My district encompasses all aspects of American society, from urban to suburban to rural. My constituents have a wide range of beliefs and ideals. Head Start is something that can bridge these divides, and it can help children and communities no matter where they live.

Mr. Speaker, let's build that bridge and let's bring lawmakers from all across the country together in support of these children, in support of Head Start.

MAKE A CHOICE FOR LIFE

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

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, 44 years ago, because of Roe v. Wade, over 58 million children were taken from the chance to utter the words of the psalmist in Psalm 139 when he said:

For you formed my inward parts; you wove me in my mother's womb. I will give thanks to you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; wonderful are your works, and my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was made in secret, and skillfully, wrought in the depths of the Earth; your eyes have seen my unformed substance; and in your book were all written the days that were ordained for me, when as yet there was not one of them.

Mr. Speaker, those lives were lives of children that were created, uniquely formed with a purpose that God only intended. Our Nation did wrong. We can turn from that. We can ask Him to heal our land. And even as the psalmist said:

Behold, children are a gift of the Lord, the fruit of the womb is a reward.

We can again affirm that and say that they should be given a choice—that little girl, that little boy—making a choice for life, and who knows what that would do to impact our world for the good.

□ 1730

WOMEN'S MARCH MESSAGE OF RESPECT AND RESISTANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SOTO) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today wearing this pink scarf in solidarity with so many millions of Americans who rose up this past Saturday, whether it be in D.C., on the West Coast, East Coast, so many cities in the Midwest, as well as those around the world.

It is interesting. My wife and I awoke to chanting of thousands of people. It almost felt like the protest was in our living room. And when we got out on the balcony, we saw thousands of people who were wearing pink hats and carrying signs and so boisterous with hope.

Amanda and I decided we would go down to join them. When we got to the street, it was an amazing scene, with the Capitol ahead of us, and so many folks just gathered together—like-minded—with a message of respect and of resistance. As we tried to get towards the stage as we got to The Mall and about a mile away, we couldn't even get past a wall of bodies of so many people who were there to cheer on the message of so many great speakers.

But we found our way through, eventually, and made it onto the stage. And what I can tell you was just sheerly unimaginable: 17 blocks of Americans, of all States, of all creeds, of all colors, of all backgrounds, who were there with a message.

We had some wonderful speakers that day. We had folks from labor. We had folks from criminal justice reform groups. We had folks who were fighting for reproductive rights. We had many celebrities there, of course, and we also had folks who cared about everything from our economy to agriculture, to equality, to anything you could imagine, so many values that we fought for over the last 8 years.

There is a sense that there is going to be common ground among many of these issues as we go forward.

American jobs, obviously, everybody in this Chamber wants to make sure that we protect Americans and make sure that we have employment for everyone.

We are also going to fight for common infrastructure among all of the 50 States, and that is something that we saw in the Senate the other day that was presented.

We may also have some common ground on tax reform, particularly if it means bringing back from overseas a lot of corporate money that certainly would be important to go through the same process as profits derived here.

But there is certainly, as we saw at the speech of so many people, there will be areas of resistance.

We care about workers' rights. We care about making sure that we have a Department of Labor that will stand on the side of working American families.

We care about having an inclusive economy, one that will respect a higher minimum wage; one that will fight for more high-tech, higher paying jobs; one that will fight for our manufacturing base; one that will be based upon tax cuts for the middle class, tax cuts for folks who are working, everyday Americans, as opposed to trickle-down economics and tax cuts for the wealthy.

It was also about health care and about saving ACA or, at the very least, replacing it with something that is still going to make sure that we don't have 18 million Americans, according to the CBO, losing their health insurance.

It is about making sure that we have a Medicare system that is not going to be block-rented out to the States as a creative way to cut Medicaid for our seniors and for our poor.

It is also about protecting Medicare for our seniors who paid into it through their whole lives and making sure it is not privatized, as well as Social Security, making sure that not only those who are receiving it today, but up to those who are millennials and beyond, will be able to receive that benefit. We all paid into it, and we all expect it to be there.

But it was also about equality. Many of our LGBT community are worried: Are these executive orders in place that are protecting equality in our Federal workforce going to be continued? Is this advance, this progression, this success in the Supreme Court and in so many other areas of society to have equality for the LGBT community going to be continued onward? There is a big doubt about that.

It is also about women's reproductive rights. We saw so many, including Planned Parenthood and so many other groups, who fought not only to protect health care, but to protect women's choice, stand up and say that they don't want to revert back, that they don't want our society to revert back on equal rights for women.

And we saw that today with the reinstatement of the gag rule across the Nation and the world, to encourage nations to prohibit reproductive rights, prohibit the ability to have birth control, prohibit the right to be able to exercise the right to choose.

So many of my fellow Hispanics are worried about immigration. A simple executive order can assure that our DREAMers go from law-abiding students and members of our military and those who are applying in part of this program to being undocumented and being potentially even hunted down by their government. It is about long-term comprehensive immigration policy and reform.

So many from my district, whether it be those who are also Hispanic or those who are from the Caribbean in my district, they care deeply about this. So does our agriculture community, so does our tourism community, so does business in general. These are going to be things that people are going to stand up for, and they certainly stood up for them during the march, along with women's rights, along with equality in general.

Then there is the concern about climate change and how there was a push forward over the last 8 years and there will be an attempt to backtrack.

I don't have to tell everybody, from the way the weather has been working over the last 10 to 15 to 20 years, that this is going to be one of the greatest challenges of our time—and for our kids and for our grandchildren. We do have to do it the right way, but we stood up to make sure that everybody knows we cannot go back.

In addition, Dodd-Frank and financial reform, so critical to preventing another Great Recession. Many of us remember in 2008, in October, when President George W. Bush got on TV and told everyone that we were in for a Great Recession and one that President Obama described as the greatest recession since the Great Depression. There will be an attempt to chip back on those reforms and an attempt to try to get away from the lessons we learned to try to prevent another global meltdown.

And of course criminal justice was critical. So many of our youth, so many Hispanics, so many African Americans, so many people who find themselves in greater proportion than other Americans in jail from a system that sometimes discriminates against them.

All of these folks stood up, millions of Americans stood up, and, yes, we had hats and, yes, we had pink scarfs and, yes, we spoke about the progress that we made in the fight. But in one word, this was about respect. It was about respect for all women across the Nation, all minorities across the Nation, regardless of ethnicity and religion, all Americans, all of our Americans with disabilities, all of our working class folks who are fighting every day to try to make a good living.

The message is clear. The message is clear from the millions of Americans who marched on Saturday that we will be watching, that we will speak up when we see things we disagree with, and when we have to, we will resist.

Those who marched on Saturday, we welcome you to the resistance, and we thank you for your support. It is going to be a long 2 years.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

ROE V. WADE ANNIVERSARY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Indiana, JIM BANKS, as our first speaker tonight, a former State senator in Indiana. He served since 2010, a new Member of the House. He served as chairman of the senate Veterans Affairs and The Military Committee with great distinction, and now he has actually joined the Veterans' Affairs Committee as well as other committees here in the House.

Mr. BANKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of the innocent lives lost as a result of Roe v. Wade.

It has now been 44 years since the Supreme Court made this unconstitutional ruling, and over that period of time, more than 58 million—I repeat, over 58 million—children have had their God-given right to life denied. Every single one of these lives was important and unique, and we grieve this loss.

At the same time, we celebrate the fact that, increasingly, our culture recognizes the value of human life. A poll released last year found that a majority of young Americans support increasing restrictions that protect the unborn. Another recent poll found that 61 percent of Americans oppose using tax dollars to fund abortions in the United States.

I agree with them, and that is why I support the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act that we voted on earlier today. I am pleased that it passed the House, and I urge my colleagues in the Senate to quickly consider this important bill.

But we must not stop there. We must work to ensure that taxpayer dollars do not continue to support the abortion industry, including Planned Parenthood, our Nation's largest abortion provider.

Additionally, we must encourage the new administration to nominate a Justice to the Supreme Court who follows the Constitution and respects the most basic and fundamental right of every human being born and unborn: the right to life.

As a father of three young daughters, these issues are personal for me. During my time in Congress, I will stand up for those who cannot stand up for themselves. I will protect and defend human life and advance these deep- and long-held values upon which our Nation was founded.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. I thank my good friend for his remarks.

I now yield to the distinguished gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX), the chairwoman of the Education and the Workforce Committee, who has been outspoken for years on behalf of the innocent and inconvenient unborn children.

Ms. FOXX. I thank my colleague from New Jersey for his unflagging leadership on the issue of pro-life as well as on other issues related to human rights.

Mr. Speaker, since 1973, as my colleague before me said, at least 58 million children's lives have been tragically taken by abortion in the United States. Over these last 44 years, science has made the facts increasingly clear: the unborn child in his or her mother's womb is a member of the human family, fully alive and simply awaiting the right conditions before joining the rest of us in the world.

Our laws should recognize and uphold the dignity of these unborn children. And thankfully, we have made significant progress in this endeavor since the decision of Roe v. Wade. The Hyde amendment has saved over 2 million lives since 1976, and just earlier today, we passed H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act. This bipartisan legislation makes the Hyde amendment permanent, ensuring that unborn children are better protected and that taxpayers are not forced to fund thousands of abortions each year.

The American people overwhelmingly agree that we should protect innocent lives and that taxpayer dollars should not be used to finance abortions. This Friday, hundreds of thousands of Americans will pour into D.C. from across the country to voice their vision of a world where every human life is valued and protected. As we mourn the lives already lost to abortion, we should continue to strive for better legal protections for the unborn so that one day every unborn child will be able to join us in exercising their rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Once again, thanks to Congressman SMITH for this Special Order.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. I want to thank the distinguished chairwoman of the Education and the Workforce Committee for her kind remarks and again thank her for her leadership for so many years.

I now yield to the gentleman from Arizona, Congressman ANDY BIGGS. While a new Member of the House, he is a very experienced lawmaker, having served 14 years in the Arizona Legislature.

□ 1745

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I have a deep sense of gratitude that I expressed to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) for his effort in promulgating the bill that we passed today, H.R. 7, and allowing me to speak tonight.

On Sunday, we recognized the 44th anniversary of Roe v. Wade. Sadly, almost 60 million American babies have lost their lives because of this ignominious Supreme Court decision. The tide is turning, though.

On Friday, I will have the pleasure of participating in the March for Life rally to stand with the millions of people who are defending life across this country.

I am immensely proud to live in Arizona, a State that prioritizes the protection of the unborn. Since 2009, Arizona has passed 34 provisions to restrict or regulate abortions, and Arizona's abortion rate has concomitantly decreased 12 percent in those same 4 years. I appreciate the efforts of pro-life advocates across my district who have worked tirelessly to help countless women choose life for their unborn babies.

I look forward to working with President Trump and his administration on advancing pro-life legislation like H.R. 7, which we passed out of the House today, and ensuring pro-life candidates for all Supreme Court vacancies and ultimately reversing that ignominious ruling, Roe v. Wade.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Arizona for his leadership in the legislature before. As the gentleman so aptly pointed out, the numbers of abortion come down when even modest restrictions are passed. The law is a great teacher. We are so happy to have the gentleman from Arizona here in

the House, and I know I speak for many of us on the Pro-Life Caucus.

I yield to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HUIZENGA).

Mr. HUIZENGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today and thank the gentleman from New Jersey because nobody has fought longer or harder for the cause of life than this man. I am pleased to be up here because I know we both believe that we represent and rise on behalf of the hundreds of thousands of Americans who are going to come to Washington, D.C., and march here this coming Friday because we believe that giving even one more life, one more person, the right to change the world is worth it.

For the last 6 years, I have come to the well of the House with the gentleman from New Jersey and my colleagues on the bipartisan Pro-Life Caucus to celebrate life and fight for the unborn. On this seventh occasion, I rise with a renewed sense of hope and optimism for our children's future.

I commend President Trump for making one of his very first actions protecting unborn children around the world by preventing U.S. taxpayer dollars being used for foreign aid from being used to fund groups that promote abortion under the guise of family planning.

We can't stop here, however. That is just one step. Now is the time for action. When President Bush restored these protections in 2001, he wrote:

''It is my conviction that taxpayer funds should not be used to pay for abortions or advocate or actively promote abortion, either here or abroad.''

We took step two earlier today when a bipartisan majority of us here in the House voted to extend the Hyde amendment across all government programs and to ensure that no tax dollars from hardworking Americans are used to fund abortions here in the United States.

Let's take additional steps to fight for the ones who don't have a voice. This Congress should protect unborn children from the violence of late-term abortion, protect medical professionals from being coerced to participate in abortions, and protect women from an industry that has put its financial interests first above women's health.

Mr. Speaker, the government does not give us our rights. No. In fact, the government exists to protect our God-given rights that were given to us by our Creator and to protect the next generation. All you have to do is look at those original founding documents and it is easy to see.

Well, we are here tonight for the same reason: that hundreds of thousands will march on Washington this Friday and fight for the rights of that next generation. I am pleased and proud to be able to be a part of that.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Michigan for his eloquence, for his commitment, his passion, and for that steadfastness that will one day yield the result when the unborn are protected in our laws against the violence of abortion. I thank the gentleman from Michigan for participating, but most importantly for his years of service on behalf of his constituents and the unborn.

I now yield to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING).

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the privilege to address you and the privilege to address the House here, and I thank the gentleman from New Jersey for recognizing me to say a few words here.

This week, when we go down to the Mall to March for Life, we will see the tens of thousands of faces, many of them young people, especially young ladies that are there to stand up and defend life.

I hear the debate here on the floor of the House of Representatives, and I have listened to the gentleman who spoke on the Democrat side of this aisle who lamented that there would be 18 million people pushed off of their healthcare if we repeal the Affordable Care Act. If you want to use the technical term, it is named the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, and it is not the right name for it.

It won't be 18 million. It won't be half of that. But to listen to the lament that some people might go without—not health care, that is another misnomer—health insurance for a little while, that is their concern?

Well, we are here talking about more than 58 million little babies—little babies that are created in God's image and formed in the womb, as we heard TIM WALBERG speak a little earlier. They are the love of our lives. I have never known anyone who had a baby in their arms and felt that little baby—that little baby is forming, that little baby cooing, that special little baby smell, to witness the miracle of that little baby, I have never known a mother or a father that said: I wish this child had never been born. But that is what has happened to more than 58 million little miracles.

We are here; we are a moral standard. People say you can't legislate morality. Well, a reflection of morality is in the Federal code, and it is in the State laws all across this land.

The question that doesn't seem to be answered generally by people on the other side of the aisle—and I am grateful for the pro-life Democrats that we have who have joined us year after year.

I would pose the question to those who oppose the pro-life movement: Do you believe that human life is sacred in all of its forms? Is there anybody over there that would deny that, that human life is sacred in all of its forms? Not one of you. Not one of you will stand up and wave your arm and say: let me yield to you and say why that is not true.

It is true. We know. Human life is sacred in all of its forms. Once we understand that—now, you can stipulate that. You have by your silence—that human life is sacred in all of its forms, there is only one other question: Since we have to protect human life in all of its forms then at what moment does life begin? At what moment, ladies and gentlemen?

Well, we know that we can only identify a single moment. As much as we know about biology—and we know plenty—one single moment is the moment of conception. From that moment, it is a unique life with the chromosomes matched up and the DNA that will never change for a lifetime, that unique individual.

Did you ever think that God's creation of us—there are over 7 billion human beings on the planet. Each one of us is created in his image, each one of us is unique. Think of 7 billion faces and no two of them are alike. Every face on the planet is distinct and unique, and it matches up with none of the faces that are in the grave today. And nobody's face matches up with any of the faces that will be born in future years or millennia.

Each face of God's creation is unique. What is the best way we can tell each other apart? Look at the visage of our faces. It is a uniqueness that God created within us that is part of how we interact with each other. It is how we should love each other and appreciate each other and draw those distinctions so that we can respect everyone as having their own unique life.

So you have stipulated that human life is sacred in all of its forms. So the next question I have to ask you is: Well, at what moment does life begin? What moment, what instant does life begin?

If you can pose another instant, another moment, other than conception, I would listen to that. But I am not seeing anybody who wants to step down and say that there is a distinct moment that life begins, other than conception.

So I will make this case again: human life is sacred in all of its forms; you stipulated that. The second is that it begins at the moment of conception. Your silence has stipulated that.

So we have the whole argument wrapped up here, packaged in this today. We need to defend human life in all of its forms. It is God's gift to his creation. It is our obligation to defend it, and we can defend it. We can defend it through legislation as we did today.

We should honor and respect the life of Henry Hyde, who contributed a great deal to this Congress in his lifetime. We are working on the foundation that he has laid down for us, and Representative CHRIS SMITH has assumed much of the role that Henry Hyde played here in this Congress. We each had the privilege to serve with Henry Hyde. His legacy remains, and we have the unique privilege and opportunity to build on it. I suggest we continue to do so in every piece of legislation that we can pass.

We anticipate appointments to the Supreme Court that will honor life and

recognize, also, as our Founding Fathers did when they drafted the Declaration of Independence, that we have a right to life, to liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Don't try to package that up as three equal values. They are not. They are prioritized rights. The right to life supercedes the right to liberty, and the right to liberty supersedes the right to the pursuit of happiness. No one in the pursuit of their happiness can trample on someone's liberties. And no one can claim they have the liberty to take the life of a baby because life is paramount. That is the package. That is the argument that is here. We need young people to grow up with that understanding and those values.

As we stand here tonight, Mr. Speaker, and as we work together in the coming days and months—and I pray it is not years—one day we will see this Nation that respects life from the moment of conception until natural death.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman from Iowa's leadership, which has been over many decades. I want to thank him for his eloquence and his steadfastness. The day will come when the unborn are protected, and he will be a major part of that.

I would also concur with the gentleman from Iowa fully in how much we miss the great Henry Hyde. He was extraordinary. He was irreplaceable. And the fact that his amendment has saved 2 million lives, at least—some estimates put it even higher—is a testimony to his vision, which we now carry on with.

I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT). I again thank him for his outspokenness on behalf of the weakest and most vulnerable.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I am so grateful that Representative CHRIS SMITH is a Member of the United States Congress because of his leadership, because of his enormous heart, and his enormous caring.

It is amazing—those of us who believe in God—the way our lives develop. I was a guy that grew up; I never liked to hug anybody. But when we had three beautiful incredible girls added to my wife's and my life, I became a hugger. Fox has a show named ''Outnumbered,'' but that has been my life for years now.

I know there are so many people that say you are a man and you have no right to speak about this. I guess, when I was a judge, there were those who thought, since I was not a person that had been on both sides of a civil lawsuit or had been a defendant in a case, maybe I should not be able to say anything about or pass sentence. But we have laws, and laws are there to protect people.

I do believe, as our Founders did, in nature's God, that we have a Creator who provided us inalienable rights. But in this world, you have to fight for any inheritance, including your inalienable rights.

It does appear that nature gave a greater percentage of women a nurturing greater sense of loving and caring than most men. That gets changed for some of us when you have a house full of girls.

□ 1800

But I could identify with the doctor who had performed, I think he said, over 1,000 abortions, who came before our Judiciary Committee and testified about how it was just a procedure, how it was nothing to him, and how he would go into the uterus.

Of course, the pregnant mom was not dilated and not going to be able to deliver a baby that had begun forming, had a heartbeat. But that is why he would go in with his instrument, feel around with his clamps for something that felt long, and when he found it, he knew that it was either a leg or an arm, and he would grab it and pull it out from the baby's body, and continue till he did that four times, and then reach in and find something that felt bulbous, and he would—he knew the head could not come out in a bulbous form, and so he would crush it and pull out the baby's head. And that was the way he went about beginning the abortion of a child that had begun developing like that.

He never thought a thing about it until his daughter died, and then he became nauseated, and he was never able to do another abortion like that, and it became such a burden that he had done what he had done.

I know from my years on the bench as a judge, I know from my years as an attorney helping people, if something is built on a lie, the chances are that the outcome will not be good for a majority of people. I also know that if someone encourages and perpetuates a lie within some other person's life, they are not that person's friend.

So I would like to quickly reference an article published by WND called ''The Real 'Jane Roe' '' and just hit some of the highlights about the real Jane Roe, the woman.

I was talking with my friend, CHRIS SMITH, about Norma McCorvey. He is quite familiar with her, and I believe he said he had talked to her and had come to know her. Being the Christian that CHRIS SMITH is, he cares deeply about people, and that included Norma McCorvey.

But this article says: ''At the age of 21, McCorvey was pregnant with her third child. She had given her other two children up for adoption and McCorvey did not want to say good-bye to her offspring a third time. So she decided to have an illegal abortion, but the Dallas clinic she went to had been recently raided and shut down. So McCorvey made up a story—she had been raped, she told her doctor and two lawyers. She signed an affidavit on condition of anonymity, and the lawsuit began.''

And she told WorldNetDaily: '' 'I considered abortion and, because of this, I was put in touch with two attorneys, Sarah Weddington and Linda Coffee. They had just recently graduated from law school and were interested in challenging the Texas abortion statute.' ''

She says: '' 'Plain and simple, I was used.' '' This is Norma McCorvey. '' 'I was a nobody to them. They only needed a pregnant woman to use for their case, and that's it. They cared, not about me, but only about legalizing abortion. Even after the case, I was never respected—probably because I was not an ivy-league educated, liberal feminist like they were.' ''

But she goes on and says—well, this was from a New York Times interview: ''McCorvey describes her meeting the two young attorneys. . . .

'' 'Sarah Weddington sat right across the table from me at Columbo's pizza parlor, and I didn't know then that she had had an abortion herself. When I told her then how desperately I needed one, she could have told me where to go for it. But she wouldn't because she needed me to be pregnant for her case. I set Sarah Weddington up on a pedestal like a rose petal. But when it came to my turn, well, Sarah saw these cuts on my wrists, my swollen eyes from crying, the miserable person sitting across from her, and she knew she had a patsy. She knew I wouldn't go outside of the realm of her and Linda. I was too scared. It was one of the most hideous times of my life.' ''

She says: '' 'My experience with pro-abortion leaders is that they are snobs. They claim they care about women and their rights but, in my experience, they care for nothing, not even themselves in a way,' '' McCorvey said.

''McCorvey said in a 1990 New York Times interview that the rape lie caused her to be 'terribly depressed.' ''

'' 'I was brought up not to lie and, because of this story, I had to lie all the time. And the depression periods got deeper and longer until the night I cut my wrists.' ''

Well, it is one of the difficulties that attorneys have: when you represent someone and you are sworn to do the best job you can, it should be more than simply about getting the legal result that a lawyer wants. It ought to be about helping the client. You can't always do that.

But it is rather tragic that Jane Roe, Norma McCorvey, now looks back on that as the most hideous time of her life, and that she was taken advantage of by people that didn't care about her. They had an agenda.

I heard someone here on the floor talking about the Women's March and how that was for all women, except the hypocrisy of that march was it was not about all women because there were pro-life women that tried to march. It was about women that think exactly like they do, and nobody else gets to participate.

It is the same kind of mentality that would—when in the majority here in this body say: We want everybody to participate in debate, except we are

going to have a record-setting number of closed rules so nobody can debate. We don't want your input on ObamaCare. We don't care that you support what we do on preexisting conditions and on kids living with their parents.

Heck, some of us said 30 would be a better number than 26. They didn't care. They could pass it without our votes. They didn't want our input.

So then to hear people who treated us like that say we care about open debate, knowing that some of those same people came down here and grabbed microphones and, for the first time we can find in congressional hearing, prevented the majority from starting into session; and then they want to lecture us on openness and kindness and open debate? Really?

Let's go back to the Norma McCorveys of the world. Let's minister to them individually, as my church, as a number of ministries with which I am greatly familiar do. Let's help the real person. Let's help that child so that that little boy or that little girl doesn't have its arms and legs jerked out of the uterus. Let's help that child have a life that will be so full they will never think about slitting their wrists, as Norma McCorvey did. Let's vote for life.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. I thank the gentleman for his very passionate and incisive remarks.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA), a member of the Transportation and Infrastructure, the Agriculture, and the Natural Resources Committees. I thank the gentleman for his leadership.

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), my colleague, for his continued leadership on this very important topic, a moral one, I think, that reflects truly an important part of the fiber of our country.

Which way are we going to go on this? What are our values going to be?

The gentleman has been a consistent leader way before my time during Congress as well.

As we reflect on this week, landmark legislation again passed tonight, H.R. 7, that would prohibit funding for abortion in this country, on the heels of the Mexico City solution that President Trump just signed today as well.

We are seeing that hearts are turning in this country on this issue. And when you look at it in the categories of people across the country, about half and half, rough numbers. Half the country might label itself pro-life, and the other half that favors Roe v. Wade being the law of the land, that might label themselves as pro-choice or pro-abortion.

When we get down to H.R. 7, we find that the half that is pro-life can be joined by many additional people on the other side of that argument that don't think it is appropriate to have government funding, their taxpayer dollars, used for abortion as a birth control tool in a lot of cases.

So this shows that we do have the tide going in this direction on that, as people become more and more informed on this and understand and don't listen to the rhetoric and don't listen to misinformation on what this really is. This is a baby you are talking about. It doesn't form into something else. Each pregnancy will result in a human baby.

So when we fight this battle, we find it is those that would speak on this side of the issue come under a lot of persecution. Many, many people will be joining together in this town later this week in the March for Life. You will be persecuted to some extent or another. You will be called things. But, you know, we know from the Bible that those that speak the truth are often persecuted as well, and we all need to be strong and firm in that.

God is watching what we do here. God will be watching later this week and at all times on those that are marching for life. So be strong.

Also, put your arms around those folks that might be strongly opposed, because there are a lot of people hurting on that. We understand. People that have had to make a difficult abortion choice and chosen to do so, they need healing as well. They need understanding and compassion on that. If we can show them that, and if we can show that those that are contemplating abortion, there are alternatives out there. There are many alternatives. If we can just come alongside them and show them that there is more than one way to do this, and there are people willing to help and willing to counsel you in that, because that is really what it comes down to.

When you talk about a choice, show that woman in crisis, in that situation that she has many choices, informed choices to make; and, by and large, maybe she will make the right one. In a lot of cases I believe she will.

So God bless those that are going to come for this march later this week and stand for this, put up with the level of persecution that comes with any of these types of issues, including the one on being pro-life.

Again, God bless you, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, for being a consistent leader on this.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. I thank the gentleman so very much for his kind remarks, but also his very eloquent concern for post-abortive women and those who may be contemplating abortion. You know, the Pregnancy Care Network, 4,000 strong throughout the United States, is there as a front line to say: We love you both, mother and baby.

So I thank the gentleman for bringing attention to that as well.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JODY B. HICE), a member of the Oversight and Government Reform, and the Natural Resources Committees.

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman, my good friend, CHRIS SMITH, for his leadership for so many years on this issue of life. He is deeply loved and appreciated, and I am grateful to be able to share this time with him as well.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure it has been said this evening already many times over that since the Roe v. Wade decision of 1973, we have lost over 50 million lives. That is such a staggering number, but within that number, of course, are mothers, daughters, fathers, sons, all of them lost to abortion.

This decision of Roe v. Wade, at the crux of the matter, is one that has the question: When does life begin?

And with that question, I was reminded of the opinion of the Supreme Court Justice Blackmun. During that period of time when Roe v. Wade came into law, Blackmun made the decision and wrote in his opinion. He said: ''We, the Court, need not resolve the difficult question of when life begins. When those trained in the respective disciplines of medicine, philosophy, and theology are unable to arrive at any consensus, the judiciary,'' he said, ''at this point in the development of man's knowledge, is not in a position to speculate as to the answer.''

What a startling statement that was made. But here we are at this time, this body, at this point of our Nation's history, we have no need as to speculate on this question any longer. There is clear science that, without question, tells us when life begins. And life begins at conception. There is no question about this.

We know inside the womb is a human life. And we know with that life, based on what we know of God and what we in our own country know from our own Declaration of Independence, the very first inalienable right protected is that of life.

□ 1815

So I just believe it is time that we correct this wrongheaded decision that was made by the Court some 44 years ago. Even just recently, a couple of days ago, I introduced H.R. 586, the Sanctity of Human Life Act, which makes clear that life begins at conception. I certainly would ask my colleagues to join me in cosponsoring this bill.

I just dream of the time, 44 years from now, that we could be celebrating the right to life rather than 44 years from now looking back and mourning over yet another 50 million American babies who have been lost to the horrible stain of abortion. So, again, I thank you for your leadership, and I deeply appreciate the opportunity to join you in this Special Order.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Thank you very much for your eloquence and reminding us all that the Supreme Court itself said that we need not resolve the difficult question of when human life begins; then they went on to say that any child, at any point until birth, could be killed by way of an abortion. They resolved it, but they

resolved it in the negative without science, without the information. Ultrasound certainly has shattered that myth, and I thank you for reminding all of us about that.

I also would remind my colleagues that Jean Garton—a great leader—ran Lutherans for Life for years. She was preparing a presentation on abortion that included some actual pictures of aborted babies. It was late at night, but her young child walked in while she was doing this and said: Mommy, who broke the baby?

So even a small child could recognize—and did recognize—that abortion destroys the life of a baby. Sadly, the Court has not been able to. With all of their much-vaunted intelligence capacity, they missed it by a mile. So thank you for reminding us of that.

Mr. Speaker, how much time remains.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MARSHALL). The gentleman has 21 minutes remaining.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, ex-President Barack Obama, the abortion President, has done serious harm. No human rights abuse, however, need be forever. Today, we have an extraordinary opportunity. We have, I would submit, a duty to protect the weakest and most vulnerable and to reassert protections that have been sadly lacking for the last 44 years. Protecting unborn children and their mothers is the most important human rights cause on Earth. And this week, on Friday, thousands are expected to march for life, to march for this fundamental human right—the right to live.

Now, as never before, we must work, pray, and fast for that day when every life is cherished as a gift; every life loved, despite one's disability, race, sex, color, religion, or condition of dependency; and every life welcomed, no matter the inconvenience. Earlier in this Special Order, STEVE KING talked about caring for people at every stage of development—every stage—including the unborn. Birth is an event that happens to each and every one of us. It is not the beginning of life.

Again, ultrasound imaging of the unborn child has just opened up everyone's eyes to the little child—twins if there are two—that resides within.

He also talked about, and I would agree with him, children with disabilities need to be welcomed. A prenatal diagnosis of disability should mean empathy and concern for the child, not exclusion or a death sentence, because every life is a gift.

Mr. Speaker, it is very encouraging as to how many young people are stepping up to protect and lead in this human rights cause. Increasingly, the young people on college campuses, Students for Life, and so many young people in their 20s, the millennials—and the polling shows the millennials are pro-life—are stepping up.

Tom Brokaw often talked about the Greatest Generation. They are stepping up as the next Greatest Generation who by their compassion, faith, and determination will transform America into a culture of life.

All of us in the pro-life movement are especially thankful for the growing number of courageous women who are silent no more. Some of the groups are called the Silent No More Awareness campaign. For example, women, all of whom have had abortions, have suffered psychological and emotional harm, and yet they, thank God, have found reconciliation and peace, often through faith. But now they blaze a hope-filled path for other post-abortive women to find healing, reconciliation, and inner peace. They admonish society not to offer the false solution of killing an unborn child.

There are two victims in every abortion: the baby, the most obvious, but equally the mother. Women deserve better than the false solution of dismembering or chemically poisoning unborn children. The other side of the issue seldom talks about the child, if ever, don't even use the word abortion much anymore, just choice or reproductive rights, and just refuses to accept or to acknowledge or to debate what the deed actually does.

Children have their arms and legs torn off their bodies by the abortionist as well as decapitation. Chemicals literally starve the child to death. RU–486 is euphemistically called medical abortion like the other pills that are provided. First, the child starves in the womb, and then another chemical brings on labor.

For the pro-life movement, we all acknowledge that the way forward is fraught with obstacles that must be overcome. The promotion of human rights is never easy. The promotion of human rights is never obstacle free. If past is prologue, the history of the pro-life movement, however, shows that we will never quit.

Earlier today, the House voted on the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion and Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act, H.R. 7, to end taxpayer complicity and funding of abortion. I especially want to thank our very principled leadership, great people like the Speaker, PAUL RYAN; KEVIN MCCARTHY, our majority leader; STEVE SCALISE, our whip; and CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS; and so many others who take a principled stand for the unborn and equally for their mothers.

No matter what The Washington Post or The New York Times might say, they are willing to stand into the wind rather than to go along with it because the sanctity of life—the preciousness of those children and equally of their mothers—demands it. I want to thank them for their extraordinary leadership. As we all know, the bill passed 238–183.

The extraordinary news is about the Hyde amendment and its consequences. It has saved the lives of over 2 million children, and that is a conservative estimate. There may be many more. Other funding bans at State levels, as well as our funding bans in our Federal policies, including the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program, have also saved lives because the money was not there to facilitate the demise—the violent demise—of those children.

Even the Guttmacher Institute, the former research arm of Planned Parenthood, acknowledges that about 25 percent of the Medicaid abortions that otherwise would have occurred do not occur. Those children go on to be born, and that is where the 2 million figure, about 60,000 per year—children who evade the scalpel or the chemical poisoning of abortion.

Forty years ago, Congress enacted the Hyde amendment. It has been continued every year, and now it will be made permanent if this bill were to become law. We know, as was said during the debate by my friends on the other side of this issue, that they are determined to eviscerate the Hyde amendment, and those 2 million children, had they had their way over the last 40 years, would have been killed.

We also want to take abortion out of ObamaCare. The President stood right at that podium, Mr. Speaker, in September of 2009, and said: ''Under our plan, no federal dollars will be used to fund abortions. . . . ''

We know that is absolutely untrue. He also signed an executive order where he said that the Hyde amendment would be applied to the plans in the exchanges. So we went to the Government Accountability Office and asked for a study. It took about a year, and they came back and said that 1,036 insurance plans across the country paid for abortion on demand with taxpayer funding. H.R. 7, title II, would end that complicity of the taxpayer with the procurement of abortion.

Let me also say that we hope to bring up in this House a bill that was sponsored last Congress and is again today by TRENT FRANKS of Arizona, a great champion of life. It is called the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act to legally protect most babies at 20 weeks postfertilization. Of course, many of those kids die of dismemberment. Again, we need a national debate on abortion because the methods have been hidden by the facade of the abortion industry. They have been very good at cloaking, concealing, and diminishing any focus on what happens to the baby. Even when abortion is through ultrasound-guided abortions and the mother is there, semi-sedated, they turn the screen away from her so she doesn't see the dismemberment of the child, because, obviously, as Dr. Nathanson, the founder of NARAL and an abortionist, once said—he came to the conclusion after having killed 60,000 children and then became a prolifer—he said that if wombs had windows, if everyone, including the woman, could see the child, she would run out of that abortion mill.

So, again, I want to say thank you to TRENT FRANKS. I know he is here, and

I hope that he will join us tonight. He has led on born-alive legislation, which is also transformative.

Imagine that the former President of the United States, Barack Obama, said that he would veto a bill that would provide a standard of care, including a right to private action, when the child is born alive from a later term abortion. We can't even help that child? Yet Obama, the abortion President, said: No, we can't. TRENT FRANKS, again, has been the leader on that as well.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS) who is a good friend and colleague, and then to close, Congressman TRENT FRANKS.

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from New Jersey, for more than three decades, has raised these issues in this very Chamber, speaking for those who are defenseless and voiceless. He speaks because he speaks truth and is motivated by his conscience to discuss these truths.

Every year since 1973, we have had a March for Life here in Washington. This year, we have the 44th anniversary of Roe v. Wade. It is one of the gravest examples of judicial activism in our Nation's history. Seven black-robed Justices decided that the lives of unborn children are not protected under the Constitution in what Justice White referred to as an exercise in raw judicial power. In the last 44 years, 60 million children have died in abortion.

The March for Life draws thousands of people, young and old, Democrat and Republican, from across the Nation year after year from near and far, on buses, on planes, in cars, on trains, in snow, in rain, in sunshine, and overcast skies. Why? Why do they continue to come?

They come because they are motivated by the transcendent truth that was captured in our Declaration of Independence that everyone is endowed by a Creator with an inalienable right to life—a right that no one can take away.

□ 1830

Everyone in this Chamber has that right. Everybody listening to this Special Order debate has that right. You have it today, you had it yesterday, you had it before you were born. No one has the right to take that right away.

The right does not depend on your ability to see, your ability to hear, your ability to walk, your ability to talk. That right exists because you are human. It is as simple as that. No one can take away that right.

Those coming to the March for Life this year are coming to share that witness, but they have also been witnessing back home the countless acts of service they do for women in crisis pregnancies and to continue with the help that they provide.

It is a good thing for them to come to Washington. I look forward to welcoming my constituents from western Pennsylvania, and I encourage them to come and stand and continue to witness until one day we recognize the right to life for everyone in our country.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. I thank the gentleman so much for his leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FRANKS).

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, I came to this building some 30 years ago. Christopher Smith was here fighting the battle for these little babies, as he is tonight. I hold him to be a grand hero of humanity. Words fail me to express to him the honor, the respect, and the affection that is due him for his relentless, faithful commitment to these little babies that could never vote for him.

All I can say to Mr. SMITH is that one day he will step over the threshold of eternity and God will say: Welcome home, Chris. You did a good job. You protected those who couldn't protect themselves.

I can't think of anything that I think points to a greater manhood, a greater honor, a greater stewardship of life than protecting those who cannot protect themselves. I just want to express that in the deepest way possible.

Certainly, KEITH ROTHFUS, I love him. He is a wonderful man. We have so many here. But Chris has been here forever and he has stayed with it. He is getting to be an old guy, but he is not quitting. I am so honored just to be in the same room with him.

Mr. Speaker, as I often do around the 22nd of January to commemorate and to remember the tragic Roe v. Wade decision, I come with a sunset memorial because another legislative day has come and gone in Washington, D.C., and sunset approaches fast. So I stand here in this House with what I call a sunset memorial.

You see, Mr. Speaker, before the sun sets today in America, over 3,000 more unborn children will be killed by abortion on demand in the land of the free and the home of the brave. That is more than the number of innocent lives lost on September 11th in this country. It happens every day.

As much hope as there is in the day in which we stand in this place, in this new moment in American history, for these 3,000, hope will never come in time. I mourn that, Mr. Speaker, because it wasn't necessary.

It has now been 44 years since the tragedy called Roe v. Wade was first handed down. Since then, the very foundation of this Nation has been stained by the blood of almost 60 million of our own unborn children. So many of them, Mr. Speaker, cried and screamed as they died, but because it was amniotic fluid going over the vocal cords instead of air, we couldn't hear them.

All of them had at least four things in common, Mr. Speaker. First, they were just little babies who had done nothing wrong to anyone. Each one of them died a nameless and lonely death and each one of their mothers was wounded. Whether she realizes it or not, she will never quite be the same.

All the gifts that these children might have brought to humanity are now lost forever, Mr. Speaker, and that is worth mourning. Yet, even the glare of such tragedy brings a ray of hope because this generation, even though it still clings sometimes to a blind, invincible ignorance while history repeats itself over and over again, there is, again, a new beacon of hope breaking over the horizon.

Mr. Speaker, not so long ago I heard Barack Obama speak some very noble but poignant words that, whether he realizes it or not, applies so profoundly to this subject. So I am going to quote some excerpted portions of his comments.

Let me just say at the outset that I agreed with the words that he spoke. I am going to say that upfront. No one was a greater critic of the policies of Barack Obama than myself because I thought he missed the moment. I thought he missed his moment in history. He could have been a great and powerful friend to the helpless, yet he chose to be the one to oppose their chance to walk in the light of life.

He said: ''This is our first task—caring for our children. It's our first job. If we don't get that right, we don't get anything right. That's how, as a society, we will be judged.''

I agree, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Obama asked: ''Are we really prepared to say that we're powerless in the face of such carnage, that the politics are too hard? Are we prepared to say that such violence that is visited on our children year after year after year is somehow the price of freedom?''

The President also said: ''Our journey is not complete until all our children . . .'' are ''cared for and cherished and always safe from harm.''

''That is our generation's task,'' he said, ''to make these words, these rights, these values of life and liberty and the pursuit of happiness real for every American.''

Mr. Speaker, never have I so deeply agreed with any words ever spoken by President Barack Obama as those I have just quoted. Yet, when he was President, in the most merciless distortion of logic and reason and humanity itself, he refused to apply his incontrovertible words to the helpless unborn babies in this Nation.

How I wish, Mr. Speaker, that Mr. Obama could have somehow opened his heart and his ears to his own words and asked himself in the core of his own soul why his words that should apply to all children could not have included the most helpless and vulnerable of all children. Nine million American unborn children died under the policies that Mr. Obama relentlessly supported.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that moment when President Barack Obama could have heard and responded to the silent

cries of these little forgotten souls has passed forever. Mr. Obama takes his place as the undisputed abortion President.

While I mourn that reality, Mr. Speaker, I take great hope in a new reality that Donald Trump is now President of the United States and that the winds of change are beginning to blow. I believe Mr. Trump will be a protector of these little babies that have waited so very long for someone to come along and help them.

So now I pray that the Members of this body and those in the United States Senate will remember the words of Thomas Jefferson when he said: ''The care of human life and its happiness, and not its destruction, is the chief and only object of good government.''

That phrase in the 14th Amendment that capsulizes our entire Constitution says: ''No State shall deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law.''

Mr. Speaker, protecting the lives of all Americans and their constitutional rights is why we are all here.

Mr. Speaker, there is hope now. We wait for that new day that has come to manifest and the sun to break through the clouds and shine once again on the faces of these little babies.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

PROTECTING THE UNBORN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FRANKS) for 30 minutes.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, it is a new day in America. I am very gratified that we now have a President that looks differently upon the innocent unborn than did the last one.

Mr. Speaker, protecting the lives of all Americans and their constitutional rights is why we are all here in this place. The bedrock foundation of this Republic is that clarion declaration of the self-evident truth that all human beings are created equal and endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights: the rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Every conflict and every battle our Nation has ever faced can be traced to this core commitment to this self-evident truth. It has made us the beacon of hope for the entire world, Mr. Speaker. It is who we are. Yet, today, another day has passed and we in this body have still failed to honor that foundational commitment.

While we move in the right direction, we have still failed our sworn oath and our God-given responsibility, as more than 3,000 additional American babies died today without the protection we should have already given them.

So, Mr. Speaker, let me just say, in the hopes that we will finally embrace the truth that abortion really does kill little babies, that it is time we looked up together again and looked to the Declaration of Independence and that we remember that we are the same America that rejected human slavery and that marched into Europe to arrest the Nazi Holocaust and that we are the courageous and compassionate nation that can find a better way for mothers and their unborn children than abortion on demand.

It is a new day in America, Mr. Speaker, and we all have a glorious new opportunity to make a better world and for America to be the one that leads the rest of the planet, just as we did in the days of slavery, from this tragic genocide of murdering more than 3,000 of our own children every day.

So now, Mr. Speaker, as we consider the plight of the unborn after 44 years under Roe v. Wade, may we each remind ourselves that our own days in this sunshine of life are all numbered and that all too soon each one of us will also walk from this Chamber for the very last time.

But if it should be that we are allowed to convene again on yet another day, may that be the day, Mr. Speaker, when we finally hear the cries of these little babies. May that be the day when we find the humanity, the courage, and the will to embrace together our human and our constitutional duty to protect these, the least of our tiny little brothers and sisters, from this murderous scourge called abortion on demand.

It has been 44 years, Mr. Speaker, since Roe v. Wade first stained the foundation of this Nation with the blood of its own children. But, thankfully, it is a new day in the land of the free and home of the brave. By the grace of God, help is finally on the way.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1845

FIXING OUR HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS) for 30 minutes.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, tonight I rise in support of describing to each of my colleagues some important attributes of a big issue that we are all working on, and that is about health care. I rise today to talk about not just the current state of health care, but also a direction about where this body has an opportunity and a chance to go to make America's healthcare system even better so that it is the greatest healthcare system in the world.

President Obama signed what is known as ObamaCare, the Affordable Care Act, into law on March 23, 2010. This was an attempt then by the President and his party, receiving no votes from the Republicans in the House or the Senate, to offer a brand-new vision to the American people of their idea of health care.

It took several years for the American people really to comprehend and understand this undertaking, but we are now in the sixth year of ObamaCare, and it has turned out that it not only is not sustainable, but it has provided millions of people who have lost coverage, higher premiums. It is not uncommon to see where some healthcare providers are raising their rates by 60 percent, and in 2013 alone, 4.7 million Americans had their preferred healthcare system canceled.

So the plan began with the high accolades of President Obama and Democrats, only to see, in its sixth year, it has become a concrete life preserver to many who are not only on the plan, but those who would wish to have their own healthcare coverage and cannot because of this law.

Tonight what I would like to describe to my colleagues is a chance for them to begin understanding that the American people have elected Donald J. Trump, Republicans, back into the majority, and Republicans back again into the majority in the United States Senate. This was done because there were a number of ideas that were made well aware to the voting public that Republicans would have an answer not only to repeal, but to replace the Affordable Care Act.

Republicans, in fact, now that we are in our second or third week of being in the majority, with President Trump taking office last Friday, Republicans have begun working not only with themselves, but with this administration on ideas that will make the replacement of ObamaCare even better for each and every person in this country.

The ability to make this transition, I believe, will require a deliberate and disciplined approach by Members of Congress and the American people for us to listen to each other, for, you see, Republicans do have better ideas to fix health care for all Americans. The basis of the understanding about where Republicans will come from, I believe, is embodied in the law as it exists today.

In 1943, employer-sponsored insurance exemption was given. It was during World War II. It was at a time when there were wages that were frozen but opportunities for benefits to be given to employees that would not be taxed. And so back in 1942, this benefits system arose. Sure, it became an opportunity as a result of being employed. It became an employer benefit. And that is what has taken place today with about 150 million Americans who receive the benefits of pretax contributions not only by their employer, but also by the employee to their healthcare system.

Well, just last December, under the 21st Century Cures Act, Congress made a new change, updating, allowing more

people in the system, this time small business, allowing small business the opportunity to deduct up to $4,500 per employee, a chance for them to receive their health care on a pretax basis.

What this has established now is a different, unfair system that Mr. Trump was speaking about when he was on the campaign trail. He referred to it as a rigged system. Now, he was not just speaking about the healthcare system. He actually was speaking about much of the way America operates, systems that are not fair for the average American not only to have a shot at making their life better, but in this case, a healthcare system where about 150 million Americans get their health care on a pretax basis and others do not. This is the basis of where I believe Republicans have an opportunity to help make the tax advantage for all Americans available.

So the question is: Who is insured and who is uninsured? Well, we can go to the chart that we see here. About 49 percent of all the people in this country who are insured, health care would be provided by an employer, meaning that an employer most likely is able to offer, as a benefit, a healthcare package on a pretax basis, and the employee is able to receive that, allowing them to make their own contributions on a pretax basis.

As an example, as a Member of Congress, I have this opportunity. My employer, being in the House of Representatives, provides about 70 percent, which is standard for the operations of almost any business in this country, 70 percent, and the employee would provide 30 percent. In this case, I provide the premiums of about $13,000 for my health care.

Then I have a $3,600 deduction under my ObamaCare health insurance that I receive. I am required by law, as a result of being a Member of Congress, to receive, to buy into health care that would be ObamaCare, and then I have a $3,600 deductible that is a pretax contribution. So I make about a $17,000 contribution to my health care every year. Not unusual for employer-provided contributions on a pretax basis.

Medicaid is about 20 percent of all the people who are insured, and then, as you see here, Medicare is about 14 percent.

As you look at Medicaid, Medicaid is what is commonly known as insurance for those people who are at or below the poverty level to gain coverage. But it comes with strict requirements. Many of those requirements work against the opportunity to go and get a job for fear that they will lose their contribution that comes from the government because they might not have an opportunity to receive other help.

Then, as you see, we have got exchanges, and those that just buy their own insurance. And then about 9 percent, or about 30 million Americans, are uninsured.

This is the current status of where we are in America today.

When I say these things to people back in Dallas, Texas, I receive a lot of feedback, and one of them that I have selected comes from a man who is self-employed. He falls under the what might be off exchange, meaning he pays for his own health care without it being on a pretax basis. He said: I am being penalized for being an entrepreneur—penalized.

This is true of the 20 percent who are on Medicaid. They are in a system that essentially keeps them there and keeps them from going to gain the opportunity to receive full-time employment because it might not be an employment that provides health care.

So Republicans have a daunting challenge. We have a challenge to understand that there are about 12 to 20 million people who presently are on ObamaCare, including Members of Congress, and it is a very expensive—not only to the country, but also to individuals—insurance plan.

The biggest problem with ObamaCare is not its expense. The problem is that people are not on the system, as we were told would happen. We were told there would be upwards of 40 million people, providing an opportunity for more people to pay into the system, to sustain the system, and for it to be, what I would say, structured in such a way to where it had young people, middle-aged people, and perhaps older people up to Medicare age who would be paying in or be a part of a system—and it didn't work that way.

Younger people are not in ObamaCare because it is tremendously expensive, and they have found that to meet their deductible, it takes thousands and thousands of dollars. It does not meet their needs. It does not meet my needs with my family. It would not be a preferred healthcare choice that I or my family would make.

So we now have a choice, a chance as a result of the American people saying: Okay, Republicans, let's see what you can do. Bring us your ideas to make health care better.

Here is one of the facts that we know. We know that of the family working status of uninsured, 74 percent of people who are uninsured go to work. Now, this is a staggering fact because we were told by President Obama and Democrats that they were going to make sure that people got health care, the working poor, as we were told, people who needed coverage. But, in fact, 74 percent of 30 million people get up and go to work.

What we find is that they have lost, many times, their full-time status because of ObamaCare rules and regulations, mandates on employers to where employers cut their full-time status to part-time workers. Because we have so many part-time workers, they cannot afford to get the payments that are necessary, even though they were above the Medicaid line.

So Republicans now have a choice to be able to say, if we are going to outthink ObamaCare, if we are going to make sure that we believe—as President Trump has said just in the last few weeks and on the trail as he was running, he believes we should have a system that is not rigged. We should have a system that helps cover every single American and creates an opportunity that is sustainable and does not mean that we have 60 percent or even double-digit increases every year in health care because of the inequities that exist in the system.

□ 1900

This is the system that exists today.

So what might be one of those options or alternatives?

One of those options or alternatives might be a bill that I have worked on for 2 years, with over 500 physicians from across this country, known as the National Physicians' Council for Healthcare Policy. The National Physicians' Council for Healthcare Policy has formally met with hundreds of doctors nine times. They are co-chaired by Dr. Marcy S. Zwelling from Los Angeles, California, and Dr. John T. Gill from Dallas, Texas.

We have worked diligently with economists also to put together a plan that matches what President Trump is speaking about, but probably has not had time to fill in all of the rest of the activities.

This is what I would like to tell you. We believe that we should first allow every single American to be a part of a pre-tax credit, an advanceable credit that can be given to every single American to allow them to buy into a non-government healthcare system. That means, yes, people who are on Medicaid today can receive their health care and go out and get a job without fear of losing their healthcare coverage. It means that you no longer would have to go to the Federal Government and the IRS and to tell them how much work or how much money you think you will do this next year, and if you guess wrong, to pay differently. It creates a well-understood system, and can be done for the same amount of money that is presently in the system today.

It means that a person, a family, would be able to, effective this next November, go online and go to a database and fill it in. I am from Dallas, Texas. I would put my name in, I would put my wife's name, our social security numbers, and our children, and it would allow this pre-tax credit that is advanceable, assignable, and refundable, not coming to me, but going to a healthcare plan that I could then purchase. I could co-purchase, I could put my own money in on a pre-tax basis.

But what it would mean to me, PETE SESSIONS, is that I would be out of ObamaCare. I would choose to be in what is called a health savings account, an HSA. A health savings account requires that you have a major medical component with any coverage that you get.

What is major medical?

Major medical is hospitalization, the chance, the risk that you would have of

needing hospitalization. It could be a car wreck, it could be cancer, it could be something really unexpected. But I would then purchase this major medical policy that is well known in the marketplace today, and then have a choice of deciding the type of coverage where I would pay the first $5,000 that is required. And then after that, based upon the risk that I would choose.

If I were younger, I would choose probably a plan that would be 90/10. That means that I would pay 10 percent beyond what happened after I paid my $5,000. Perhaps I couldn't afford that and would want to move to a 70/30 where I accept more of the risk.

The other component that I would then choose is a health savings account. That is I would take the $17,000 that I contribute to my health care every year, cash, and I would take that to a pre-tax cash account that would be available for me to go to the doctor. Instead of showing up with a card, I would shop the doctor that I choose, only buying the things that I and my family needed, choosing my doctor, and asking my doctor and the marketplace what services would be available for a cash price.

Generally speaking, cash prices are about 18 percent less. Because a doctor would receive that money directly in, rather than having to file a claim, or wait time to get back their money. It would allow my family a chance to receive virtually an 18 percent opportunity upfront savings. It would allow me to manage the things which I needed to and not worry about paying for the things I didn't use. It would save my local doctor, who would then look at me as a preferred customer as opposed to me shopping around, perhaps with others in the marketplace, based upon a model of ObamaCare, which today you can't always count on who your doctor would be. A far better idea. Every single American that would qualify would receive this opportunity, but not required.

Now, how do we make it better, because there is more?

We would, under every single one of these circumstances, take away the mandate on an individual and the mandate on the business. We would do away with the Cadillac tax, because I don't think health care should be taxed. I think everybody should have an opportunity, and the world's greatest healthcare plan would allow that. Every single person would have a chance to have their health care provided, just as I have mine, too.

So what I want to say to the Members today is Republicans are going to be sharing ideas. We are going to be presenting our ideas at the Energy and Commerce Committee, at the Ways and Means Committee, and we believe we have an opportunity under three scenarios to make sure that health care is available and ready for every single American.

First, we need to establish a Republican alternative that can be implemented this year. Not waiting. Our better idea is ready in a bill ready to go.

Would we do hearings? Yes.

Would we want to scrub that and maybe add some things? Yes.

We should be ready to do it and make the transition this year. We should use reconciliation to repeal the most onerous parts of mandates. Yes, we should. And I believe we are doing that.

Should we make sure that we replace before we repeal? Absolutely.

And we should allow HHS, under what is today becoming Dr. TOM PRICE, a proud Member of this body, a chairman of the Budget Committee, who is in hearings over in the Senate to be the secretary of Health and Human Services, he should use everything that is available in law today to manage a system and to make it better. But my bet is that he will count on real people, not government, to make these decisions. And in doing so, he will empower a better opportunity.

So what Republicans want to do is to establish a tax benefit system while allowing a continuation of an employer-sponsored system. Those people that are on a system today that is provided by your employer, that would continue. But we would do away with the mandates on the individual and the business and the Cadillac tax. And we would encourage each of these companies to continue that system and work with their employees on a benefit system to make it better.

We would make HSAs available to every single person, not just Members of Congress, to where they would have an opportunity to have a system that would help their health care and their families and not be use it or lose it. It would make no sense that I would have to spend $43,000 a year simply to start over next year when I could actually benefit from saving and being efficient with my money. Maybe I am 30 years old and want to save for the future. Maybe I am 50 and cannot save, but I would roll over the system and make it work for me.

It will allow private physicians to endure. And what this does is empowers the private physician.

But there is more. And that is we will also keep—I believe we should, and the world's greatest healthcare system would, keep what are known as consumer protections that today exist in law: dependent coverage through age 26, no lifetime or annual limits, modified guaranteed availability and renewability, prohibition on preexisting condition exclusions, prohibition on discrimination based on your health status, and nondiscrimination in healthcare coverage.

I would like to tell the Members that back in Dallas, Texas, I am proud to also represent the disability community. I believe I can look at every single person back in Dallas, Texas, in the 32nd Congressional District of Texas, and say this: If you like your health care, you can keep it. If you like your own doctor, you can keep your own doctor.

But, more importantly, I believe that we will give equal to or better than opportunities for every single American. We will end the discriminatory services that ObamaCare is today. Because virtually every single doctor and virtually every single hospital will begin taking coverage, where today only about 24 percent of doctors take ObamaCare because it does not reimburse properly. And hospitals all over Dallas that do not take ObamaCare, leading edge hospitals in Dallas, Texas, and across this country, will begin taking this new health care because it reimburses based upon actual cost and marketplace availability.

So to my colleagues who want to go back home and talk to their constituents about Republican ideas, I don't know which one we will end up with. What I do know is that Senator BILL CASSIDY and I have worked with hundreds of physicians for 2 years, and we have a bill, the world's greatest healthcare plan. The world's greatest healthcare plan is a bill that you can understand that is guaranteed to provide people a better opportunity without guessing about their healthcare coverage, and it is not use it or lose it.

So it is my hope that my colleagues that saw this this evening and took part in this will understand that there is an opportunity to go back home and sell the world's greatest healthcare plan for their people back home, too.

I thank my colleagues for being here tonight.

I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

PUBLICATION OF COMMITTEE RULES

RULES OF THE COMMITTEE ON RULES FOR THE 115TH CONGRESS

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 2(a)(2) of rule XI, the Committee on Rules' rules of procedure for the 115th Congress are transmitted herewith. They were adopted on January 4, 2017 by a nonrecord vote.

RULE 1.—GENERAL PROVISIONS

(a) The Rules of the House are the rules of the Committee and its subcommittees so far as applicable, except that a motion to recess from day to day, and a motion to dispense with the first reading (in full) of a bill or resolution, if printed copies are available, are non-debatable privileged motions in the Committee. A proposed investigative or oversight report shall be considered as read if it has been available to the members of the Committee for at least 24 hours (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, or legal holidays except when the House is in session on such day).

(b) Each subcommittee is a part of the Committee, and is subject to the authority and direction of the Committee and to its rules so far as applicable.

(c) The provisions of clause 2 of rule XI of the Rules of the House are incorporated by

reference as the rules of the Committee to the extent applicable.

(d) The Committee's rules shall be published in the Congressional Record not later than 30 days after the Committee is elected in each odd-numbered year.

RULE 2.—REGULAR, ADDITIONAL, AND SPECIAL MEETINGS

Regular Meetings

(a)(1) The Committee shall regularly meet at 5:00 p.m. on the first day on which votes are scheduled of each week when the House is in session.

(2) A regular meeting of the Committee may be dispensed with if, in the judgment of the Chair, there is no need for the meeting.

(3) Additional regular meetings and hearings of the Committee may be called by the Chair.

Notice for Regular Meetings

(b) The Chair shall notify in electronic form each member of the Committee of the agenda of each regular meeting of the Committee at least 48 hours before the time of the meeting and shall provide to each member of the Committee, at least 24 hours before the time of each regular meeting:

(1) for each bill or resolution scheduled on the agenda for consideration of a rule, a copy of—

(A) the bill or resolution;

(B) any committee reports thereon; and

(C) any available letter requesting a rule for the bill or resolution; and

(2) for each other bill, resolution, report, or other matter on the agenda a copy of—

(A) the bill, resolution, report, or materials relating to the other matter in question; and

(B) any report on the bill, resolution, report, or any other matter made by any subcommittee of the Committee.

Emergency Meetings

(c)(1) The Chair may call an emergency meeting of the Committee at any time on any measure or matter which the Chair determines to be of an emergency nature; provided, however, that the Chair has made an effort to consult the ranking minority member, or, in such member's absence, the next ranking minority party member of the Committee.

(2) As soon as possible after calling an emergency meeting of the Committee, the Chair shall notify each member of the Committee of the time and location of the meeting.

(3) To the extent feasible, the notice provided under paragraph (2) shall include the agenda for the emergency meeting and copies of available materials which would otherwise have been provided under subsection (b) if the emergency meeting was a regular meeting.

Special Meetings

(d) Special meetings shall be called and convened as provided in clause 2(c)(2) of rule XI of the Rules of the House.

RULE 3.—MEETING AND HEARING PROCEDURES IN GENERAL

(a)(1) Meetings and hearings of the Committee shall be called to order and presided over by the Chair or, in the Chair's absence, by the member designated by the Chair as the Vice Chair of the Committee, or by the ranking majority member of the Committee present as Acting Chair.

(2) Meetings and hearings of the Committee shall be open to the public unless closed in accordance with clause 2(g) of rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives.

(3) Any meeting or hearing of the Committee that is open to the public shall be open to coverage by television, radio, and still photography in accordance with the provisions of clause 4 of rule XI of the Rules of the House (which are incorporated by reference as part of these rules).

(4) Before a motion to report a rule is offered, a copy of the language recommended shall be furnished to each member of the Committee.

Quorum

(b)(1) For the purpose of hearing testimony on requests for rules, five members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum.

(2) For the purpose of taking testimony and receiving evidence on measures or matters of original jurisdiction before the Committee, three members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum.

(3) A majority of the members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum for the purposes of: reporting any measure or matter; authorizing a subpoena; closing a meeting or hearing pursuant to clause 21(g) of rule XI of the Rules of the House (except as provided in clause 2(g)(2)(A) and (B)); or taking any other action.

Voting

(c)(1) No vote may be conducted on any measure or motion pending before the Committee unless a majority of the members of the Committee is actually present for such purpose.

(2) A record vote of the Committee shall be provided on any question before the Committee upon the request of any member.

(3) No vote by any member of the Committee on any measure or matter may be cast by proxy.

(4) A record of the vote of each member of the Committee on each record vote on any measure or matter before the Committee shall be made publicly available in electronic form within 48 hours, and with respect to any record vote on any motion to amend or report, shall be included in the report of the Committee showing the total number of votes cast for and against and the names of those members voting for and against.

Hearing Procedures

(d)(1) With regard to hearings on matters of original jurisdiction, to the greatest extent practicable:

(A) each witness who is to appear before the Committee shall file with the Committee at least 24 hours in advance of the appearance a statement of proposed testimony in written and electronic form and shall limit the oral presentation to the Committee to a brief summary thereof; and

(B) In the case of a witness appearing in a nongovernmental capacity, a written statement of proposed testimony shall include a curriculum vitae and a disclosure of any Federal grants or contracts, or contracts or payments originating with a foreign government, received during the current calendar year or either of the two previous calendar years by the witness or by an entity represented by the witness and related to the subject matter of the hearing.

(C) The disclosure referred to in subdivision (B) shall include—

(i) the amount and country of origin of any payment or contract related to the subject matter of the hearing originating with a foreign government.

(ii) the amount and country of origin of any payment or contract related to the subject matter of the hearing originating with a foreign government.

(D) Such statements, with appropriate redactions to protect the privacy or security of the witness, shall be made publicly available in electronic form not later than one day after the witness appears.

(2) The five-minute rule shall be observed in the interrogation of each witness before the Committee until each member of the Committee has had an opportunity to question the witness.

(3) The provisions of clause 2(k) of rule XI of the Rules of the House shall apply to any hearing conducted by the Committee.

Subpoenas and Oaths

(e)(1) Pursuant to clause 2(m) of rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives, a subpoena may be authorized and issued by the Committee or a subcommittee in the conduct of any investigation or series of investigations or activities, only when authorized by a majority of the members voting, a majority being present.

(2) The Chair may authorize and issue subpoenas under such clause during any period in which the House has adjourned for a period of longer than three days.

(3) Authorized subpoenas shall be signed by the Chair or by any member designated by the Committee, and may be served by any person designated by the Chair or such member.

(4) The Chair, or any member of the Committee designated by the Chair, may administer oaths to witnesses before the Committee.

RULE 4.—GENERAL OVERSIGHT RESPONSIBILITIES

The Committee shall review and study, on a continuing basis, the application, administration, execution, and effectiveness of those laws, or parts of laws, the subject matter of which is within its jurisdiction.

RULE 5.—SUBCOMMITTEES

Establishment and Responsibilities of Subcommittees

(a)(1) There shall be two subcommittees of the Committee as follows:

(A) Subcommittee on Legislative and Budget Process, which shall have general responsibility for measures or matters related to relations between the Congress and the Executive Branch.

(B) Subcommittee on Rules and Organization of the House, which shall have general responsibility for measures or matters related to process and procedures of the House, relations between the two Houses of Congress, relations between the Congress and the Judiciary, and internal operations of the House.

(2) In addition, each such subcommittee shall have specific responsibility for such other measures or matters as the Chair refers to it.

(3) Each subcommittee of the Committee shall review and study, on a continuing basis, the application, administration, execution, and effectiveness of those laws, or parts of laws, the subject matter of which is within its general responsibility.

Referral of Measures and Matters to Subcommittees

(b)(1) No special order providing for the consideration of any bill or resolution shall be referred to a subcommittee of the Committee.

(2) The Chair shall refer to a subcommittee such measures or matters of original jurisdiction as the Chair deems appropriate given its jurisdiction and responsibilities.

(3) All other measures or matters of original jurisdiction shall be subject to consideration by the full Committee.

(4) In referring any measure or matter of original jurisdiction to a subcommittee, the Chair may specify a date by which the subcommittee shall report thereon to the Committee.

(5) The Committee by motion may discharge a subcommittee from consideration of any measure or matter referred to a subcommittee of the Committee.

Composition of Subcommittees

(c) The size and ratio of each subcommittee shall be determined by the Committee and members shall be elected to each subcommittee, and to the positions of chair and ranking minority member thereof, in accordance with the rules of the respective party caucuses. The Chair of the full committee may designate a member of the majority party on each subcommittee as its vice chair.

Subcommittee Meetings and Hearings

(d)(1) Each subcommittee of the Committee is authorized to meet, hold hearings, receive testimony, mark up legislation, and report to the full Committee on any measure or matter referred to it.

(2) No subcommittee of the Committee may meet or hold a hearing at the same time as a meeting or hearing of the full Committee is being held.

(3) The chair of each subcommittee shall schedule meetings and hearings of the subcommittee only after consultation with the Chair.

Quorum

(e)(1) For the purpose of taking testimony, two members of the subcommittee shall constitute a quorum.

(2) For all other purposes, a quorum shall consist of a majority of the members of a subcommittee.

Effect of a Vacancy

(f) Any vacancy in the membership of a subcommittee shall not affect the power of the remaining members to execute the functions of the subcommittee.

Records

(g) Each subcommittee of the Committee shall provide the full Committee with copies of such records of votes taken in the subcommittee and such other records with respect to the subcommittee necessary for the Committee to comply with all rules and regulations of the House.

RULE 6—STAFF

In General

(a)(1) Except as provided in paragraphs (2) and (3), the professional and other staff of the Committee shall be appointed, by the Chair, and shall work under the general supervision and direction of the Chair.

(2) All professional, and other staff provided to the minority party members of the Committee shall be appointed, by the ranking minority member of the Committee, and shall work under the general supervision and direction of such member.

(3) The appointment of all professional staff shall be subject to the approval of the Committee as provided by, and subject to the provisions of, clause 9 of rule X of the Rules of the House.

Associate Staff

(b) Associate staff for members of the Committee may be appointed only at the discretion of the Chair (in consultation with the ranking minority member regarding any minority party associate staff), after taking into account any staff ceilings and budgetary constraints in effect at the time, and any terms, limits, or conditions established by the Committee on House Administration under clause 9 of rule X of the Rules of the House.

Subcommittee Staff

(c) From funds made available for the appointment of staff, the Chair of the Committee shall, pursuant to clause 6(d) of rule X of the Rules of the House, ensure that sufficient staff is made available to each subcommittee to carry out its responsibilities under the rules of the Committee, and, after consultation with the ranking minority member of the Committee, that the minority party of the Committee is treated fairly in the appointment of such staff.

Compensation of Staff

(d) The Chair shall fix the compensation of all professional and other staff of the Committee, after consultation with the ranking minority member regarding any minority party staff.

Certification of Staff

(e)(1) To the extent any staff member of the Committee or any of its subcommittees does not work under the direct supervision and direction of the Chair, the member of the Committee who supervises and directs the staff member's work shall file with the Chief of Staff of the Committee (not later than the tenth day of each month) a certification regarding the staff member's work for that member for the preceding calendar month.

(2) The certification required by paragraph (1) shall be in such form as the Chair may prescribe, shall identify each staff member by name, and shall state that the work engaged in by the staff member and the duties assigned to the staff member for the member of the Committee with respect to the month in question met the requirements of clause 9 of rule X of the rules of the House.

(3) Any certification of staff of the Committee, or any of its subcommittees, made by the Chair in compliance with any provision of law or regulation shall be made—

(A) on the basis of the certifications filed under paragraph (1) to the extent the staff is not under the Chair's supervision and direction, and

(B) on his own responsibility to the extent the staff is under the Chair's direct supervision and direction.

RULE 7.—BUDGET, TRAVEL, PAY OF WITNESSES

Budget

(a) The Chair, in consultation with other members of the Committee, shall prepare for each Congress a budget providing amounts for staff, necessary travel, investigation, and other expenses of the Committee and its subcommittees.

Travel

(b)(1) The Chair may authorize travel for any member and any staff member of the Committee in connection with activities or subject matters under the general jurisdiction of the Committee. Before such authorization is granted, there shall be submitted to the Chair in writing the following:

(A) The purpose of the travel.

(B) The dates during which the travel is to occur.

(C) The names of the States or countries to be visited and the length of time to be spent in each.

(D) The names of members and staff of the Committee for whom the authorization is sought.

(2) Members and staff of the Committee shall make a written report to the Chair on any travel they have conducted under this subsection, including a description of their itinerary, expenses, and activities, and of pertinent information gained as a result of such travel.

(3) Members and staff of the Committee performing authorized travel on official business shall be governed by applicable laws, resolutions, and regulations of the House and of the Committee on House Administration.

Pay of Witnesses

(c) Witnesses may be paid from funds made available to the Committee in its expense resolution subject to the provisions of clause 5 of rule XI of the Rules of the House.

RULE 8.—COMMITTEE ADMINISTRATION

REPORTING

(a) Whenever the Committee authorizes the favorable reporting of a bill or resolution from the Committee—

(1) The Chair or acting Chair shall report it to the House or designate a member of the Committee to do so.

(2) In the case of a bill or resolution in which the Committee has original jurisdiction, the Chair shall allow, to the extent that the anticipated floor schedule permits, any member of the Committee a reasonable amount of time to submit views for inclusion in the Committee report on the bill or resolution. Any such report shall contain all matters required by the Rules of the House of Representatives (or by any provision of law enacted as an exercise of the rulemaking power of the House) and such other information as the Chair deems appropriate.

(3) In the case of a resolution providing for consideration of a measure, the Committee report accompanying such resolution shall include an accurate explanation of any waivers of points of order, including a detailed explanation of all points of order.

Records

(b)(1) There shall be a transcript made of each regular meeting and hearing of the Committee, and the transcript may be printed if the Chair decides it is appropriate or if a majority of the members of the Committee requests such printing. Any such transcripts shall be a substantially verbatim account of remarks actually made during the proceedings, subject only to technical, grammatical, and typographical corrections authorized by the person making the remarks. Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to require that all such transcripts be subject to correction and publication.

(2) The Committee shall keep a record of all actions of the Committee and of its subcommittees. The record shall contain all information required by clause 2(e)(1) of rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives and shall be available for public inspection at reasonable times in the offices of the Committee.

(3) All Committee hearings, records, data, charts, and files shall be kept separate and distinct from the congressional office records of the Chair, shall be the property of the House, and all Members of the House shall have access thereto as provided in clause 2(e)(2) of rule XI of the Rules of the House.

(4) The records of the Committee at the National Archives and Records Administration shall be made available for public use in accordance with rule VII of the Rules of the House. The Chair shall notify the ranking minority member of any decision, pursuant to clause 3(b)(3) or clause 4(b) of the rule, to withhold a record otherwise available, and the matter shall be presented to the Committee for a determination on written request of any member of the Committee.

Audio and Video Coverage

(c) The Chair shall provide, to the maximum extent practicable—

(1) complete and unedited audio and video broadcasts of all committee hearings and meetings; and

(2) for distribution of such broadcasts and unedited recordings thereof to the public and for the storage of audio and video recordings of the proceedings. Proceedings shall be broadcast live on the Majority Committee website and recordings shall be made available on such website within one calendar day of the proceeding.

Committee Publications on the Internet

(d) To the maximum extent feasible, the Committee shall make its publications available in electronic form.

Journal

(e)(1) The Committee shall maintain a Committee Journal, which shall include all bills, resolutions, and other matters referred to or reported by the Committee and all bills, resolutions, and other matters reported by any other committee on which a rule has been granted or formally requested, and such other matters as the Chair shall direct. The Journal shall be published periodically, but in no case less often than once in each session of Congress.

(2) A rule is considered as formally requested when the Chairman of a committee of primary jurisdiction which has reported a bill or resolution (or a member of such committee authorized to act on the Chairman's behalf):

(A) has requested, in writing to the Chair, that a hearing be scheduled on a rule for the consideration of the bill or resolution; and

(B) has supplied the Committee with the bill or resolution, as reported, together with the final committee report thereon.

Other Procedures

(f) The Chair may establish such other Committee procedures and take such actions as may be necessary to carry out these rules or to facilitate the effective operation of the Committee and its subcommittees in a manner consistent with these rules.

RULE 9.—AMENDMENTS TO COMMITTEE RULES

The rules of the Committee may be modified, amended or repealed, in the same manner and method as prescribed for the adoption of committee rules in clause 2 of rule XI of the Rules of the House, but only if written notice of the proposed change has been provided to each Member at least 48 hours before the time of the meeting at which the vote on the change occurs. Any such change in the rules of the Committee shall be published in the Congressional Record within 30 calendar days after their approval.

BILLS PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported that on January 20, 2017, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bill:

H.R. 39. To amend title 5, United States Code, to codify the Presidential Innovation Fellows Program, and for other purposes.

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, further reported that on January 23, 2017, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bill:

H.R. 72. To ensure the Government Accountability Office has adequate access to information.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 7 o'clock and 13 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Friday, January 27, 2017, at 2 p.m.

EXPENDITURE REPORTS CONCERNING OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL

Reports concerning the foreign currencies and U.S. dollars utilized for Official Foreign Travel during the fourth quarter of 2016, pursuant to Public Law 95–384, are as follows:

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2016

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
HOUSE COMMITTEES											
Please Note: If there were no expenditures during the calendar quarter noted above, please check the box at right to so indicate and return. ☒											

[1] Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
[2] If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. LAMAR SMITH, Chairman, Jan. 5, 2017.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2016

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Hon. Mark Sanford, Jr.	10/1	10/2	Italy		475.00						475.00
	10/3	10/4	Zambia		425.00						425.00
	10/4	10/6	Mozambique		660.00						660.00
	10/6	10/7	South Africa		273.00		6,810.76				7,083.76
Committee total					1,833.00		6,810.76				8,643.76

[1] Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
[2] If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. BILL SHUSTER, Chairman, Jan. 9, 2017.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

323. A letter from the Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Specialty Crops Program, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Walnuts Grown in California; Increased Assessment Rate [Doc. No.: AMS-SC-16-0062; SC16-984-2 FR] received January 19, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Agriculture.

324. A letter from the Program Specialist (Paperwork Reduction Act), LRAD, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's Joint final rule — Community Reinvestment Act Regulations [Docket ID: OCC-2016-0031] (RIN: 1557-AE11) received January 18, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

325. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Education, transmitting the Department's final regulations — Assistance to States for the Education of Children with Disabilities and the Preschool Grants for Children with Disabilities Program; Early Intervention Program for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities (RIN: 1820-AB74) received January 17, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

326. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2015, as required by the Older Americans Act of 1965, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 3018(a); Public Law 89-73, Sec. 207(a) (as amended by Public Law 106-501, Sec. 205); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

327. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a report to Congress titled ''2016 Actuarial Report on the Financial Outlook for Medicaid'', pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 1396 note; Public Law 111-3, Sec. 506(c); (123 Stat. 95); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

328. A letter from the General Counsel, Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board, transmitting the Board's final rule — Standards for Accessible Medical Diagnostic Equipment (RIN: 3014-AA40) received January 17, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

329. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the report to Congress entitled ''Fiscal Year 2016 Annual Report on the Food and Drug Administration Advisory Committee Vacancies and Public Disclosures'', pursuant to Sec. 712(e) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

330. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Administration's Fiscal Year 2016 Performance Report to Congress for the Biosimilar User Fee Act; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

331. A letter from the Chair, Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission, transmitting the Commission's recommendations concerning the future of the State Children's Health Insurance Program; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

332. A letter from the Director, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Direct Investment Surveys: BE-13, Survey of New Foreign Direct Investment in the United States, and Changes to Private Fund Reporting on Direct Investment Surveys [Docket No.: 160531475-6465-01] (RIN: 0691-AA85) received January 17, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

333. A letter from the Director, Office of Information Policy, Department of Justice, transmitting the Department's interim final rule — Revision of Department of Justice Freedom of Information Act Regulations [Docket No.: OAG 155] (RIN: 1105-AB51; A.G. Order No.: 3803-2016) received January 18, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

334. A letter from the Staff Attorney, National Indian Gaming Commission, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Privacy Act Procedures (RIN: 3141-AA65) received January 19, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

335. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Land and Minerals Management, Department of the Interior, transmitting notification of Amended Offer to donate Lands Acquired Adjacent to the Sabinoso Wilderness for Inclusion in the Wilderness through Section Six of The Wilderness Act of 1964 and to create public access to the Sabinoso Wilderness, pursuant to 16 U.S.C. 1135(a); Public Law 88-577, Sec. 6(a); (78 Stat. 896); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

336. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a report titled ''Indian Health Prescription Drug Monitoring'', pursuant to Sec. 827, 25 U.S.C. 1680q; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

337. A letter from the U.S. Special Representative and CNMI Special Representative, transmitting a report on the 902 Consultations from the Special Representatives of the United States and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) focusing on Immigration and Labor Issues and Proposed Military Activities in the CNMI, pursuant to 48 U.S.C. 1801; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

338. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's determination on a petition filed on behalf of workers from the Pantex Plant in Amarillo, Texas, to be added to the Special Exposure Cohort, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 7384q(c)(2); Public Law 106-398, Sec. 1 (as amended by Public Law 108-375, Sec. 3166(b)(1)); (118 Stat. 2188); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

339. A letter from the Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmitting the Ninth Annual Government-to-Government Violence Against Women Tribal Consultation, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 14045d(c); Public Law 109-162, Sec. 903(c) (as added by Public Law 113-4, Sec. 903(3)); (127 Stat. 120); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

340. A letter from the Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmitting the 2015 Annual Report of the National Institute of Justice, pursuant to Title 1 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 and the Homeland Security Act of 2002; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

341. A letter from the General Counsel, Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board, transmitting the Board's final rule — American With Disabilities Act (ADA) Accessibility Guidelines for Transportation Vehicles [Docket No.: ATBCB 2010-0004] (RIN: 3014-AA38) received January 17, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

342. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulations and Reports Clearance, Social Security Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rules — Revisions to Rules Regarding the Evaluation of Medical Evidence [Docket No.: SSA-2012-0035] (RIN: 0960-AH51) received January 18, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. SARBANES (for himself, Ms. PELOSI, Mr. HOYER, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. CROWLEY, Ms. SÁNCHEZ, Mr. AGUILAR, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. BERA, Mr. BEYER, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. BROWN of Maryland, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. COOPER, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. DEFAZIO, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. DELANEY, Ms. DELAURO, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. DEUTCH, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Ms. ESTY, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. HECK, Mr. HIMES, Ms. NORTON, Mr. HUFFMAN, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. JAYAPAL, Mr. JEFFRIES, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. KEATING, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. KHANNA, Mr. KIHUEN, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. KILMER, Mr. KIND, Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI, Mr. CLAY, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Ms. LEE, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. LOEBSACK, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Ms. MATSUI, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. MENG, Ms. MOORE, Mr. MOULTON, Mrs. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. NADLER, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. NORCROSS, Mr. O'HALLERAN, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. PETERS, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. POCAN, Mr. POLIS, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. RASKIN, Miss RICE of New York, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. SERRANO, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. SIRES, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. SOTO, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. TONKO, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. VEASEY, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. WALZ, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. WELCH, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. JONES, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. MCNERNEY, and Ms. BASS):

H.R. 20. A bill to reform the financing of Congressional elections by broadening participation by small dollar donors, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, and Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. DEFAZIO (for himself, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Ms. SHEA-PORTER):

H.R. 617. A bill to restore the application of the Federal antitrust laws to the business of health insurance to protect competition and consumers; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. LAMBORN (for himself, Mr. POLIS, and Mr. TIPTON):

H.R. 618. A bill to authorize, direct, expedite, and facilitate a land exchange in El Paso and Teller Counties, Colorado, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. CHABOT (for himself, Mr. CLAY, Mr. BLUM, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mr. WENSTRUP, Mr. SANFORD, Mr. RENACCI, Mr. COHEN, and Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio):

H.R. 619. A bill to amend title 46, United States Code, to exempt old vessels that only operate within inland waterways from the fire-retardant materials requirement if the

owners of such vessels make annual structural alterations to at least 10 percent of the areas of the vessels that are not constructed of fire-retardant materials and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. POE of Texas (for himself, Mr. PETERS, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. BERA, Ms. SPEIER, and Mr. CONAWAY):

H.R. 620. A bill to amend the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 to promote compliance through education, to clarify the requirements for demand letters, to provide for a notice and cure period before the commencement of a private civil action, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CHAFFETZ:

H.R. 621. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to sell certain Federal lands in Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, and Wyoming, previously identified as suitable for disposal, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. CHAFFETZ (for himself, Mr. STEWART, Mrs. LOVE, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. AMODEI, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, and Mr. GOSAR):

H.R. 622. A bill to terminate the law enforcement functions of the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management and to provide block grants to States for the enforcement of Federal law on Federal land under the jurisdiction of these agencies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CHAFFETZ (for himself, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. JONES, and Mr. CARTWRIGHT):

H.R. 623. A bill to promote competition and help consumers save money by giving them the freedom to choose where they buy prescription pet medications, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. VALADAO (for himself, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. JOYCE of Ohio, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. ROYCE of California, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. RENACCI, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. COHEN, Mr. DENHAM, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mrs. ROBY, Mr. BUCSHON, Mr. NUNES, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. MOULTON, Mrs. MURPHY of Florida, Mrs. DEMINGS, Mr. KILMER, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. CARBAJAL, and Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York):

H.R. 624. A bill to restrict the inclusion of social security account numbers on documents sent by mail by the Federal Government, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. AGUILAR (for himself and Mr. CALVERT):

H.R. 625. A bill to provide for joint reports by relevant Federal agencies to Congress regarding incidents of terrorism, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania (for himself and Mr. BUTTERFIELD):

H.R. 626. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to include recreational therapy among the therapy modalities that constitute an intensive rehabilitation therapy program in an inpatient rehabilitation hospital or unit; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT (for himself, Mr. BEYER, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. DESAULNIER, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. HANABUSA, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. KEATING, Mr. KNIGHT, Mr. LANCE, Ms. LEE, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. OLSON, Mr. PETERS, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. POCAN, Mr. POLIS, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mrs. RADEWAGEN, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. SERRANO, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. STEWART, Mr. TONKO, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. WELCH, Ms. NORTON, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SCHIFF, and Ms. SLAUGHTER):

H.R. 627. A bill to amend the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to provide for the dissemination of information regarding available Federal programs relating to energy efficiency projects for schools, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois (for himself and Mr. COFFMAN):

H.R. 628. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to prohibit application of preexisting condition exclusions and to guarantee availability of health insurance coverage in the individual and group market, contingent on the enactment of legislation repealing the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. CONAWAY (for himself and Mr. WENSTRUP):

H.R. 629. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify the conditions under which certain persons may be treated as adjudicated mentally incompetent for certain purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. COHEN (for himself, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. TAKANO, Ms. NORTON, Ms. LEE, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. CLAY, and Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico):

H.R. 630. A bill to require the Attorney General to issue rules pertaining to the collection and compilation of data on the use of deadly force by law enforcement officers; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. NOEM (for herself, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. NUNES, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. DAVIDSON, and Mr. SMITH of Nebraska):

H.R. 631. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the estate and generation-skipping transfer taxes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. MENG (for herself, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. POLIQUIN, Mr. HECK, Mrs. DINGELL, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Ms. BORDALLO, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. LOBIONDO, and Mr. PERLMUTTER):

H.R. 632. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the treatment of veterans who participated in the cleanup of Enewetak Atoll as radiation exposed veterans for purposes of the presumption of service-connection of certain disabilities by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. HARPER:

H.R. 633. A bill to authorize health insurance issuers to continue to offer for sale health insurance coverage offered in the individual market before the enactment of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act in satisfaction of the minimum essential health insurance coverage requirement, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. HARPER:

H.R. 634. A bill to terminate the Election Assistance Commission; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Ms. SCHAKOWSKY (for herself, Mr. DEUTCH, Ms. NORTON, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. POLIS, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. POCAN, Mr. SARBANES, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, and Ms. MOORE):

H.R. 635. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to establish a public health insurance option, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. SCHAKOWSKY (for herself, Mr. NADLER, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. NORTON, Ms. DELAURO, Ms. LEE, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. POCAN, Mr. COHEN, and Mr. CONYERS):

H.R. 636. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to impose increased rates of tax with respect to taxpayers with more than $1,000,000 taxable income, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. PALMER (for himself, Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Mr. BIGGS, Mr. HARRIS, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. LATTA, Mr. WENSTRUP, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. BABIN, Mr. WESTERMAN, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. BRAT, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. NUNES, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia, Mr. LUCAS, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. BERGMAN, Mr. CHAFFETZ, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. BANKS of Indiana, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Mr. BARTON, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. CARTER of Texas, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. RATCLIFFE, Mr. AMASH, Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. BUCK, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. CRAMER, Mrs. NOEM, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Ms. CHENEY, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. MESSER, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. SANFORD, Mr. WALKER, Mr. MULLIN, Mrs. ROBY, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. OLSON, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. LABRADOR, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. WILLIAMS, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. PERRY, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. SCALISE, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. YOHO, Mr. MASSIE, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. COLE, Mr. GARRETT, Mr. MARINO, Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. JONES, and Mr. DAVIDSON):

H.R. 637. A bill to prevent the Environmental Protection Agency from exceeding its statutory authority in ways that were

not contemplated by the Congress; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Natural Resources, Transportation and Infrastructure, and Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CALVERT (for himself, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. COSTA, Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. COOK, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. ISSA, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. LAMALFA, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. KNIGHT, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, and Mr. VALADAO):

H.R. 638. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 24930 Washington Avenue in Murrieta, California, as the ''Riverside County Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans Memorial Post Office''; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. ABRAHAM:

H.R. 639. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide for electronic notification of H-2A and H-2B visa petitioners upon receipt of the petitions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ALLEN (for himself, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. PITTENGER, and Mr. ROE of Tennessee):

H.R. 640. A bill to amend title I of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to require that a State awarded a Federal grant to establish an Exchange and that terminates the State operation of such an Exchange provide for an audit of the use of grant funds and return funds to the Federal Government, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. ALLEN (for himself, Mr. BOST, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. MESSER, and Mr. RICE of South Carolina):

H.R. 641. A bill to reform the H-2A program for nonimmigrant agricultural workers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BARLETTA (for himself, Mr. KING of New York, and Mr. MCCAUL):

H.R. 642. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to enhance the partnership between the Department of Homeland Security and the National Network of Fusion Centers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. BARLETTA:

H.R. 643. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to penalize aliens who overstay their visas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. BLACK (for herself, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. HUIZENGA, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. BANKS of Indiana, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Mr. LATTA, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. WENSTRUP, Mr. STEWART, Ms. FOXX, Mr. JONES, Mr. HULTGREN, Mrs. NOEM, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. YODER, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. BABIN, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. SCALISE, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. PALAZZO, Mr. MITCHELL, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. OLSON, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. YOHO, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. BRAT, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mrs. ROBY, Mr. LOUDERMILK, Mr. BIGGS, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. PERRY, Mr. HILL, Mr. RUTHERFORD, and Mr. HARRIS):

H.R. 644. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to prohibit governmental discrimination against providers of health services that are not involved in abortion; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. BOST (for himself, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mrs. RADEWAGEN, and Ms. GABBARD):

H.R. 645. A bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide for the inspection of kitchens and food service areas at medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs to ensure that the same standards for kitchens and food service areas at hospitals in the private sector are being met at kitchens and food service areas at medical facilities of the Department; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. BUCHANAN:

H.R. 646. A bill to provide that rates of pay for Members of Congress shall not be adjusted under section 601(a)(2) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 in the year following any fiscal year in which outlays of the United States exceeded receipts of the United States; to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CARSON of Indiana (for himself, Mr. COHEN, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. LANGEVIN, Ms. LEE, Mr. LOEBSACK, Ms. MOORE, Ms. NORTON, Mr. PAYNE, and Mr. RYAN of Ohio):

H.R. 647. A bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to award grants to eligible entities to establish, expand, or support school-based mentoring programs to assist at-risk middle school students with the transition from middle school to high school; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. CHENEY:

H.R. 648. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to amend the Definite Plan Report for the Seedskadee Project to enable the use of the active capacity of the Fontenelle Reservoir; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. COLLINS of New York (for himself, Mr. FARENTHOLD, and Mr. JONES):

H.R. 649. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that new wind turbines located near certain military installations are ineligible for the renewable electricity production credit and the energy credit; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. CULBERSON:

H.R. 650. A bill to provide for the development of a United States strategy for greater human space exploration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

By Mr. CUMMINGS (for himself, Ms. MENG, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, and Ms. NORTON):

H.R. 651. A bill to protect unpaid interns from workplace harassment and discrimination; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. CUMMINGS (for himself, Ms. MENG, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, and Ms. NORTON):

H.R. 652. A bill to amend the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995 to protect unpaid interns in the legislative branch from workplace harassment and discrimination, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. CUMMINGS (for himself, Ms. MENG, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, and Ms. NORTON):

H.R. 653. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to protect unpaid interns in the Federal Government from workplace harassment and discrimination, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. DEFAZIO:

H.R. 654. A bill to direct the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to carry out a plan for the purchase and installation of an earthquake early warning system for the Cascadia Subduction Zone, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. DONOVAN (for himself, Mr. MCCAUL, and Mr. KING of New York):

H.R. 655. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish the Securing the Cities program to enhance the ability of the United States to detect and prevent terrorist attacks and other high consequence events utilizing nuclear or other radiological materials that pose a high risk to homeland security in high-risk urban areas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. DUFFY (for himself, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. STEWART, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. WEBER of Texas, and Mr. LATTA):

H.R. 656. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to allow for greater State flexibility with respect to excluding providers who are involved in abortions; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. DUFFY (for himself, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. GOHMERT, Ms. NORTON, Mr. MEADOWS, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. COLE, Mr. COSTA, and Mr. GROTHMAN):

H.R. 657. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to extend certain protections against prohibited personnel practices, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. ELLISON (for himself and Mr. SWALWELL of California):

H.R. 658. A bill to amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to prohibit criminal corporations from making disbursements of funds in connection with a campaign for election for Federal, State, or local office; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. FARENTHOLD (for himself, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. MARINO, Mr. BUCSHON, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, and Mr. MESSER):

H.R. 659. A bill to amend the Clayton Act and the Federal Trade Commission Act to provide that the Federal Trade Commission shall exercise authority with respect to mergers only under the Clayton Act and only in the same procedural manner as the Attorney General exercises such authority; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. GOSAR (for himself, Mr. AMODEI, Mr. BIGGS, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. COSTA, Mr. DENHAM, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. HUFFMAN, Ms. MCSALLY, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. PEARCE, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. LAMALFA, and Mrs. BLACK):

H.R. 660. A bill to require the Secretary of the Interior to submit to Congress a report on the efforts of the Bureau of Reclamation to manage its infrastructure assets; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. GUTHRIE:

H.R. 661. A bill to authorize health insurance issuers to offer for sale previously available health insurance coverage in the small group market in satisfaction of the minimum essential health insurance coverage requirement, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. JENKINS of Kansas (for herself, Mr. KIND, Mr. TURNER, Mr. TONKO, and Mr. KINZINGER):

H.R. 662. A bill to enable hospital-based nursing programs that are affiliated with a hospital to maintain payments under the Medicare program to hospitals for the costs of such programs; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia (for himself, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. WELCH, and Mr. RYAN of Ohio):

H.R. 663. A bill to establish a grant program to assist dislocated miners in receiving additional training and education to enable them to find and secure new jobs; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. JOYCE of Ohio (for himself, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida, Ms. STEFANIK, and Ms. KAPTUR):

H.R. 664. A bill to prevent the abuse of opiates, to improve response and treatment for the abuse of opiates and related overdoses, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on the Judiciary, Oversight and Government Reform, and Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. KEATING (for himself, Mr. KATKO, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. RICHMOND, and Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi):

H.R. 665. A bill to modernize and enhance airport perimeter and access control security by requiring updated risk assessments and the development of security strategies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. KING of New York (for himself, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. MCCAUL, and Mr. DONOVAN):

H.R. 666. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish the Insider Threat Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. KING of New York (for himself, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. ZELDIN, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, and Ms. GABBARD):

H.R. 667. A bill to award a Congressional gold medal to the 5307th Composite Unit (Provisional), commonly known as ''Merrill's Marauders'', in recognition of their bravery and outstanding service in the jungles of Burma during World War II; to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on House Administration, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. LATTA (for himself, Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mrs. BLACK, and Mr. OLSON):

H.R. 668. A bill to eliminate automatic pay adjustments for Members of Congress, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. TED LIEU of California (for himself, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. GARAMENDI, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. POCAN, Ms. LEE, and Mr. WELCH):

H.R. 669. A bill to prohibit the conduct of a first-use nuclear strike absent a declaration of war by Congress; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Ms. LOFGREN:

H.R. 670. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to reform the H-1B visa program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. LOWEY (for herself, Ms. LEE, Mr. CONNOLLY, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. HASTINGS, Ms. NORTON, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. DELBENE, Ms. MOORE, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. COHEN, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Ms. TITUS, Mr. WELCH, Mr. HECK, Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. BERA, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. KHANNA, Ms. ESHOO, Ms. TSONGAS, Ms. DELAURO, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. KEATING, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. SINEMA, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. AGUILAR, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. POCAN, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. FOSTER, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Ms. MATSUI, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. BEYER, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. NADLER, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. NORCROSS, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. SCHIFF, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. LEVIN, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. POLIS, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. TONKO, Mr. PANETTA, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. RUSH, Mr. YARMUTH, Ms. MENG, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. PETERS, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. HIGGINS of New York, Ms. ESTY, Mrs. TORRES, Mr. RUIZ, Ms. JAYAPAL, Mr. DESAULNIER, Ms. HANABUSA, Mr. WALZ, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire, Ms. SÁNCHEZ, Mr. SOTO, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. EVANS, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. KIHUEN, Mr. RASKIN, Mr. SCHRADER, Ms. BASS, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. COURTNEY, Ms. FUDGE, Mrs. DEMINGS, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. HIMES, and Mrs. BEATTY):

H.R. 671. A bill to prohibit the application of certain restrictive eligibility requirements to foreign nongovernmental organizations with respect to the provision of assistance under part I of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mrs. LOWEY (for herself, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. ENGEL, and Ms. GRANGER):

H.R. 672. A bill to require continued and enhanced annual reporting to Congress in the Annual Report on International Religious Freedom on anti-Semitic incidents in Europe, the safety and security of European Jewish communities, and the efforts of the United States to partner with European governments, the European Union, and civil society groups, to combat anti-Semitism, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER (for himself, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, and Mr. GOSAR):

H.R. 673. A bill to prohibit United States contributions to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the Green Climate Fund; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. MCCAUL (for himself, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. BRAT, and Mr. GOHMERT):

H.R. 674. A bill to require each agency to repeal or revise 1 or more existing regulations before issuing a new regulation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. MCHENRY:

H.R. 675. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand the coverage of qualified tuition programs and increase the limitation on contributions to Coverdell education savings accounts; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. CONYERS (for himself, Mr. HUFFMAN, Ms. LEE, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. CLAY, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Ms. NORTON, Mr. POCAN, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. TAKANO, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. TONKO, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. WELCH, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. PINGREE, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. GARAMENDI, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. HASTINGS, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. NADLER, Ms. JAYAPAL, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Ms. ADAMS, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. DESAULNIER, and Ms. MOORE):

H.R. 676. A bill to provide for comprehensive health insurance coverage for all United States residents, improved health care delivery, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, and Natural Resources, for a period

to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. MCSALLY (for herself, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. DONOVAN, and Mr. MCCAUL):

H.R. 677. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear intelligence and information sharing functions of the Office of Intelligence and Analysis of the Department of Homeland Security and to require dissemination of information analyzed by the Department to entities with responsibilities relating to homeland security, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Ms. MCSALLY (for herself, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. MCCAUL, and Mr. KING of New York):

H.R. 678. A bill to require an assessment of fusion center personnel needs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. MEADOWS (for himself, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, and Mr. RUSSELL):

H.R. 679. A bill to amend title 41, United States Code, to improve the manner in which Federal contracts for design and construction services are awarded, to prohibit the use of reverse auctions for design and construction services procurements, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. MEADOWS (for himself and Mr. JONES):

H.R. 680. A bill to prohibit accessing pornographic web sites from Federal computers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia (for himself, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. OLSON, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. HARPER, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. CHABOT, Mrs. NOEM, Mr. DAVIDSON, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. PALMER, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. CARTER of Texas, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. MASSIE, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. PITTENGER, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. LONG, Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. YOHO, Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia, Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida, Mr. MARINO, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. BUCSHON, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. MITCHELL, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. LATTA, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. PALAZZO, Mr. JONES, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. LABRADOR, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. BARTON, and Mr. PETERSON):

H.R. 681. A bill to implement equal protection under the 14th article of amendment to the Constitution for the right to life of each born and preborn human person; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MULLIN (for himself, Mr. RUSSELL, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. DENHAM, and Mr. CÁRDENAS):

H.R. 682. A bill to amend titles XIX and XXI of the Social Security Act to eliminate the CHIP maintenance of effort requirement and to eliminate DSH cuts for States not implementing the ACA Medicaid expansion; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. NOLAN:

H.R. 683. A bill to require pipelines regulated by the Secretary of Transportation to be made of steel that is produced in the United States and originates from iron ore and taconite mined and processed in the United States, for safety, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. PALAZZO (for himself, Mr. PALMER, Mr. WEBER of Texas, and Mr. HARPER):

H.R. 684. A bill to prohibit recovery of damages in certain wrongful birth and wrongful life civil actions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. PASCRELL (for himself, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Ms. NORTON, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. KIND, and Mr. LARSON of Connecticut):

H.R. 685. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to encourage domestic insourcing and discourage foreign outsourcing; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. PAULSEN (for himself and Mr. WELCH):

H.R. 686. A bill to ensure appropriate spectrum planning and interagency coordination to support the Internet of Things; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. PAYNE (for himself, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, and Mr. DONOVAN):

H.R. 687. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish a process to review applications for certain grants to purchase equipment or systems that do not meet or exceed any applicable national voluntary consensus standards, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. POLIS (for himself, Mr. TIPTON, and Mr. LAMBORN):

H.R. 688. A bill to adjust the boundary of the Arapaho National Forest, Colorado, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. POLIS (for himself, Mr. TIPTON, and Mr. LAMBORN):

H.R. 689. A bill to insure adequate use and access to the existing Bolts Ditch headgate and ditch segment within the Holy Cross Wilderness in Eagle County, Colorado, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. RICHMOND:

H.R. 690. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to enhance certain duties of the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. ROKITA (for himself, Mr. MESSER, and Mr. GOWDY):

H.R. 691. A bill to expand opportunity through greater choice in education, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committees on Oversight and Government Reform, and Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN (for herself, Mr. JONES, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. RATCLIFFE, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, Ms. FOXX, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. CURBELO of Florida, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. YOHO, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Mr. LATTA, Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. HUIZENGA, Mr. OLSON, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. MESSER, Mr. CHABOT, and Mr. AMASH):

H.R. 692. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit taking minors across State lines in circumvention of laws requiring the involvement of parents in abortion decisions; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ROSS:

H.R. 693. A bill to amend the Employee Polygraph Protection Act of 1988 to provide an exemption from the protections of that Act with regard to certain prospective employees whose job would include caring for or interacting with children; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. ROUZER (for himself, Mr. JONES, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. DUFFY, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. HUIZENGA, Mr. O'HALLERAN, Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, and Mr. LATTA):

H.R. 694. A bill to repeal the Environmental Protection Agency's most recent rule for new residential wood heaters; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SCHIFF (for himself, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. WALBERG, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. WELCH, Mr. TROTT, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. TIPTON, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. VELA, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. SOTO, Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, and Mrs. DINGELL):

H.R. 695. A bill to amend the National Child Protection Act of 1993 to establish a national criminal history background check system and criminal history review program for certain individuals who, related to their employment, have access to children, the elderly, or individuals with disabilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SCHRADER (for himself and Mr. MOULTON):

H.R. 696. A bill to prohibit any hiring freeze from affecting the Department of Veterans Affairs; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi:

H.R. 697. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to improve the management and administration of the security clearance processes throughout the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. TIPTON (for himself, Mr. POLIS, and Mr. LAMBORN):

H.R. 698. A bill to require a land conveyance involving the Elkhorn Ranch and the White River National Forest in the State of Colorado, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. WALDEN (for himself and Mr. BLUMENAUER):

H.R. 699. A bill to amend the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 to modify provisions relating to certain land exchanges in the Mt. Hood Wilderness in the State of Oregon; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mrs. WALORSKI:

H.R. 700. A bill to amend section 552 of title 5, United States Code, to apply the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act to the National Security Council, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. WILSON of South Carolina (for himself and Mr. TED LIEU of California):

H.R. 701. A bill to direct the Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to conduct a study to determine appropriate cybersecurity standards for motor vehicles, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. DEUTCH (for himself, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. DEFAZIO, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Ms. ESTY, Mr. FOSTER, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. HIMES, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. KEATING, Mr. KIHUEN, Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. LOEBSACK, Ms. LOFGREN, Mrs. LOWEY, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. NADLER, Mr. NOLAN, Ms. NORTON, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. PASCRELL, Ms. PELOSI, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. RASKIN, Miss RICE of New York, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. SERRANO, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. SIRES, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. SUOZZI, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Ms. TITUS, Mr. TONKO, Ms. TSONGAS, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. WELCH, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. WALZ, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mr. SOTO, and Mr. HUFFMAN):

H.J. Res. 31. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relating to contributions and expenditures intended to affect elections; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BISHOP of Utah (for himself and Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS):

H.J. Res. 32. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States to give States the authority to repeal Federal rules and regulations when the repeal is agreed to by the legislatures of two-thirds of the several States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York (for herself, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. HIGGINS of New York, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. NADLER, Mr. CRIST, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. CLAY, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. DENT, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. GOTTHEIMER, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. MCEACHIN, Mr. KIND, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. WALZ, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. RASKIN, Mr. JEFFRIES, Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. REED, Mr. LANCE, Mr. HOYER, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. PALLONE, Mrs. DINGELL, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. NORCROSS, Ms. MENG, Mr. LAWSON of Florida, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. KEATING, Ms. ADAMS, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Ms. MATSUI, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Ms. SÁNCHEZ, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. LEE, Mr. KILDEE, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. NORTON, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. SIRES, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. POCAN, Ms. DEGETTE, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. LYNCH, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. AGUILAR, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. BEYER, Mr. COOPER, and Mr. COHEN):

H.J. Res. 33. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relative to equal rights for men and women; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BISHOP of Michigan (for himself, Mr. HUIZENGA, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. TROTT, and Mr. MITCHELL):

H. Con. Res. 12. Concurrent resolution supporting the designation of the week of September 11 to September 17 as ''Patriot Week''; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. CONAWAY (for himself, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mrs. RADEWAGEN, Mr. COOK, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. BUCSHON, Mr. YODER, Mr. MASSIE, Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Mr. LONG, Mr. PALAZZO, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. MESSER, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. CRAMER, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. PALLONE, Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. HILL, Mr. JOYCE of Ohio, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. KINZINGER, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. WOMACK, Mr. RUSSELL, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. SHIMKUS, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. COMER, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. TURNER, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. WESTERMAN, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. FLORES, Mr. BARR, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. UPTON, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. LOBIONDO, Mrs. NOEM, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. LATTA, Mr. BLUM, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. LUCAS, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. BABIN, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. BANKS of Indiana, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. BOST, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. ELLISON, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. WALDEN, Mr. WALZ, Mr. LANCE, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. FOXX, Mr. HULTGREN, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. PASCRELL, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. KILMER, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. GALLAGHER, Mr. EMMER, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. AMODEI, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. KEATING, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. STEWART, Mr. LAHOOD, Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire, Mr. COLE, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, and Mr. SMITH of Nebraska):

H. Con. Res. 13. Concurrent resolution supporting the Local Radio Freedom Act; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. GRIFFITH:

H. Con. Res. 14. Concurrent resolution establishing the Joint Ad Hoc Committee on Trade Responsibilities to develop a plan under which the functions and responsibilities of the Office of the United States Trade Representative shall be moved to the legislative branch in accordance with article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Rules, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CROWLEY:

H. Res. 56. A resolution electing Members to a certain standing committee of the House of Representatives; considered and agreed to. considered and agreed to.

By Mr. LIPINSKI (for himself, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. EMMER, Mr. FASO, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, Mr. GALLAGHER, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. JONES, Mr. JOYCE of Ohio, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. LATTA, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Mr. PASCRELL, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. SABLAN, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mrs. WAGNER, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, and Mr. SOTO):

H. Res. 57. A resolution supporting the contributions of Catholic schools; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN (for herself, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. DEUTCH, and Ms. GRANGER):

H. Res. 58. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding unanswered questions into the fate of Raoul Wallenberg; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. CROWLEY:

H. Res. 59. A resolution electing Members to certain standing committees of the House of Representatives; considered and agreed to. considered and agreed to.

By Mr. DENT (for himself, Mr. WALKER, Mr. HUIZENGA, Mr. THORNBERRY, Mr. RUSSELL, Mr. HUDSON, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. FLORES, Mr. BLUM, Mr. GRIFFITH, Mr. TAYLOR, Mr. COLE, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. EMMER, and Mr. KING of New York):

H. Res. 60. A resolution expressing continued support for the special relationship between the United States and the United Kingdom and urging commencement of negotiations for the development of a North Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (NATIP) between the United States and the United Kingdom; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be

subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. ESPAILLAT:

H. Res. 61. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of a Juan Pablo Duarte Day; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. FITZPATRICK:

H. Res. 62. A resolution prohibiting the placement of ''Members Only'' signs in the House of Representatives wing of the United States Capitol or in office buildings of the House of Representatives; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Ms. MENG (for herself, Mr. ROYCE of California, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Ms. LEE, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. SCHIFF, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. VARGAS, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. PETERS, Ms. HANABUSA, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. CROWLEY, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Ms. TITUS, Ms. LOFGREN, and Mr. SCOTT of Virginia):

H. Res. 63. A resolution recognizing the cultural and historical significance of Lunar New Year in 2017; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. SARBANES:

H.R. 20.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution under the General Welfare Clause.

By Mr. DEFAZIO:

H.R. 617.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress)

By Mr. LAMBORN:

H.R. 618.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. CHABOT:

H.R. 619.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This legislation is enacted by Congressional Authority expressed in Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. POE of Texas:

H.R. 620.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. CHAFFETZ:

H.R. 621.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2: relating to the power of Congress to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States.

By Mr. CHAFFETZ:

H.R. 622.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2: relating to the power of Congress to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States.

By Mr. CHAFFETZ:

H.R. 623.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3: To regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes

By Mr. VALADAO:

H.R. 624.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. AGUILAR:

H.R. 625.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, section 8, clause 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 626.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3; and including but not solely limited to Article I, Section 8, Clause 14.

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT:

H.R. 627.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 (relating to the power of Congress to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.)

By Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois:

H.R. 628.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress as stated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. CONAWAY:

H.R. 629.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Pursuant to Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. COHEN:

H.R. 630.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mrs. NOEM:

H.R. 631.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8: The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises . . .

By Ms. MENG:

H.R. 632.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. HARPER:

H.R. 633.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Congress enacts this bill pursuant to Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. HARPER:

H.R. 634.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 4 of the U.S. Constitution granting Congress the authority to make laws governing the time, place, and manner of holding federal elections.

By Ms. SCHAKOWSKY:

H.R. 635.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8: The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United State

By Ms. SCHAKOWSKY:

H.R. 636.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 7 of the Constitution

By Mr. PALMER:

H.R. 637.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18—The Congress shall have Power To . . . make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. CALVERT:

H.R. 638.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is provided by Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically clause 1 and clause 18.

By Mr. ABRAHAM:

H.R. 639.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3: to regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with Indian tribes.

By Mr. ALLEN:

H.R. 640.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congressman Rick W. Allen (GA–12) states that Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Consistent with the original understanding of the commerce clause, the authority to enact this legislation is found in Clause 3 of Section 8, Article 1 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. ALLEN:

H.R. 641.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Consistent with the original understanding of the commerce clause, the authority to enact this legislation is found in Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. BARLETTA:

H.R. 642.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18—To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. BARLETTA:

H.R. 643.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 4

By Mrs. BLACK:

H.R. 644.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill makes specific changes to existing law in a manner that provides conscience protections in accord with the 1st Amendment of the United States Constitution. Further, this bill creates a private right of action in federal court in accord with Clause 9

of Section 8 of Article I, of the United States Constitution. Similarly, this bill provides for preventing disbursement of all or a portion of certain Federal financial assistance in accord with Clause 1, Section 8 Article 1.

By Mr. BOST:

H.R. 645.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1.

By Mr. BUCHANAN:

H.R. 646.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. CARSON of Indiana:

H.R. 647.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 7 of section 9 of article I of the Constitution, Clause 1 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution, and clause 18 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution.

By Ms. CHENEY:

H.R. 648.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3.

By Mr. COLLINS of New York:

H.R. 649.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. CULBERSON:

H.R. 650.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 granting Congress the power to ''promote the Progress of Science.''

By Mr. CUMMINGS:

H.R. 651.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18 [Page H5590]

By Mr. CUMMINGS:

H.R. 652.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18 [Page H5590]

By Mr. CUMMINGS:

H.R. 653.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18 [Page H5590]

By Mr. DEFAZIO:

H.R. 654.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically Clause 1 (relating to providing for the common defense and general welfare of the United States) and Clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress).

By Mr. DONOVAN:

H.R. 655.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. DUFFY:

H.R. 656.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. DUFFY:

H.R. 657.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. ELLISON:

H.R. 658.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1, Clause 3 and Clause 18.

By Mr. FARENTHOLD:

H.R. 659.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, clauses 3 and 18 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. GOSAR:

H.R. 660.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1 (the Spending Clause). The Supreme Court, in South Dakota v. Dole (1987), reasoned that conditions and limitations on funds were constitutional and within the power of Congress under the Spending Clause.

Article 1 Section 8 Clause 3 (Commerce Clause) If the matter in question is not a purely local matter (intra-state) or if it has an impact on inter-state commerce, it falls within Congress' power to ''regulate commerce among the several states.''

Article 1 Section 8 Clause 18 (the Necessary and Proper Clause) which grants Congress the power to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers, and all other powers vested by this Constitution of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. GUTHRIE:

H.R. 661.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section 8:

The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States;

By Ms. JENKINS of Kansas:

H.R. 662.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8:

The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.

Article I, Section 9:

No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law.

By Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia:

H.R. 663.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8—Commerce Clause

By Mr. JOYCE of Ohio:

H.R. 664.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

The Congress shall have Power * * * To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Office thereof.

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts, and Excises shall be uniform throughout the Unites States.

By Mr. KEATING:

H.R. 665.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. KING of New York:

H.R. 666.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18—To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. KING of New York:

H.R. 667.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 5 of the Constitution

By Mr. LATTA:

H.R. 668.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 6

The Senators and Representatives shall receive a Compensation for their Services, to be ascertained by Law, and paid out of the Treasury of the United States.

By Mr. TED LIEU of California:

H.R. 669.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution, which grants Congress the power to declare war.

By Ms. LOFGREN:

H.R. 670.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 4 of the Constitution.

By Mrs. LOWEY:

H.R. 671.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I.

By Mrs. LOWEY:

H.R. 672.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 673.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Constitutional authority on which this bill is based is Congress's power under the Spending Clause in Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution.

By Mr. MCCAUL:

H.R. 674.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. MCHENRY:

H.R. 675.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section VIII

By Mr. CONYERS:

H.R. 676.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Ms. MCSALLY:

H.R. 677.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, section 8, clause 1—The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States;

Article 1, section 8, clause 18—To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United

States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Ms. MCSALLY:

H.R. 678.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18—To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. MEADOWS:

H.R. 679.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article 1

By Mr. MEADOWS:

H.R. 680.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

''The Congress shall have the Power To . . . make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or Department or Officer thereof''—Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia:

H.R. 681.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This legislation makes clear that human life begins at the moment of conception and, therefore, the unborn are entitled to the same rights and protections afforded to all American citizens under the U.S. Constitution. In affirming human life begins at conception, the unborn are granted the right to due process under Section 1 of the 14th Amendment which explicitly states, ''No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.''

The Life at Conception Act allows for constitutional protection for the unborn that they not ''be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law'' afforded under the 5th Amendment.

By Mr. MULLIN:

H.R. 682.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. NOLAN:

H.R. 683.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically Clause 3

By Mr. PALAZZO:

H.R. 684.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18: The Congress shall have Power . . . To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. PASCRELL:

H.R. 685.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. PAULSEN:

H.R. 686.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. PAYNE:

H.R. 687.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8.

By Mr. POLIS:

H.R. 688.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 (relating to the power of Congress to provide for the general welfare of the United States) and Clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress).

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 (relating to the power of Congress to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting territory or other property belonging to the United States).

By Mr. POLIS:

H.R. 689.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 (relating to the power of Congress to provide for the general welfare of the United States) and Clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress).

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 (relating to the power of Congress to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting territory or other property belonging to the United States).

By Mr. RICHMOND:

H.R. 690.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is introduced pursuant to the powers granted to Congress under the General Welfare Clause (Art. 1 Sec. 8 Cl. 1), the Commerce Clause (Art. 1 Sec. 8 Cl. 3), and the Necessary and Proper Clause (Art. 1 Sec. 8 Cl. 18).

Further, this statement of constitutional authority is made for the sole purpose of compliance with clause 7 of Rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and shall have no bearing on judicial review of the accompanying bill.

By Mr. ROKITA:

H.R. 691.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause I ''Congress shall have the power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts, and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States; but all duties, imposts, and excises shall be uniform throughout the United States

By Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN:

H.R. 692.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. ROSS:

H.R. 693.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Fourteenth Amendment, Section 5

By Mr. ROUZER:

H.R. 694.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Consistent with the understading and interpretation of Commerce Clause, Congress has the authority to enact this legislation in accordance with Clause 3 of Section 8, Article 1 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. SCHIFF:

H.R. 695.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress has the power to enact the Child Protection Improvements Act of 2017 pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 18, the Necessary and Proper Clause. The Necessary and Proper Clause supports the expansion of congressional authority beyond the explicit authorities that are directly discernible from the text. Additionally, the Preamble to the Constitution provides support of the authority to enact legislation to promote the General Welfare.

By Mr. SCHRADER:

H.R. 696.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section VIII of the Constitution

By Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi:

H.R. 697.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The U.S. Constitution including Article 1, Section 8.

By Mr. TIPTON:

H.R. 698.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 4, Section 3, Clause 2:

The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitution shall be so construed as to Prejudice any Claims of the United States, or of any particular State.

By Mr. WALDEN:

H.R. 699.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 (relating to the power of Congress to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States).

By Mrs. WALORSKI:

H.R. 700.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution. ''To provide for the common defense,'' ''to raise and support Armies,'' ''to provide and maintain a Navy,'' and ''to make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces.''

By Mr. WILSON of South Carolina:

H.R. 701.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18 of the U.S. Constitution, which gives Congress the power to ''make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof '' This legislation requires a study to determine regulations appropriate for the safety and security of automobiles in the United States. Nothing in this legislation shall be construed to restrict due process of the law as defined in Section 1, Amendment XIV of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. DEUTCH:

H.J. Res. 31.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article V of the Constitution: The Congress, whenever two thirds of both Houses shall deem it necessary, shall propose amendments to this Constitution, or, on the application of the legislatures of two thirds of the several states, shall call a convention for proposing amendments, which, either case, shall be valid to all intents and purposes, as part of this Constitution, when ratified by the legislatures of three fourths of the several states or by conventions in three fourths thereof, as the one or the other

mode of ratification may be proposed by the Congress; provided that no amendment which may be made prior to the year one thousand eight hundred and eight shall in any manner affect the first and fourth clauses in the ninth section of the first article; and no state, without its consent, shall be deprived of its equal suffrage in the Senate.

By Mr. BISHOP of Utah:

H.J. Res. 32.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article V

By Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York:

H.J. Res. 33.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article V—Amendment. The Congress, whenever two thirds of both Houses shall deem it necessary, shall propose Amendments to this Constitution, or, on the Application of the Legislatures of two thirds of the several States, shall call a Convention for proposing Amendments, which, in either Case, shall be valid to all Intents and Purposes, as Part of this Constitution, when ratified by the Legislatures of three fourths of the several States or by Conventions in three fourths thereof, as the one or the other Mode of Ratification may be proposed by the Congress; Provided that no Amendment which may be made prior to the Year One thousand eight hundred and eight shall in any Manner affect the first and fourth Clauses in the Ninth Section of the first Article; and that no State, without its Consent, shall be deprived of its equal Suffrage in the Senate.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 7: Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana, Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana, Mrs. ROBY, Mr. GRAVES of Georgia, and Mr. FRANKS of Arizona.

H.R. 24: Mr. SOTO, Mr. CARTER of Texas, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, Mr. JOYCE of Ohio, Mr. BIGGS, and Mr. ROUZER.

H.R. 36: Mr. TURNER, Mr. YOHO, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. RATCLIFFE, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. HUNTER, and Mr. MARSHALL.

H.R. 37: Mr. YOHO, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. RATCLIFFE, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. MARSHALL, and Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida.

H.R. 38: Mr. FASO, Mr. SMUCKER, Mr. KUSTOFF of Tennessee, and Ms. TENNEY.

H.R. 80: Mr. MULLIN, Mr. ZELDIN, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. GROTHMAN, and Mr. DUNN.

H.R. 82: Mr. MULLIN.

H.R. 147: Mr. YOHO, Mr. JORDAN, and Mr. BRADY of Texas.

H.R. 161: Mr. NOLAN.

H.R. 184: Mr. SMUCKER, Mr. MARSHALL, and Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI.

H.R. 217: Mr. HUNTER and Mr. WENSTRUP.

H.R. 233: Mr. NOLAN, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. SOTO, and Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 246: Mr. RICE of South Carolina, Mr. MCHENRY, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. COMER, Mr. REICHERT, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. MITCHELL, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mrs. LOVE, Mrs. RADEWAGEN, Mr. SANFORD, and Ms. TENNEY.

H.R. 256: Mr. GOHMERT.

H.R. 257: Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. BACON, and Mr. WENSTRUP.

H.R. 275: Mrs. WAGNER, and Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 299: Ms. MOORE, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mr. KEATING, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. VARGAS, Ms. NORTON, Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. BABIN, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. FASO, Mr. HUIZENGA, Mr. LUCAS, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. UPTON, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. SMITH of Washington, and Mr. BISHOP of Michigan.

H.R. 301: Ms. PINGREE, and Ms. MCCOLLUM.

H.R. 305: Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. PAYNE, and Ms. BARRAGAN.

H.R. 308: Mr. PITTENGER.

H.R. 351: Mr. BUDD.

H.R. 354: Mr. MITCHELL.

H.R. 360: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, MR. HUFFMAN, and Mr. POLIS.

H.R. 367: Mr. DUNN, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, and Mr. LATTA.

H.R. 371: Ms. Barragan, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, and Mr. KHANNA.

H.R. 372: Mr. BIGGS, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. SANFORD, and Mr. GARRETT.

H.R. 373: Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. OLSON, and Mr. SESSIONS.

H.R. 377: Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. GARRETT, Mr. LAMBORN, and Mr. LOUDERMILK.

H.R. 379: Mr. SOTO.

H.R. 380: Mr. OLSON.

H.R. 387: Mr. ALLEN, Mr. AMASH, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. COHEN, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. DEFAZIO, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. EMMER, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. HIMES, Mr. JONES, Mr. KILMER, Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Ms. NORTON, Mr. OLSON, Mr. POSEY, Mrs. RADEWAGEN, Miss RICE of New York, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. SANFORD, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. TONKO, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. WALKER, Mr. WENSTRUP, Mr Yoho, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. CURBELO of Florida, Mr. LOUDERMILK, Mr. SOTO, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. POLIQUIN, Mr. BARTON, Mr. KATKO, Mr. GALLEGO, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. HASTINGS, Ms. TSONGAS, and Mr. MARSHALL.

H.R. 390: Mr. SCHWEIKERT and Mr. GROTHMAN.

H.R. 392: Ms. MATSUI, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. PASCRELL, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. FOSTER, Mr. REICHERT, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI, and Mr. LARSEN of Washington.

H.R. 399: Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 400: Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. FARENTHOLD, and Mr. ABRAHAM.

H.R. 406: Mr. BISHOP of Michigan.

H.R. 409: Mr. BIGGS.

H.R. 411: Mr. ENGEL, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. KNIGHT, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. KILMER, Mr. LANGEVIN, and Mr. COLLINS of New York.

H.R. 463: Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. SIRES, Mr. KEATING, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. PASCRELL, and Mr. SENSENBRENNER.

H.R. 464: Mr. ELLISON.

H.R. 475: Mr. ROUZER and Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia.

H.R. 476: Mr. BANKS of Indiana, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. GOODLATTE, and Mr. ROUZER.

H.R. 482: Mr. BIGGS.

H.R. 483: Mr. GARRETT.

H.R. 490: Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. BACON, and Mr. GARRETT.

H.R. 502: Mr. FASO, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. KATKO, Mr. POLIS, Mr. HECK, Mr. TAKANO, Ms. NORTON, Ms. MOORE, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. TONKO, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. KHANNA, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. POCAN, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. BEYER, Ms. LEE, Mr. KEATING, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. WELCH, Mr. PETERS, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. COHEN, Mr. Ted Lieu of California, Mr. SOTO, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. LOEBSACK, Ms. ESTY, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. FORTENBERRY.

H.R. 505: Mr. BYRNE and Mr. EMMER.

H.R. 508: Mr. LANGEVIN and Mr. WALZ.

H.R. 512: Mr. LAUDERMILK, Mr. KNIGHT, and Mr. LANGEVIN.

H.R. 520: Mr. LABRADOR.

H.R. 523: Mr. TIBERI and Mr. SCHWEIKERT.

H.R. 534: Mr. POE of Texas.

H.R. 539: Mr. ROE of Tennessee and Mr. EMMER.

H.R. 547: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia and Mr. WALZ.

H.R. 548: Mr. MARSHALL and Mr. BARR.

H.R. 559: Mr. BURGESS.

H.R. 564: Mr. BARR, Mr. BUDD, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. TURNER, Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, and Mr. KATKO.

H.R. 580: Mr. KILMER.

H.R. 585: Mr. DEFAZIO.

H.R. 589: Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 592: Mr. BARR, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, and Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 598: Mr. POLIS.

H.R. 601: Mr. DONOVAN, Mr. ROYCE of California, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. DENT, Ms. GRANGER, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, and Mr. MCCAUL.

H.R. 606: Mr. MCCLINTOCK.

H. Con. Res. 8: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, and Mr. CUELLAR.

H. Res. 15: Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER, Mr. PANETTA, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mrs. TORRES, Mr. LOEBSACK, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. TONKO, and Mrs. LOWEY.

H. Res. 28: Mr. LATTA, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. KATKO, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. TONKO, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. BILIRAKIS and Ms. KELLY of Illinois.

H. Res. 30: Mr. FOSTER, Mr. QUIGLEY, Ms. Bordello, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. SOTO, Mr. Rodney Davis of Illinois, and Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, Ms. NORTON, and Mr. TIPTON.

H. Res. 31: Mr. KING of New York, Mr. LOWEY, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. LANGEVIN, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. KATKO, and Mr. LATTA.

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PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 115th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 163 WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, JANUARY 24, 2017 *No. 13*

Senate

The Senate met at 10:45 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable BEN SASSE, a Senator from the State of Nebraska.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Beautiful Savior, You have been our dwelling place in all generations, sustaining us with Your steadfast love.

Today, surround our Senators with the shield of Your divine favor, enabling them to obey Your command to be fruitful and productive. Teach them to obey Your precepts, doing Your good will, as they find joy in Your presence. Lord, keep them from doing those things that could bring them regret, remorse, and shame. Renew their strength as You give them the courage to carry on in these challenging days. Guard them from error, save them from false judgments, and deliver them from evil.

We pray in Your Holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, January 24, 2017.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable BEN SASSE, a Senator from the State of Nebraska, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ORRIN G. HATCH,
President pro tempore.

Mr. SASSE thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

DIALOGUE WITH THE PRESIDENT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, yesterday, leaders from both parties had an opportunity to meet with President Trump and Vice President PENCE at the White House. We appreciate their time and look forward to more conversations with them in the days to come, including later today.

The President has invited the Democratic leader, the chairman and ranking member of the Judiciary Committee, and me to the White House this afternoon to meet with him regarding the Supreme Court vacancy as part of his ongoing consultations with Members of the Senate. I appreciate the President soliciting our advice on this important matter.

Later this week, Republicans in both the Senate and House will have another opportunity to engage with the President as we gather for our issues conference in Philadelphia. I know we are all eager to continue the dialogue about moving our legislative agenda, including priorities like bringing relief from the consequences of ObamaCare, confirming the President's nominees, enacting tax reform, easing the regulatory burden on our economy, and other key issues.

We are also looking forward to hearing from another special guest, British Prime Minister Theresa May. Her visit will provide Members the chance to hear from the leader of one of our closest allies and partners. We appreciate her willingness to join us, and we welcome the opportunity to discuss the ways in which we can continue to strengthen our Nations' close relationship and pursue shared interests in the years ahead.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

CAMPAIGN PROMISES OF PRESIDENT TRUMP

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, according to President Trump's words, yesterday—not Friday—was his first official day in office. It is an important distinction because throughout the campaign, President Trump made numerous promises about what he would do on his first day. So we went through them. Turns out he made upwards of 30 promises of Executive actions or plans that he would announce on day 1. This didn't require any congressional approval; he could just announce it. Even by a generous count, the President fulfilled only two or three of them. Let me mention just a few of the important omissions.

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The President campaigned against both establishments, promising to oppose elites and the powerful in Washington, ''to drain the swamp.'' He campaigned against the Democratic establishment, but he also campaigned against the Republican establishment. As a result, he explicitly promised to introduce an 18-point plan for ethics reform on day 1. How did he do on that? He promised to sign a 5-year ban on lobbying after officials worked in Congress or the White House, but he did not deliver. He promised to institute a lifetime ban on White House officials from lobbying on behalf of a foreign government, but he did not deliver. He promised to put in place a complete ban on foreign lobbyists raising money for American elections, but again he did not deliver.

On day 1, did President Trump fulfill his pledge to bring ethics reform to Washington? No. In fact, looking at his ''swamp Cabinet''—stacked with billionaires and bankers with myriad conflicts of interests—he may have already lowered the ethical standards in our government.

On trade—this is an issue where I am probably closer to the views of the President's than I was to either President Obama's or President Bush's, but it seems President Trump is again failing to deliver on his day 1 promises. He promised over and over again—it was one of the few things he said in the campaign I really liked. He said he was going to label China a currency manipulator on his first day. But he did not deliver. Instead, he issued an Executive action withdrawing from the TPP.

Everyone knew the TPP was dead in the water a month or two ago. Leader MCCONNELL would not bring it up on the floor of the Senate because he did not have the votes. Furthermore, saying we won't do TPP, which is not in effect anyway, isn't creating a single new job.

So there is something else he could have done—his promise: On day 1, label China a currency manipulator. China is propping up their currency at the moment. They do whatever is best for China even if it hurts American jobs and American workers over and over again. You can be sure they will continue manipulating their currency when it is in their best interest to do so. You can be sure, even when they move up the currency, they are manipulating it.

Guess who I worked with on the issue of currency manipulation. Attorney General nominee, then-Senator JEFF SESSIONS. He and I were partners in this, and many others. On our side, Senator BROWN and Senator STABENOW were allies. On their side, Senator GRAHAM and Senator COLLINS were allies. It was a broad bipartisan coalition. And we were opposed, frankly, by both President Bush and President Obama. But here we have President Trump. He promised to label China a currency manipulator on his first day in office. We are still waiting.

Last night at the White House, I mentioned this to the President. He didn't say no. I am not going to say what he said. He didn't say no. Maybe he will do it. I hope and pray he does. We await real action on trade, one of the President's signature issues. It is another promise not fulfilled.

There are many promises President Trump made during the campaign that we are glad he is not keeping, to be honest with you, but the bottom line is, there is a giant gulf between what the President says he is going to do and what he actually does. His rhetoric does not match reality. That is becoming clearer each day. Just look at what happened on Friday, inauguration day, which perfectly sums up my point. The President gave an inaugural address arguing that for too long Washington has reaped the rewards of government, while the people have suffered. Then, an hour later, the President took an Executive action that made it harder for Americans to afford a mortgage, even though Washington could certainly have afforded to give them a tax break. We are seeing a pattern emerge. President Trump is using populist rhetoric to cover up a hard-right agenda.

In short, actions speak louder than words. If day 1 is any indication, the grandiose promises this President made to the working men and women of America seem to be just a hall of mirrors.

I yield the floor.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with Senator ALEXANDER to be recognized for up to 15 minutes, followed by 30 minutes controlled by the Democrats.

The Senator from Tennessee.

NOMINATION OF BETSY DEVOS

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, Democratic Senators are searching for a valid reason to oppose the President's nomination of Betsy DeVos to be U.S. Education Secretary because they really don't want Americans to know what their real reason is. Here is the real reason: Betsy DeVos has spent the last 30 years—actually more than 30 years—being dedicated to helping low-income children in America have more of the same choices of schools that wealthy Americans already have.

Specifically, the Democrats object to the fact that Betsy DeVos supports the idea of tax dollars following low-income children to the school that their parents may choose—public, private, or religious. This is not a new or subversive idea. Let us go back to 1944, the GI bill for veterans. The Congress enacted probably the most successful piece of social legislation ever enacted when it passed the GI bill for veterans. As a result, veterans came home from World War II and Federal tax dollars followed them to the accredited college or university of their choice.

They could go to Notre Dame. They could go the University of Arizona. They could go to Nashville Auto Diesel College, the University of Tennessee. It did not matter. It was their choice. That is when Americans experience with education vouchers began. I have always wondered, why would an idea that helped to create the ''greatest generation''—which is what we call the World War II generation—that helped to create the best colleges and universities in the world, why would that be such a dangerous idea to use for our schools?

The idea of education vouchers following students to the college of their choice has been continued in higher education. Pell grants—we spend about $30 billion in Pell grants every year, up to $6,000, that follow lower income students to the community college or college of their choice. Those are education vouchers.

We have almost $100 billion of new student loans every year. How do we spend that money? We allow that money to follow the college students to the college of their choice. Those are education vouchers. Starting with the GI bill for veterans, all the way through Pell grants, all the way through student loans, we all endorse those ideas, saying it creates great opportunity for children. It has been so successful. I have not heard any Senator in this body stand up and say: Well, let's cancel the Pell grants because it is tax money following students to a college. Let's cancel $100 billion in student loans this year because it means tax dollars following someone to Harvard or to Notre Dame or to Yeshiva.

No one is going to say that. Then why do they get so exercised about that when it has to do with our schools? In addition to that, Mrs. DeVos has testified before our committee that she does not favor—as much as she supports the idea of giving parents choices with schools—she does not favor Washington, DC, telling Arizona or Tennessee or any other State that they must do that, even though her critics, those who are opposing her

now, delight in the idea of a national school board and in imposing their pet ideas on States, such as the common core academic standards.

Fortunately, we agreed in December of 2015 to prohibit that, but here we have a lady who has spent her time helping low-income children have more choices of schools. It was said, I respect your right to make that decision for yourself. I don't believe Washington should tell you to do that. Yes, they are really upset with her.

So I would ask: Who is in the mainstream—the GI bill for veterans; Pell grants, $30 billion worth; $100 billion of student loans this year; President George H.W. Bush; President George W. Bush; the 25 States that have State choice programs; Congress, with its passage of the Washington, DC, voucher program, which has 1,000 students standing in line hoping to get a chance to go to a better school; 45 Senators who voted on this floor in 2015 for the Scholarships for Kids legislation I proposed that would allow States to take $24 billion in Federal dollars, turn them into $2,100 scholarships and let them follow the children, the low-income children, to the school the State believes they should go to; or Betsy DeVos—that is all on one side—or her critics? I think Betsy DeVos is in the mainstream.

The second reason the Democrats on the committee are opposing Betsy DeVos is because she supports charter schools. Now, I know a little bit about charter schools. My last month as U.S. Education Secretary, in January 1993, I wrote a letter to every school superintendent in America and said: Why don't you try this new idea that the Minnesota Democratic Farmer-Labor Party has invented called charter schools.

There were only 12 charter schools then. The first President Bush, with my help, had been working for 2 years to create what we called New American Schools, start-from-scratch schools, the idea of giving teachers more freedom, parents more choices.

That seemed to us like a good idea in a country that values opportunity and competition. Well, not only did we think so, over the last 30 years or so, a lot of people have thought so. Today, there are 6,800 public charter schools in America. These are public schools. These are schools that have fewer union rules and fewer government rules so teachers have more freedom to teach and parents have more freedom to choose the school that is appropriate for their child.

Boy, that is really a subversive idea. Oh, no, it is not subversive because the last six Presidents of the United States have supported charter schools, not just the Presidents Bush but also the last four Presidents of the United States—Presidents Bush and President Obama and President Clinton and now President Trump. That is five.

The last six U.S. Secretaries of Education have supported charter schools, including both of President Obama's Education Secretaries, Arne Duncan and John King. John King was founder of a charter school system in Massachusetts. Forty-three States have authorized charter schools. That is where the 6,800 charter schools are; 2.9 million people go to those charter schools. That is more than 6 percent of all the children in public schools in America. I would ask the question again: Who is in the mainstream? the last five Presidents, the last six Education Secretaries, 43 States, the Senate, Betsy DeVos or her critics—or her critics?

Now, the third reason her critics don't like her is because she is wealthy. No question about that. All of her information is public for everybody to see. She has agreed to divest herself of 102 investments that the Office of Government Ethics has identified as possibly causing a conflict of interest. When those are gone, she has no conflicts of interest. Her investments are public.

They don't like the fact that she has money. Would they have been happier if she had spent the last 30 years trying to deny low-income children an opportunity to go to a better school? No. She has spent her money and her time trying to help children from low-income families go to a better school. Her opponents are really grasping for straws, and I am very disappointed in them.

''We did not have time to question her,'' they said at our committee hearings. Well, let's go over the facts. No. 1, she visited everyone in their offices individually, so they had a chance to ask her questions then. Then she appeared at a hearing for questions for about 3½ hours or nearly 90 minutes more than either of President Obama's Education Secretaries.

Now we have followup questions coming from the Democratic Senators. Let me tell you what they are doing. They have asked her 1,397 followup questions after the hearing. Remember, this is a hearing where she spent more time than either of President Obama's Secretaries answering questions, after she had been to be their offices answering questions.

By comparison, Republicans asked President Obama's first Secretary 53 followup questions, his second Secretary 56 followup questions. The Democrats have asked 1,397 followup questions. I think what they are doing says more about them then it does about her. In other words, they have asked 25 times as many followup questions of Ms. DeVos as Republicans asked of either of President Obama's Education Secretaries.

Finally, they are throwing around conflict-of-interest accusations. As I just mentioned—let me mention it again. Last week, Mrs. DeVos signed an agreement with the Independent Office of Government Ethics. The job of that office is to review the financial holdings of any Cabinet nominee and identify any conflicts of interest. They identified 102 because the DeVos's have a lot of money. Mrs. DeVos agreed to sell all 102 of those assets. According to the letter of agreement between the Office of Government Ethics and the independent ethics officer in the Education Department, who is already in the Department, Mrs. DeVos is not, after she divests herself of those items, which she has 90 days to do—she has no conflicts of interest.

She has also filled out the same financial disclosure forms that are fundamentally like the ones we Senators fill out. People know where we get our money. They know what we own. They know what we owe. We know that about her.

We also know that the independent Office of Government Ethics has said she will have no conflicts and that she has agreed to that.

We also know that she supports giving low-income children more choice of schools, which more Americans support; 73 percent of the American people told a Luntz public opinion survey that they supported more choices of schools.

And then tax returns—some have mentioned tax returns. Well, Federal law doesn't require Cabinet nominees to produce tax returns. Our Education Committee does not require nominees to produce tax returns. U.S. Senators aren't required to produce tax returns, and why? Because we fill out extensive financial disclosure forms so that the public knows what we own, what we owe, and they can make an evaluation about that. They also know whether we have a conflict of interest, in the case of the Cabinet members, because the independent Office of Government Ethics decides that, and they know that we have paid our taxes because we have to declare that under oath, and there is an FBI investigation on top of that, which Mrs. DeVos, like every other Cabinet nominee, has gone through.

One year ago, the Office of Education Secretary was vacant. I talked to President Obama about it, and I said: I don't think it is appropriate for that office to be vacant. We need the institutional responsibility of having a confirmed U.S. Education Secretary responsive to the Senate.

And I said: Mr. President, if you appoint someone—and I knew very well that he intended to appoint John King, with whom I greatly disagree on the scope of Federal education policy—I said: I will make sure that he has a prompt hearing in our committee, and I will make sure that he is confirmed on the floor of the Senate.

President Obama appointed John King. He had a prompt hearing, and he was confirmed within 3 weeks. As I said, Republicans asked him 56 questions, compared with the nearly 1,400 questions the Democrats are asking Mrs. DeVos.

So I ask the American people to compare this just for a minute. Look at the reasons they really don't want to confirm Betsy DeVos. No. 1, she spent 30 years trying to help low-income children attend a better school. No. 2, she

supports public charter schools. No. 3, she spent her money helping low-income children have a better school, instead of denying them a better school. And No. 4, she has disclosed everything there is to disclose, and she has divested herself of every conflict that the independent Office of Government Ethics has said there is. In addition, I rescheduled a mark-up this week until next Tuesday so that members of the committee would have a chance to review all of this information.

Next Tuesday, we will vote on whether to approve Betsy DeVos's nomination to the Office of the Secretary of Education, and we will send that to the floor of the full Senate. I am confident we will do that, and I am confident the Senate will approve her.

Even though they may disagree with her, Democrats should give the new President a chance to have his own Education Secretary, just as we did—just as we Republicans did for President Obama.

Few Americans have done as much as Betsy DeVos has to help low-income children have a choice of a better school. The Democrats' opposition to her says more about them than it does about her.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a letter which I have written to my distinguished ranking member, Senator MURRAY, declining to have a second hearing on Mrs. DeVos.

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

JANUARY 23, 2017.

Hon. PATTY MURRAY,
Russell Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR MURRAY: Thank you for your letter today requesting a second hearing for Betsy DeVos.

I have carefully considered the request and decided not to schedule a second hearing, and here is why: Already Mrs. DeVos has spent considerably more time answering questions of committee members than either of President Obama's education secretaries, and I do not know why our committee should treat a Republican nominee so differently than the nominee of a Democratic president.

First, she has met with each committee member in his or her office for the purpose of answering questions.

Then, her confirmation hearing lasted nearly an hour and a half longer than those for either of President Obama's nominees for education secretary.

Now she is answering 837 written follow-up questions from Democratic committee members—1,397 if you include all the questions within a question. By comparison, Republicans asked President Obama's first education secretary 53 written follow-up questions and his second education secretary 56 written follow-up questions, including questions within a question. In other words, Democrats have asked Mrs. DeVos 25 times as many follow-up questions as Republicans asked of either of President Obama's education secretaries.

On January 4, two weeks before her nomination hearing on January 17, committee members received Mrs. DeVos' completed financial disclosure and committee questionnaire. Also on January 4, committee members received the same information that she submitted to the Office of Government Ethics on December 12, 2016, about all of her financial holdings.

Many of the 837 written follow-up questions have to do with this financial information that has been before the committee members since January 4, two weeks before her nomination hearing.

Last Thursday, January 19, Mrs. DeVos and the independent Office of Government Ethics agreed that within 90 days of her confirmation, she would divest herself of 102 holdings ''to avoid conflicts of interest.'' When she completes this, according to the letter from the Office of Government Ethics—done in consultation with the department's own Ethics Division—she will be ''in compliance with applicable laws and regulations governing conflicts of interest.''

I delayed the committee vote which was scheduled for tomorrow, Tuesday, January 24, for one week to allow committee members to review all of this information before they cast a vote next Tuesday, January 31, at 10:00 a.m. on whether or not to recommend Mrs. DeVos to the full Senate.

One year ago, because I believed presidents should have their Cabinet members in place in order to govern, I worked to confirm promptly President Obama's nomination of John King to be education secretary, even though I disagreed with him. Even though you may disagree with Betsy DeVos, I would respectfully ask you to confirm her. Few Americans have done more to help children of low-income families have a choice of better schools.

Sincerely,

LAMAR ALEXANDER,
Chairman, Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. ALEXANDER. I will point out again that I see no reason I should treat a Republican President's nominee so differently than a Democratic President's nominee would be treated.

Betsy DeVos has visited every office of the Democratic Senators. She has testified for up to 90 minutes longer than either of President Obama's Secretaries. She is answering nearly 1,400 follow-up questions when each of those Secretaries under President Obama answered 53 and 56.

The reasons for opposing her are reasons that are not valid. I mean, how can you turn down a woman for U.S. Secretary when she spent 30 years of her life trying to help low-income children find a better school?

We have had our hearing. She will answer the questions. Next Tuesday we will have a vote. She will be sent to the Senate, and hopefully the Senate will confirm her. I look forward to working with her as U.S. Secretary.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I came to the floor today to talk about women's health. But before I do, I want to address an issue that my colleague, the Senator from Tennessee, just talked about: President Trump's nominee for Secretary of Education, Betsy DeVos.

This is a nominee the Democrats have significant numbers of concerns about. In her hearing, where Republicans blocked us from asking questions in an unprecedented and disappointing way, Mrs. DeVos gave what has been widely seen as ill-informed, confused, and concerning responses to serious and reasonable questions. She refused to rule out slashing investments in or privatizing our public schools. She was confused that Federal law provides protections for students with disabilities. She actually argued that guns needed to be allowed in our schools across the country to ''protect from grizzlies.'' And even though she was willing to say that President Trump's behavior toward women should be considered sexual assault, she would not commit to actually enforcing Federal laws protecting women and girls in our schools. So that nominee is absolutely not ''in the mainstream.'' She is far from it.

When it comes to policy, many of us have serious concerns about whether she would stand with students and parents who care about strong public education for all or with President Trump and other millionaires and billionaires like them. And that does not even touch on the serious questions that remain regarding her ethics paperwork, her tangled finances, and her potential conflicts of interest—questions that Democrats have continued to demand answers to.

After her first hearing, Mrs. DeVos announced that she would have to divest 102 separate assets, many of them investments in education companies that Democrats were unable to ask her about. So Democrats have requested another hearing to get information on those issues and to do our job scrutinizing this nominee. I am hopeful that my colleague, the Senator from Tennessee, does allow that to happen because here in the Senate, we owe it to our constituents to scrutinize these nominees. That is our job. It is not our job to protect them from tough questions; it is our job to ask them tough questions.

While I suspect that my colleague, the Senator from Tennessee, supports Mrs. DeVos and I respect that he is the chairman of the committee, I am hopeful that he does not simply jam this nominee through without allowing us to do our job.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND THEIR ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, having said that, I am on the floor today with a number of my colleagues who will be joining me throughout the time here today in the Senate to stand up and to be a voice for women.

I was so proud to march this weekend with millions of women and men in a

clear rejection of the hate and division that President Trump campaigned on and in strong support of every woman's rights.

This past weekend, we also recognized the anniversary of the historic ruling in Roe v. Wade, a decision that has empowered women and expanded economic opportunity and security for families for more than four decades.

I have heard story after story from Washington State and across the country about what Roe v. Wade means for women. It means being able to plan your family, to be able to pursue your dreams and give back to your community. But perhaps most importantly, the decision in Roe v. Wade sent a clear message that access to abortion—a woman's right to make the most personal of all decisions herself—is fundamental to her freedom and her ability to chart her own path.

Now we have already seen extreme politicians in State after State do everything they can to undermine access to abortion. But, today, the constitutionally protected rights these women have had now for 44 years are, unfortunately, more at risk than ever as a result of President Trump's extreme and deeply harmful agenda.

He has promised to pick Supreme Court nominees whose beliefs about women's reproductive rights simply could not be more backwards or damaging. Unfortunately, in what looks like a sign of things to come, the President yesterday signed an Executive order limiting access to safe abortion and other family planning services on women worldwide by reinstituting the global gag rule.

I want to be very clear. If the President continues down this path, women will be hurt. Their lives will be put at risk, and the same goes for women around the world. So I am very concerned, and I am angry.

But if Saturday's march proved anything, it proved that women and men across this country are more motivated than ever, and, frankly, so am I.

Now, I can understand why President Trump may not have wanted to hear from the hundreds of thousands of marchers who completely filled the National Mall on Saturday or the millions more who marched nationwide in every State—coast to coast—and on every continent. But if he didn't get the message, this is just the beginning.

The millions of women and people who care about women's rights and their access to health care are going to keep standing up, and we in the Senate are going to continue to stand with them and fight back every step of the way and do everything in our power to make sure that our country does not go backwards. It will not be easy, but I know we can do it if we keep marching together.

Thank you. I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

44TH ANNIVERSARY OF ROE V. WADE

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, this past Sunday we celebrated the 44th anniversary of the Supreme Court decision in Roe v. Wade, a ruling that assured every woman of her constitutional right to make her own decision about whether and when to have a child. That fundamental constitutional right is the right to privacy, which all women should cherish and protect.

This weekend, in fact, many of us in Washington, DC, and around the country marched in the streets of our home States—or here, as I did—in support of these ideals and values, including the right to privacy, other civil rights and liberties, economic opportunity, and women's access to health care, which truly make America great.

Fundamental to the principle of women's access to health care is the Roe v. Wade decision that reaffirms the constitutional right to reproductive decisions made by women individually on their own in consultation with their health care providers, their families, their clergy. I was a clerk for Justice Blackmun in the term after Roe v. Wade was decided, and I can tell you that we all believed then very strongly that that Supreme Court decision would put to rest the question of legal access to abortion in this great country.

In fact, it did not. Despite 7 in 10 Americans opposing the potential overturning of Roe v. Wade according to a recent survey by Pew Research Center, the outliers and extremists still seek to eliminate the right to legal abortion. That broad public support was embodied in the spirit and dedication shown over this past weekend by protesters across the world, and I was reminded yet again that we must continue to fight for what we believe, particularly in light of the ongoing threats to and attacks on women's health care.

Efforts to undermine these rights have redoubled in recent years, and throughout the past decade we have seen unprecedented attacks through State efforts to chip away at that vitally protected constitutional right. From 2011 to 2016, there were 334 restrictions enacted by States that would cut back on Roe v. Wade rights, accounting for 30 percent of all abortion restrictions since the U.S. Supreme Court decided that case.

The force dedicated to enacting these restrictions, which are designed to undermine the right to reproductive health care, can be particularly disheartening as they disregard the health needs of the most vulnerable population of the women who are most often impacted, by also seeking, or at least claiming to seek, to advance women's health care. In fact, many of those restrictions are a ruse. They are enacted in the name of health care but are a disguise for restrictions on health care. They have left many women, particularly in rural and underserved locations, with little access to health care, including basic care such as cancer screening, STD testing, and preventive health care. Clearly, improving women's health care has failed to be the focus of State legislatures in these instances, as they have actively worked to restrict access to care and chip away at the constitutional protections provided in Roe v. Wade.

I joined with Senator MURRAY in leading a total of 163 Members of the House and Senate in filing an amicus brief in the case of Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt. Last summer, the Supreme Court overturned the restriction at issue in that case, reiterating and clarifying the ''undue burden'' standard in Roe and debunking the lie that anti-choice extremists have been pushing for years—that medically unnecessary, onerous restrictions on clinics and clinicians that provide women abortions do not make women safer. In fact, they simply constrain access.

I am hopeful that this decision will help stem and stop the assault on women's health care taking place in so many States and communities around the country. So I am joining with my colleague, Senator MURRAY, who was here just minutes ago—a wonderful champion of this cause—as well as Senator SHAHEEN, whom I believe will be speaking later today on Roe v. Wade's anniversary, in pushing back on this policy by introducing legislation to permanently repeal the global gag rule that the Trump administration, as one of its first acts, has announced, which will reverse much of the progress that President Obama made in relation to international family planning. This legislation will seek to move that progress forward again and forestall the effort to roll back that process and turn back the clock. I will oppose any and all efforts by the Trump administration to move our country backwards, including yesterday's reversion to the global gag rule.

This 44th anniversary of Roe v. Wade should be a reminder about the importance of fighting for the right of privacy, the right to live life free of governmental interference, and, as one of our Supreme Court Justices said, the right to be let alone—in effect, let alone from government interference.

It is a right that I have fought for and that so many others have fought for throughout my career and throughout my time as a Senator and the attorney general of Connecticut. It is a right we should all continue to keep at the forefront of our work here in the Senate and for all of us in this country.

Thank you. I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

PATIENT FREEDOM ACT

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about an issue that is important to all of us.

We are, obviously, a nation in transition. Recently, the Senate took the first steps to repeal ObamaCare and begin a transition toward policies that will ensure continued access to health care with more affordability and flexibility for all. We need a stable transition that will empower Americans to make the best health care decisions for their families.

In my home State of West Virginia, ObamaCare has been very difficult for many. It has meant skyrocketing premiums and skyrocketing copays and deductibles for families and small businesses. It has meant little, if any, choice of insurers. As a matter of fact, for the first several years, we had no choice. We now have two insurers in several counties, but in the beginning, the entire State had no choice.

It has meant fewer choices of doctors and hospitals, as networks shrink and plans become more restrictive. Now we must repair what can be fixed, scrap what is not working, and create a better health care reality for all Americans.

I have spoken with small business owners who have absorbed the cost of increased insurance, but their employees are getting less coverage. I have spoken to families who may have health insurance, but due to the high deductibles and copays, they don't use it. They can't afford to even go. I have also heard from those in my State who have real concerns about what this transition will mean to them. This is especially true for those who receive coverage through Medicaid.

My State is one of the States that did an expanded Medicaid. For all of these West Virginians—and there are somewhere around 177,000 new folks who are on Medicaid—whether they are the Medicaid recipients or the business owners and families who are currently struggling, we need to have health insurance that works for everybody.

So I want them to know—and many of them have called my office, and I have talked with them a lot in our State—that I am listening to their concerns. As we move forward, I am working to balance each of these needs and ensure access in West Virginia and across the Nation to affordable, quality health care.

To achieve this goal, I am joining Senators CASSIDY, COLLINS, and ISAKSON to introduce an alternative to ObamaCare which was introduced yesterday. It is called the Patient Freedom Act. It sounds good. We are really good at making names that sound good, but the Patient Freedom Act lives up to its name.

The Patient Freedom Act of 2017 removes ObamaCare's most burdensome regulations. It provides our States, which are closest to the people who are accessing health care, the opportunity and funding to ensure that those currently covered by Medicaid expansion are protected and retain their health coverage. It returns authority to the States and provides more health care choices and better insurance options to individuals and families. It keeps important consumer protections, such as coverage for preexisting conditions, and extends coverage to children and dependents until the age of 26—both very popular parts of the ACA. It protects the Federal black lung benefits program, which is especially important in my State of West Virginia and the surrounding areas.

In addition to all of those important changes, it gives States a pathway forward for replacing ObamaCare. Specifically, following repeal, which we know we are going to do, States will have three options. First, a State, if it so chooses, could choose to reinstate ObamaCare, or a State could go without Federal assistance and opt to not receive any Federal funding for tax credits or Medicaid expansion. Finally, a State could choose an innovative replacement plan where the State determines its own insurance regulations. In this scenario, the State would be eligible for 95 percent of the funds it would receive under ObamaCare, and the Medicaid expansion would be fully funded. For a State like West Virginia that has already expanded Medicaid, the State could either keep its Medicaid expansion as is, or they could convert it to subsidies to help individuals purchase the private insurance.

Under this plan, individuals would use a Roth Health Savings Account to purchase health care. This would enable uninsured individuals to purchase health insurance that meets their specific needs. States would have the option to auto-enroll uninsured individuals into a standard health care plan, with individuals able to easily opt out if they didn't want it. Auto enrollment would ensure stability and soundness to our insurance markets.

The Patient Freedom Act is a smart, innovative way forward and meets the varied needs of people in my State of West Virginia and across the country. The legislation reflects Senator CASSIDY's experience as a physician, and I thank him for his innovation—he has worked with patients who are uninsured—and I appreciate his leadership so much, as I do Senator COLLINS in particular and Senator ISAKSON as another cosponsor. As other replacement plans are drafted and introduced in the Senate, I will evaluate those proposals to ensure they meet West Virginians' health care needs. I am committed to replacing ObamaCare with a system that offers us more choice. We can figure this out; we know what we need—lowers cost gives patients and families more control—because, together, we can achieve a health care system that works for everybody.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant Democratic leader.

REPEALING THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I was listening carefully to the comments made by my colleague from West Virginia. I thank her for coming to the floor and expressing her feelings about the Affordable Care Act. It is truly an article of political faith on the Republican side that we must repeal ObamaCare. We have heard that for 6 years, maybe longer, and each and every time, Democrats have asked: And then what?

We have asked Republicans: What would you replace ObamaCare with? Until some of the most recent moments, there was never an answer. Now they are starting to put at least some ideas forward, but repealing ObamaCare and then talking about the possibility of replacement is a disaster. It is an invitation to uncertainty and chaos. We might expect that from a Democratic Senator who voted for the Affordable Care Act, but what I ask my colleagues in the Senate to do is, please go home. Please go back to your States. Do as I did yesterday. I called together the administrators of hospitals in Central Illinois, smalltown rural hospitals and larger hospitals such as Memorial Medical Center in my hometown of Springfield. I asked them, in a nonpressurized setting: What would you do? What is wrong with the Affordable Care Act? How would you change it? What would be the impact of repeal?

I knew, and they did as well, that there had been some reports from the Congressional Budget Office. Just last week, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office told us exactly what repeal without replace would look like: 18 million Americans would lose health insurance in 12 months, 32 million within 10 years. According to the Congressional Budget Office, if they went through with the Republican repeal plan, premiums in the individual health insurance market would increase by 20 to 25 percent the first year and double within 10 years.

Despite this, on his first day in office, President Trump signed an Executive order that began to dismantle our health care system. We still haven't seen the President's secret replacement plan, even though he has repeatedly said he wants to replace the law at the same time he repeals it, and we are going to be so proud of what he does.

Let's talk about what repeal without replace means in Illinois, now that I have taken it home and asked the people who are actually running the hospitals. With repeal, 90,000 young people

in Illinois would be thrown off their parents' health care plans. More than 7 million Illinoisans with health insurance through their employer would once again be subject to discriminatory health insurance practices, like discrimination based on preexisting conditions, annual and lifetime caps on coverage, and discrimination against women. In my State, the Republican repeal plan would have an impact statewide because insurance plans statewide could once again decide not to cover maternity or newborn care, mental health, or substance abuse. Those things are required under the Affordable Care Act. That would be removed with this repeal.

In my State, more than 1 million people would lose their health insurance—in fact, 1.2 million, to be exact. According to the Illinois Hospital Association, my State would lose $11 billion to $13 billion in annual economic activity with Republican repeal, translating to a loss of up to 95,000 jobs. Let me talk about those jobs in towns like TAYLORville and Pana, IL, near my hometown of Springfield. Those are good-paying jobs. Sometimes they are the best paying jobs in the community. Those would be the jobs lost by the Republican repeal of ObamaCare.

For years, we have been hitting back against misguided and misleading claims about the Affordable Care Act. Who is hitting back now? Hospitals. And not just hospitals. Health care providers across the board are pleading with the Republicans: We know you have some campaign promise you want to keep, but keep first your promise to the people you represent to provide quality, affordable health care.

Senator TAMMY DUCKWORTH and I have sent letters to every single Illinois hospital—over 200 of them—asking about the impact of repealing the Affordable Care Act without enacting a replacement to prevent total chaos. Just yesterday morning, I met with these hospital administrators and heard firsthand. I met at Memorial Medical Center in Springfield, IL, representatives from Hopedale Medical Center, Pana Community Hospital, Carlinville Area Hospital, and Warner Hospital and Health Services.

Memorial Health System is a nonprofit, community-owned health care organization. When I asked about the impact of repealing the Affordable Care Act, here is what they told me: ''Repeal without replacing the ACA would adversely impact patients' access to care and our hospitals' and health systems' ability to provide services as well as potentially result in job losses.'' They went on to say that Memorial Medical Center in Springfield, with Republican repeal of ObamaCare, could lose over $140 million over the next 6 years, and their uncompensated care costs would ''rise dramatically due to both a rise in charity care and decline in Medicaid coverage and reimbursement.''

They cautioned:

> We would be forced to cut spending by reducing services, reducing staff, and delaying investment in new technology and facility improvements. . . . Losses of this magnitude with repeal of the [Affordable Care Act] coverage simply cannot be sustained and would adversely impact patients' access to care and our hospitals' and health systems' ability to continue to provide services.

This is not the only hospital telling me in our State. I am from downstate Illinois, proud to represent Chicago, but I have represented in the Congress and in the Senate smalltown rural America, communities where the hospital makes a difference. If you don't have a hospital nearby, you could be an hour's drive—if you are lucky—from quality medical care, not to mention the impact that hospital has on the local economy, keeping and attracting new businesses.

According to the Illinois Hospital Association, the 15th Congressional District of Illinois stands to lose $470 million under Republican repeal of the Affordable Care Act. That means 3,400 jobs lost in that congressional district in Central Illinois with repeal of affordable care. We talk about good jobs and creating them in this State. The President goes and makes trips, as he should, to try to save American jobs. Yet the first congressional action by the Republican majority this year is to threaten 3,400 jobs in the 15th Congressional District.

Washington County Hospital in Nashville, IL, is a 22-bed critical access hospital 50 miles from St. Louis. They provide acute care, surgical service, and gynecological services. When I asked them what Republican repeal of the Affordable Care Act would mean to Washington County Hospital in my downstate area, they said the following:

> To eliminate [the ACA] would be detrimental to the thousands of people in our county that were previously uninsured either because of part-time work or serious health problems.
>
> I guarantee that [repealing the ACA] without a strategic healthcare replacement plan, will result in more downsizing and more staff reductions at Washington County Hospital. Our community cannot continue to lose these good paying jobs and I believe our county residents will continue to move to neighboring states with more favorable job markets, better job security and stable benefits.

They ended their response with this warning:

> I truly fear that many Illinois communities will lose their Critical Access Hospitals—the only sources of healthcare in many of our rural counties and a vital part of infrastructure in our communities.
>
> As you know, our rural areas have vulnerable populations of elderly folks that have many chronic healthcare needs and limited ability to travel long distances for emergency care. . . . I sincerely hope that you heed the warnings of our physicians and hospitals—do NOT repeal the ACA in a hurried political rush.

Washington County is not a blue county, it is not a Democratic county. It is a county that votes regularly for the other party. It is a conservative-voting populous, representing a lot of farmers and small businesses, and this is their hospital administrator warning the Republicans here in the Senate and the House: Be careful what you do in eliminating the Affordable Care Act.

According to the Illinois Hospital Association, the 16th Congressional District in Illinois stands to lose $453 million under Republican repeal of ObamaCare, and that means the loss of 3,300 jobs.

SwedishAmerican Hospital in Belvidere, IL, in the northern part of my State, provides health care to Belvidere, Boone, western McHenry, and northern DeKalb Counties. When asked how the hospital has fared since the passage of the Affordable Care Act, the administrator of SwedishAmerican said the following:

> The passage of ACA has afforded our health system with significant benefit related to [compensation] of patients with uncompensated care. . . . SwedishAmerican experienced an average annual increase of $43 million in Medicaid payments, and a $10 million reduction in uncompensated care.

When asked about the impact of the Republican repeal of the Affordable Care Act, SwedishAmerican Hospital of Belvidere, IL, said the following:

> The impact would be significant . . . it would create an unsustainable financial result and we would be forced to make significant reductions in staff and curtail future plans for capital expenditures.

Yesterday, at my roundtable in Springfield, I asked some of these hospital administrators: What is wrong with the Affordable Care Act? And they told me. Let me add quickly, I believe—as they do—there are things which need to be changed in that law. It is not perfect, by any means. They talked about the cost of care, and they should. In some areas, premiums have gone up too quickly, and the availability of insurance is not as it should be.

I have talked to the health insurance companies, including the big companies like Blue Cross Blue Shield. They have told me specifically that the method of enrollment now under the Affordable Care Act leaves loopholes for people to jump in and out of coverage as they need it. You cannot run a viable insurance risk pool if people are only forced to sign up when they are facing a health care crisis. You have to have healthy people paying premiums to cover those who get sick and need to be compensated.

So there are things certainly within the Affordable Care Act which need to be changed, and these administrators told us.

So I said: I hear commonly from my Republican friends, if we would just allow people to buy health insurance over State lines, there would be more competition.

They laughed. They said: You mean to say, if you heard that there was a health insurance plan in Alabama and you lived in Illinois, that you would buy health insurance there; is that the idea?

I said: I suppose. I hear it over and over again, if we could just buy policies across State lines.

They laughed. They said: Do you know what is going to happen? Do you know what happens when you buy insurance in Illinois and they tell you the hospitals and doctors who are eligible? You certainly want to have doctors in your home area eligible who may not be eligible under an Alabama plan. That makes sense.

Secondly, they said: If people outside the State who are truly sick start buying into Alabama to get lower premiums, the premiums are going to go up. They are going to engineer the risk pool to make sure that it is viable.

That is a notion that they rejected out of hand. I asked them about health savings accounts. That is another thing you hear over and over again. If people could just set aside nontaxable income and leave that in a pool of money to pay their copayments and other expenses, then there would be a disincentive to overutilize health care. These administrators said: But people who are living paycheck to paycheck don't have money to set aside—even non-taxable money to set aside at that point—and, ultimately, many of them would put off care they desperately need until they become even sicker.

Each one of these approaches has its critics. There are people who think we ought to look at it more carefully. I think that ought to be the bottom line. To my Republican majority, look at this carefully. It is not a matter of keeping a campaign promise; it is a matter of keeping a promise to the people you represent not to leave our health care system in chaos.

I hope President Trump and my congressional Republican colleagues are listening to what my constituents back home told me yesterday, things that they will hear themselves if they will go back home and listen to people who run the hospitals in the communities where the voters they represent live.

I wish to conclude with a quote on the subject from Dr. William Gorski, president and CEO of SwedishAmerican, who wrote to me. He said:

> I must also speak forcefully as a former practicing physician. Irrespective of any financial impact of repeal, real lives are at stake here. President Obama's vision recognized a great understanding of the importance of health care access to the quality and outcomes of care. Any diminishment of this access threatens the health and well-being of millions of our fellow citizens. . . . My strong view is that rather than repealing the ACA, we should be looking for ways to refine and expand it.

That comes from a doctor. I solicited his view. I don't know him personally, but it represents the feelings of many.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the State Journal-Register article from Springfield, IL, on my meeting yesterday.

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

[From the State Journal-Register, Jan. 23, 2017]

DURBIN HEARS HOSPITALS' CONCERNS ABOUT OBAMACARE REPEAL

(By Dean Olsen)

Executives fromfrom Springfield-area hospitals and health systems told U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin Monday morning that a threatened repeal of the Affordable Care Act by Congress would jeopardize local patients' access to medical services and harm their organizations' finances.

''We'd just hate to see this go away,'' Memorial Health System chief executive officer Edgar Curtis said of the law, also known as Obamacare, during a meeting at the Memorial Center for Learning and Innovation with Durbin and leaders from other hospitals.

Tina Casner, chief executive officer of Pana Community Hospital in Christian County, said Illinois' expansion of Medicaid eligibility—funded by the ACA—and reduced-price private insurance sold through the state's health insurance exchange have reduced the number of uninsured patients and improved the 25-bed hospital's bottom line.

''There are now folks in our community who are seeking that care,'' she said.

Durbin, D-Springfield, said he doubted that congressional Republicans pledging a comparable replacement of the ACA would be able to fulfill their promise without big gaps in coverage for many Americans.

Instead of ''repeal and replace''—the plan for the ACA supported by local congressmen Rodney Davis, R-Taylorville, and Darin LaHood, R-Dunlap—Curtis said he is ''very afraid'' that Congress instead will ''repeal and delay'' a decision on a permanent replacement.

Action to repeal without a replacement is likely to cause disruptions in care because more insurance companies would pull out of the exchange and increase the prices of plans even more, health-care industry officials have said.

Durbin, the No. 2 Democrat in the U.S. Senate, was told by hospital administrators that the federal law isn't perfect and needs to be tweaked, especially when it comes to the high cost of private coverage and excessive paperwork.

''I'm for that,'' he said.

But he and the administrators expressed concerns about Republicans' plans to change Medicaid from a federal entitlement program to a block grant given to individual states as a way of getting control of Medicaid's rising cost to the federal government.

The Illinois Health and Hospital Association has said block grants for Medicaid could lead to reductions in funding in Illinois, a state that already spends less per Medicaid patient than almost all other states.

Dr. Jerry Kruse, dean and provost of Southern Illinois University School of Medicine, said the expansion of Medicaid eligibility ''has been really great for us.''

The expansion has decreased the uninsured rate by 80 percent for patients of SIU's federally subsidized outpatient primary care clinic, the SIU Center for Family Medicine, he said.

With insurance coverage, formerly uninsured patients are less likely to worry about incurring medical bills they can't afford to pay and more likely to seek care, Kruse said.

''It's that peace of mind,'' he said.

DACA

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, it was 16 years ago when I introduced the DREAM Act. The DREAM Act was a response to a call I received in my office. A young woman had been brought to the United States as an infant, at the age of 2, from Korea. She lived in the United States and grew up here. When she became an accomplished pianist and was accepted at some of the best musical schools in the Nation, she started to apply but didn't know what to put down in terms of her citizenship. She called and asked, and it turned out that her mom and dad had never filed the papers that would have allowed her to become a citizen of the United States. She was undocumented. Through no fault of her own—brought to the United States—her papers weren't filed.

She grew up in Chicago, went to school, and did well, despite having a family of modest means. As I said, she developed a skill as a pianist and now had an opportunity of a lifetime and wanted to know what her legal status was. We checked the law, and it was pretty clear. She was undocumented, and the laws of America said you have to leave for 10 years, go outside of the United States, and petition to come back.

It didn't seem fair or reasonable that a child, an infant of 2, would be held responsible for mistakes made by their parents, so I introduced the DREAM Act. The DREAM Act said that if you are one of those kids and you finish school and you don't have a serious criminal record, we will give you a chance—a chance to become legal in America, a chance to become a citizen.

Those kids grew up going to school in our classrooms, pledging allegiance to that same flag we pledge allegiance to. They believed they were Americans, but it was not so in the eyes of American law.

I introduced this bill 16 years ago. It passed the Senate in one form, the House in another. It has never become the law of the land. A few years ago I wrote to President Obama and said: As President, can you find a way to protect these young people until we do what we are supposed to do in Congress?

He did. He created something called DACA. By Executive order, these young people could apply, pay about $500 in a filing fee, go through a criminal background check, and if they had no problems—no threat to this country—be allowed to stay here on a temporary 2-year basis. They could go to school but with no Federal help, no Federal assistance for their education. They could work and renew it every 2 years. That is DACA.

Over 750,000 kids signed up. These were kids just like the one I described earlier—now young people who are going to college and doing important things with their lives. I have come to the floor over 100 times to tell their stories because political speeches, as inspiring as they are, usually don't move people. When you hear about these people and who they are, it can make a difference.

I want to introduce one today. It will just take a few minutes. I see a couple of my colleagues on the floor.

This is Belsy Garcia Manrique. When Belsy was 7 years old, she was brought by her family to the United States from Guatemala. She grew up in a small town in Georgia and became an extraordinary student. She graduated third in her high school class with a perfect 4.0 grade point average.

During high school, she was a member of the National Honor Society, was on the tennis team, and was a member of the mock trial team. She even earned a black belt in Tae Kwon Do. She went on to attend Mercer University in Macon, GA, where she was a Presidential scholar for 4 years. This award is given to students in the top 10 percent of their class.

Belsy was a member of a number of academic honor societies and the premed club. She worked as a researcher in their biology department. She was a leader of her college's Habitat for Humanity chapter and worked as a resident assistant in the student dorms and a tutor for high school students.

In 2013, Belsy graduated from Mercer University with a bachelor of science degree in biology, with minors in chemistry and math. She is now in her second year at the Loyola University Chicago School of Medicine. That is where I met her.

Like many States across the country, my home State of Illinois faces a shortage of physicians in the inner cities and in the downstate rural communities. As a DACA student at Loyola medical school, Belsy has promised that after she graduates and becomes a doctor, she will work for several years in underserved areas in my home State of Illinois.

Even with her busy medical school schedule, Belsy volunteers as a translator at Loyola medical clinic. She is a member of Viva la Familia, a group which educates families on healthy lifestyles, and she mentors undergraduate students who are interested in medical school.

She wrote me a letter and said:

DACA means the world to me. It has allowed me to continue the arduous journey of becoming a physician, and without it, I would not be where I am today. All I've ever wanted was the opportunity to prove myself and to further my education so that I can give back to those who need it the most. I am so close to achieving my dreams and finally making a difference in the community, but if DACA is repealed, those dreams might never become reality.

If DACA is eliminated, what happens to Belsy? If it is eliminated, she loses her right to legally work in the United States and may have to drop out of medical school, and that alone—the clinical experience in medical school—requires actually working. If she can't work, she can't pay for her education.

Aside from State of Illinois financing opportunities, Belsy doesn't qualify for a penny in Federal assistance to go to medical school. It is an extraordinary hardship on these students, but they are so darned determined, they do it anyway.

I have been encouraged recently because statements made by President Trump, as well as yesterday his press secretary and earlier in the day his chief of staff, lead me to believe that he understands the seriousness of this problem.

Young people like Belsy, thousands of them across the United States, are simply asking for a chance to have a good life, to make this a better nation. We could use her. We could use her medical services and talents as a doctor in my State of Illinois, in the State of Texas, in the State of North Dakota, and virtually every State of the Union. Why would we want to lose a great potential doctor like her? We need her, and we need people like her.

I hope my colleagues and President Trump will join me to continue the DACA program. I hope this administration will work with Congress to pass the BRIDGE Act, a bipartisan bill I have introduced with Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM to create a transition for those like Belsy, protected by DACA, so that until this Congress—as it should—passes comprehensive immigration reform, we would protect these young people from deportation.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRUZ). The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed 5 minutes to make comments but also that my colleague from North Dakota be allowed to make comments, as well, and that we be allowed to complete those comments prior to the afternoon recess.

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

HONORING DEPUTY SHERIFF COLT EUGENE ALLERY

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the service and sacrifice of Colt Eugene Allery, a sheriff's deputy in Rolette County, ND, who was killed in the line of duty on January 18. Deputy Allery was just 29 years old and leaves behind his fiance, Alexandria, his four children and stepdaughter, along with many family and many friends.

Deputy Allery was dedicated to serving the public and spent the last 5 years working in law enforcement. He started his career as a corrections officer, serving as a police officer in Rolla, ND, and as a tribal police officer for the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians, a tribe of which he was a member.

He became a deputy with the Rolette County Sheriff's Office just 3 months ago. His colleagues remember him for his friendly and positive disposition and his commitment to making his community and our State safer. He was also well known in St. John, the tightknit community where he was raised by his grandparents. He was known for always serving his friends and his family. They say Colt was happiest when he was doing things for others, which is why he chose law enforcement as his career.

Deputy Allery's life is a reminder to each of us of the enormous debt we owe to all of the men and women in law enforcement who leave home every day and go to work to protect us and help make our communities and our States safer places—places that we are proud to call home.

My wife Mikey and I extend our deepest condolences to Deputy Allery's family and friends during this difficult time. Our thoughts and prayers are with his loved ones and his law enforcement colleagues, in the coming days and months and especially today, as Deputy Allery is laid to rest. May God bless him and his family.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and turn to my colleague from North Dakota.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, I come here again today on what is a sad day and really a sad week for law enforcement in North Dakota, for the community of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa, and certainly for the family of Colt Eugene Allery.

Colt was a deputy in the Rolette County Sheriff's Office who tragically lost his life in the line of duty last Wednesday night near Belcourt, ND. Colt joined in a high-speed chase with several fellow officers Wednesday evening after a report and identification of a stolen vehicle. As the stolen vehicle was coming to a forced stop, shots were fired, and the call came over the radio that shakes all of North Dakota law enforcement and our entire State to the core: ''Officer down.''

Colt never got back up that evening, succumbing to his injuries not very far from the small community where he grew up. He leaves behind five beautiful young children, including a stepdaughter; his fiance, Alexandria; his grandparents, Gene and Rita Allery, who raised him; his family, his friends, and a community that will miss his constant smile and playful attitude.

He also leaves behind his fellow deputies and colleagues in the Rolette County Sheriff's Office. I know this is an incredibly tough time right now for Rolette County Sheriff Medrud and his deputies as well. I know that the people across the State of North Dakota and I have your back during this difficult time.

This is now the second time in less than a year that I have come to the floor of the U.S. Senate to talk about the heroism and service of one of North Dakota's peace officers—one of those peace officers who made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty.

It is heartbreaking to have to stand here yet again to make one of these speeches in recognition of a North Dakota peace officer. In fact, during my 8 years as North Dakota's attorney general, I saw two deaths, two violent deaths of peace officers in my State. In less than a year, we have two.

Talking to many of my friends in law enforcement in my State, they will tell you that the business of law enforcement and the work of law enforcement in our State have become more and more dangerous and more and more challenging. As I have said many times—and I will say it again here today—North Dakota has the finest peace officers in the entire country. Colt Allery personified that dedication of our peace officers to protect and serve their communities.

Losing an officer in the line of duty is always devastating, but in States like North Dakota, where we often say we know everyone, Colt's loss is being felt in communities across the State. Colt and his family will know that the entire State mourns his loss and that we had his back in this life and we will have theirs as they struggle with this incredible and unimaginable loss.

Growing up in St. John, ND, and as an enrolled member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians, Colt never strayed far from home. And he made a commitment to do more than just be part of his community, he made a commitment to protect his community as a peace officer.

Colt started out as a corrections officer for Rolette County. After graduating from law enforcement training academy, he started work in the Rolla Police Department. He then went to serve his fellow tribal members as a tribal police officer of Turtle Mountain before recently moving to the Rolette County Sheriff's Office.

In North Dakota, we have a proud history of peace officers like Colt serving their State and local communities with distinction. I have had the privilege over my years in public service to work with law enforcement officials, from highway patrol, to State and local officers, to various Federal officers and our tribal police, and I will tell you again that these are some of the finest men and women I have ever worked with. These are the men and women—just like Colt—who could have chosen a different path. Instead, they chose to take the oath to protect and serve. They chose to selflessly put themselves in harm's way so they could make North Dakota a safer place for each and every person who lives there or who may by chance be passing through. They chose to put the needs of others before their own needs and, in fact, before their own families' needs. They chose a more difficult path to tread than most of us would be willing to follow.

Putting that uniform on each and every day places you in a unique and special group, a tight-knit community that very few people could understand what it takes to get the job done. All too often, it takes a tragedy like this one outside of Belcourt, ND, last week to recognize and appreciate our peace officers and the sacrifice they and their families make every day so that we can feel safe and secure in our daily lives.

I stand here this morning not only to celebrate the life of Colt Allery but to celebrate each and every peace officer working in the State of North Dakota and across the country. I know that although Senator HOEVEN and I cannot be at the ceremony and at the celebration of Colt's life today, we stand today with the community and with the State in appreciation, and we stand today in mourning for the loss of Colt Allery and for the terrible sacrifice his fiancee, his children, and his family have made in service to our country and our State and their community.

Deputy Allery, I thank you for your service and your sacrifice on behalf of the people of North Dakota. May God bless you and welcome you, and may He bless your family.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, for all the people of North Dakota, we thank Colt for his service, and we ask that God bless Colt Allery and his entire family.

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

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:34 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. PORTMAN).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

GEORGIA SEVERE STORMS AND DEADLY TORNADOES

Mr. PERDUE. Mr. President, I rise today to express my sympathy and support for the people in my home State of Georgia. This past weekend, severe storms and deadly tornadoes tore through South Georgia destroying homes and businesses and taking the lives, unfortunately, of at least 15 Georgians.

Among those areas hit the hardest were counties surrounding the cities of Adel and Albany. These counties and cities are very near where I grew up and where I now reside personally. When last weekend's storms hit, emergency management teams there were still leading recovery efforts in response to deadly storms that had just caused widespread destruction earlier this month.

I am very grateful for the tireless and ongoing efforts of our first responders in our State and stand with our Georgia families during this difficult time. Our hearts, of course, go out to the families affected by these severe storms.

I now yield for the senior Senator from Georgia.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I want to thank my partner, Senator PERDUE, for arranging this colloquy today. I want to join him in expressing sympathy to the families of those who were lost in Georgia and to the thousands and thousands of Georgians who have been injured or hurt and who lost valuable property.

My wife Dianne sends her wishes as well. This part of Georgia is very close to me. I grew up as a young boy working on a farm in Fitzgerald, GA, not far from Albany. I know what these people are like, and they are salt-of-the-earth folks. They don't deserve something like this happening, but they do deserve and they do merit everything we can do to get them aid.

I am so happy Secretary Kelly called yesterday to offer the services of the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Governor Deal has done a great job of arranging the disaster area, and the Georgia emergency management people are already in place.

So my heart goes out to the injured. My heart goes out to my State. My prayers go out to the families of those who were injured and are in the hospital and those who have passed away and perished from the terrible tornadoes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. PERDUE. Mr. President. I now ask unanimous consent that the Senate observe a moment of silence for those who have lost their lives in Georgia and across the southeast in these recent storms.

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

The Senate will now observe a moment of silence.

(Moment of silence.)

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

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

(The remarks of Mr. FLAKE pertaining to the introduction of S. 195 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

MARCH FOR LIFE

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I would like to say a few words about this Friday's March for Life. This Friday, the National Mall and Capitol campus will again be filled with men and women from every corner of the country. Together, they will gather in celebration of the sanctity of life and in solidarity for its protection. For 43 straight years, the March for Life has given a powerful platform for average people to join in the political discourse to influence Federal policy in support of life.

That emphasis on the ability of a single person to bring about historic

change is the theme of this year's march. Now, this year's march is called the Power of One. The March for Life uses the following quote from the author J.R.R. Tolkien to encapsulate this theme: ''Even the smallest person can change the course of history.''

This is a powerful message that we should all embrace. It reminds us that from the young people marching on a cold January morning to the unborn children whose futures are filled with unlimited potential, any one of them has the power to be a positive force for good.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business.

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

MEDICAID

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the Medicaid Program, a program that I am sure a lot of folks in Washington and around the country hear about a lot. We talk about it a lot, but I am not sure that people around here have a real sense of what it means to folks back at home.

Medicaid is a program that is more than 50 years old now. In some ways, the name doesn't convey the scope of it. In some ways, I wish it had a different name because it would remind people who benefits from it.

Instead of referring to it as the Medicaid Program, if you called it the ''kids, seniors, and folks with disabilities program,'' or something like that, you would be accurately describing the scope and the reach of the program because it has a profound impact on the lives of children, on the lives of older citizens trying to get long-term care in nursing homes, and, of course, it has a huge impact on individuals with disabilities.

We know that in the campaign, President Trump made a statement. I am not quoting him exactly, but it was a brief statement during his campaign, and it was in writing that he would not cut Social Security, Medicare, or Medicaid. I think a lot of people had forgotten about that third one.

One of the tasks that we have in the Senate is to make sure that, when a statement like that is made, any President is held accountable to that promise.

The examples I could cite are many about the impact of Medicaid. Just a couple are significant. Not by way of exclusion, but I will just mention a few.

I am holding here a March of Dimes document. It is an issue brief by the March of Dimes, and it is entitled ''The Value of Medicaid.'' I won't read it all, but here is just one fact that I am not sure a lot of people know. ''Medicaid covers 45% of all births''—and they have a footnote for that. I am not sure there are many in Washington who know that. But that is why I referred to it earlier in a more informal way as ''the baby program,'' because all of those children come into the world paid for by Medicaid.

Medicaid has a substantial impact on rural families, rural America, and rural hospitals. By one estimate a couple of years ago, First Focus, one of the advocacy groups here in Washington that tracks issues that relate to children, estimated that as of 2012—and I doubt that it has changed much since then—more than 45 percent of rural children got their health care through Medicaid or the Children's Health Insurance Program. So almost half of rural children were benefitting from one program or the other.

Here are just a couple more. One in five seniors receives Medicare assistance through Medicaid, and that includes premium assistance, cost sharing, long-term care, dental care, and vision care.

Another important number is that two-thirds of nursing home residents are covered by Medicaid.

I mentioned children before and the profound impact it has on their lives. Medicaid covers 40 percent of all children in the country. I mentioned CHIP and Medicaid combined covering almost half of rural children. Just Medicaid alone covers 40 percent of all children—rural, urban, and everywhere in between. If you just consider low-income kids, or children who come from low-income families, Medicaid covers some 75 percent of those children.

So there is a lot to talk about. But one issue that we are in the process of engaging on as an issue is: What will happen to Medicaid?

Despite what the President said when he was campaigning—and I am talking specifically about Medicaid—just this weekend, the administration announced—without much attention drawn to it at the time, but I hope increasingly more attention—that the administration would support block-granting Medicaid. That is at variance with what the President said. In my judgment, it is a total contradiction of what he said, and now, apparently, his administration has embraced the House Republican approach to Medicaid, which is block-granting.

There are a lot of ways to measure the impact of block-granting. One that I will just cite for the record is a report by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities dated March 15, 2016, entitled ''Medicaid Block Grant Would Add Millions to Uninsured and Underinsured,'' which I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, Mar. 15, 2016]

MEDICAID BLOCK GRANT WOULD ADD MILLIONS TO UNINSURED AND UNDERINSURED

(By Edwin Park)

House Budget Committee Chairman Tom Price's budget plan would radically restructure Medicaid by converting it to a block grant, cutting federal funding by about $1 trillion over the next decade. It would also repeal health reform's Medicaid expansion. The combined result would be a total Medicaid cut of $2.1 trillion over the next ten years, relative to current law, likely making tens of millions of Americans uninsured or underinsured.

Repealing the Medicaid expansion means that at least 14 million people would lose Medicaid or not get it in the future, based on Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates. In addition, the large and growing funding cut from the block grant would almost certainly force states to sharply scale back their Medicaid programs.

The Price plan would also repeal health reform's other coverage expansions, including the subsidies to help people afford marketplace coverage.

All told, not only would the estimated 20 million Americans who've already gained coverage through health reform lose it, but millions more who qualify for Medicaid apart from health reform would likely lose their Medicaid coverage as well. Tens of millions of Americans would likely become uninsured.

Under Price's ''State Flexibilities Funds'' block grant proposal, the federal government would no longer pay a fixed share of states' Medicaid costs, apparently starting in 2018. Instead, states would get a fixed dollar amount of federal funding, which would rise only modestly each year, as explained below.

Block-grant funding would fall further behind state needs each year. The annual increase in the block grant would average about 4.3 percentage points less than Medicaid's currently projected growth rate over the next ten years. In the plan's tenth year (2026), federal Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) funding would be $169 billion—or roughly 33 percent—less than under current law (see graph). And the cuts would likely keep growing after 2026.

The block grant would cut federal Medicaid funding by $1 trillion from 2017–2026. A small share of these cuts could come from CHIP which the Price plan would presumably merge into the Medicaid block grant as in past House Republican budget plans. Over the next ten years (2017–2026), the budget plan would provide nearly 25 percent less in federal Medicaid and CHIP funding to states than under current law—not counting the lost federal funding for the Medicaid expansion.

The loss of federal funding would be greater in years when enrollment or per-beneficiary health care costs rose faster than expected—for example, due to a recession or new treatment that improved patients' health but raised costs. Currently, the federal government and the states share in those unanticipated costs; under the Price plan, states alone would bear them.

As CBO concluded in 2012 when analyzing a similar Medicaid block grant from then-House Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan:

''The magnitude of the reduction in spending . . . means that states would need to increase their spending on these programs, make considerable cutbacks in them, or both. Cutbacks might involve reduced eligibility, . . . coverage of fewer services, lower payments to providers, or increased cost-sharing by beneficiaries—all of which would reduce access to care.''

In making these cuts, states would likely use the large added flexibility that the Price plan would give them. For example, the plan would likely let states cap Medicaid enrollment and turn eligible people away from the program, or drop benefits that people with

disabilities or other special health problems need.

The Urban Institute estimated that the 2012 Ryan proposal would lead states to drop between 14.3 million and 20.5 million people from Medicaid by the tenth year (outside of the effects of repealing health reform's Medicaid expansion). That's an enrollment decline of 25 to 35 percent. Urban also estimated that the Ryan plan would lead states to cut reimbursements to health care providers by more than 30 percent. The Price block-grant proposal likely would mean similarly draconian cuts.

Mr. CASEY. Here is one of the headlines of that article, one of the basic inclusions by a respected organization that tracks this information. I will just read that headline: ''The block grant would cut federal Medicaid funding by $1 trillion from 2017–2026.''

So if you are saying you are going to protect children and you are going to protect seniors and you are going to make sure that those with disabilities don't have any problems going forward, it is pretty difficult to do that if you take a trillion dollars out of the Medicaid Program over the course of a decade.

There was an op-ed in the New York Times on Christmas Day. It was interesting that it actually was printed on that holy day. There was an op-ed by Gene Sperling. Gene is someone who many people in Washington know. But for those who don't, Gene served two Presidents; he served both President Clinton and President Obama as the Director of the National Economic Council.

Here is one of the conclusions that Gene reached, based upon his research and his vast experience. I will quote him directly from the December 25 oped in the New York Times entitled ''The Quiet War on Medicaid'': ''Together, full repeal''—and there he means full repeal of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act—''and block granting would cut Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program funding by about $2.1 trillion over the next 10 years—a 40 percent cut.''

So whether you look at it in terms of block granting's impact on Medicaid or the combination of that block-granting policy, which the administration has now embraced fully, and the repeal of the Affordable Care Act, the result of that is that you adversely impact two programs—the Children's Health Insurance Program and the Medicaid Program.

Let me bring this back to real people. I just want to highlight a couple of excerpts from a letter I received recently, and then I will conclude.

This is a letter from Coatesville, PA, the southeastern corner of our State, a letter sent to me by Pamela E. Simpson. I will just call her Pam, even though I don't know her personally.

She wrote me a letter about her son. Pam Simpson's son is Rowan. She said that Rowan, who I guess is now 5 years old, back in 2015 was diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder. She went on to say how much Rowan has benefitted from the Medicaid Program. We call it Medical Assistance in Pennsylvania.

She said that among the services he received was the behavioral specialist consultant helping him and a therapeutic staff support worker. They received direct help, direct intervention so that Rowan could grow and benefit from those direct services.

She said that the agency that administers these kinds of wraparound services for Rowan and children like him—in this case, the Child Guidance Resource Centers—started a particular program focused on social skills, especially for children with autism.

But here is how she concluded her letter, and this is why I want to cite it in the context of this critically important debate we are going to have about Medicaid and the question of block granting, which sounds kind of benign; doesn't it? When you say it, it doesn't sound that bad. But in my judgment, it would be devastating to these families.

She said to me in the letter: Please think of my dear Rowan and his happy face, his big blue eyes, and his lovely strawberry blonde hair.

You can see him in these pictures that I should have mentioned earlier. Rowan is in these two different pictures, and there he is dressed as a firefighter.

She continued: Please think of me and my husband, working every day to support our family, and please think of my 9-month-old daughter Luna who smiles at her brother daily.

There is Luna in the picture, being held by Rowan.

She says that she is worried that that little girl, when she is much older, will have to take care of Rowan later in life when Pam and her husband are gone.

She ends the letter this way: Overall, we are desperately in need of Rowan's Medical Assistance and would be devastated if we lost these benefits. What she is referring to there, of course, is Medicaid.

I have real trouble believing that if the Trump administration's proposal on block granting Medicaid marches forward, now that they have embraced the proposal that Republicans in Washington have embraced for years—they had voted for block granting over and over and over again. Now it is a live issue. Now it is no longer just voting. Now it is an issue that could be enacted into law, and I think that would be a terrible step in the wrong direction.

So I think we have to remember that when we consider these budget debates, when we consider the debate about health care, and especially when we consider real families like Pam's and real children like Rowan.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to be recognized in morning business.

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

WOMEN'S MARCH ON WASHINGTON

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I understand the majority leader may be coming to the floor to make a request. If he does, I certainly would be willing to yield to him, and I hope I won't lose my right to the floor.

Mr. President, a lot has happened here in Washington in the last few days. Marcelle and I knew that a number of Vermonters were coming down for the Women's March on Washington. We said to them, ''Look, if any Vermonters are coming down, why don't you join us for coffee?'' We arranged it right here on Capitol Hill, so they could.

At first, we didn't know how many would show up until we started getting the responses. Marcelle and I were there, along with members of my staff, shortly after 6 in the morning, and people started pouring in. Eventually, we had 500 or 600 from the little State of Vermont who joined us. I had a chance to speak to them.

My wife, Marcelle, gave one of the most powerful speeches, totally adlibbed, that I have heard, pointing out the stakes of what is happening in this country. Of course, she pointed to the Supreme Court just next door.

What got me is that these people came from all walks of life in Vermont. Some I knew, and a lot I didn't. Some are Republicans. Some are Democrats. Some are Independents. All were very concerned. Most came down in buses and drove all through the night, a little over 500 miles, to show that our brave little State says no to hate. We had thousands more who marched in my State capital, Montpelier. Let me put this in perspective. Our State capital—I was born there, and I know it very well—is home to only 8,500 people, but 15,000 Vermonters stood on our statehouse lawn to show the President that they are paying attention, they want their voices to be heard, and the American people will hold him accountable.

I got some of the most enthusiastic emails and tweets. My 14-year-old granddaughter, Francesca, told me how thrilled she was to be there. One Vermonter who took part in the enormous Women's March in Montpelier told a member of my staff, ''This is the first time I have been able to smile since Election Day.''

In Washington, Marcelle and I were proud to march with our daughter, Alicia, and 12-year-old granddaughter, Sophia. I was proud to see this 12-year-old holding her head high, knowing the respect that was being shown to her and her mother, as well as to Marcelle and me. She knew that respect went to her in a way that reflected everybody—Black, White, no matter what you might be. People cared.

We have heard disrespectful, offensive and dangerous comments seep into

our national discourse. The millions of men and women who participated in marches across the country this weekend offered a powerful statement that they will not tolerate policies that restrict the rights of women or treat women like second-class citizens. They will not treat my wife as one, they will not treat my daughter as one, they will not treat my three wonderful granddaughters as one, and all five of our grandchildren will be treated the same.

Unfortunately, the Trump administration ignored the voices of millions of Americans and is already undermining the rights of women. Two of the President's first Executive Orders targeted women. His first Executive Order attempts to dismantle the Affordable Care Act, which throws into limbo the health insurance arrangements of millions of American women who have been guaranteed maternity coverage as part of their health care plans, who have been able to have affordable birth control for the first time, who have been able to tell insurance companies that no, pregnancy is not a preexisting condition. In other words, women can be treated the same as men when they seek insurance.

President Trump also reinstated the so-called Mexico City policy, a policy that would be illegal and unconstitutional in this country—that will only result in more abortions and more pregnancy related deaths in developing countries. A former Republican Senator whom I respected highly, when he was chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee—he was strongly against abortion, but he said this kind of a policy is only going to result in more abortions and more pregnancy-related deaths in developing countries, and he is right. He is right. Affordable health care, affordable birth control, and the availability of these services would bring down abortion and pregnancy-related deaths, whether in the United States or the countries we help.

Mr. President, Americans are watching. From what I heard and saw from Vermonters on Saturday, I could tell you that they are fired up and ready to go. We need a President who is committed to equality and opportunity for all people, no matter their sex, gender, or race. We will not stand for policies that turn back the clock on so much progress we have made. To paraphrase Dr. Martin Luther King, we have to accept finite disappointment, but we must not give up infinite hope. Only light can crowd out the darkness.

I was proud to see so many Vermonters speaking up. They are not going away, and, as I pledged to them on Saturday, I am not going away. I am going to speak. I am going to speak the same way I did when Marcelle and I walked with our daughter and our granddaughter in the million women march. I will continue to speak up, as the people in my office in Vermont did, in Montpelier. I will speak up for all five of our grandchildren, for Francesca and Sophia and Fiona, but also for Patrick and Roan. I will speak up for all Americans. I will speak up for all Vermonters. They expect nothing less and they deserve nothing less.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

44TH ANNIVERSARY OF ROE V. WADE

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I am pleased to follow my neighbor from Vermont, Senator PATRICK LEAHY. We also had a very inspiring march in the capital of New Hampshire on Saturday that Senator HASSAN and I both attended. But I am not here to talk about that so much as about the 44th anniversary of the Roe v. Wade decision. That anniversary happened this past Sunday. That ruling affirmed the constitutional right of women to control our own reproductive choices. It made birth control safer and more accessible for women across this country.

On Saturday, as Senator LEAHY said so eloquently, we saw millions of women and men come together in Washington and Concord, NH, and other cities across New Hampshire and across the United States and all across the globe. There were events in all 50 States and in 32 countries. We came together to defend this constitutional right, as well as other critical gains for women in recent years. Our message, expressed peacefully and powerfully, was that we will not allow these gains to be taken away. We will not be dragged backward.

Despite the progress since the 1973 Roe v. Wade decision, women's reproductive health care remains under constant assault. States have passed restrictions intended to shut down clinics and limit access. Sadly, Republican leadership here in Congress has repeatedly attempted to defund Planned Parenthood, which is one of this Nation's leading providers of high-quality, affordable health care for women, and over 95 percent of the work that is done by Planned Parenthood is done to provide preventive services and health care to women, such as mammograms, cervical cancer screenings, and other important preventive care.

Unfortunately, the Trump administration and Republican leaders here in Congress have exhibited a dangerous obsession with rolling back women's reproductive rights. President Trump has promised to nominate Supreme Court Justices who will overturn Roe v. Wade. It is interesting—he has talked about court decisions around LGBT rights as being settled law, and yet we have the Roe v. Wade decision, which is 44 years old, and for some reason he doesn't include that as settled law.

Just yesterday, in one of his first official acts, the President signed an Executive order reinstating the global gag rule, also known as the Mexico City policy that began with Ronald Reagan's Executive order. That Executive order prohibits U.S. financial aid to many international organizations that offer contraception and comprehensive family planning services to women. But what we have seen with this Executive order that President Trump signed is a broad expansion of that Mexico City policy.

The new Trump administration has joined with Republican leaders in Congress in pledging a much broader assault on women's rights and the gains women have made in recent years. In addition to terminating funding for Planned Parenthood, which more than 12,000 Granite Staters depend on for quality, affordable health care, they have promised to repeal the Affordable Care Act, which would have profoundly negative consequences for women's health. The repeal would end ObamaCare's ban on discrimination against women in health insurance. Depending on how the law is crafted, it would allow insurers to once again classify pregnancy as a preexisting condition and to deny many women coverage; it would allow insurers to charge women more simply because we are women; it would reverse women's access to contraception without cost-sharing; and it would end access to preventive health services, such as mammograms and cervical cancer screenings, without cost-sharing—all very significant benefits of the Affordable Care Act.

Last week, we also saw reports that at the Justice Department, the Trump administration plans to eliminate the Office on Violence Against Women, including all 25 grant programs that have been working to prevent domestic violence, sexual assault, and other forms of violence against women for more than two decades—this at a time when one in five women in this country still reports being the victim of a completed or attempted rape.

Taken together, these actions amount to more than a dangerous obsession with throwing back women's reproductive rights, they amount to an assault on the safety and well-being of women and girls in the United States and across the globe. This is exactly what millions of women and men were protesting on Saturday.

Sadly, people are not just concerned, they are frightened, and unfortunately with very good reason.

As those of us who gathered and marched on Saturday made very clear, we are not going to stand still for this assault on our rights and gains. We are not going to be taken backward. This week, I am introducing bipartisan legislation to permanently repeal the global gag rule, with Senator COLLINS. This rule bans Federal funds for nongovernmental organizations that provide abortion services or information about abortion as part of comprehensive family planning services.

As I said earlier, the Trump administration's reinstatement of the global gag rule is even more extreme and harmful than it has been in previous

Republican administrations. Previously, under President Reagan and the Bush administration, this policy applied only to family planning funding, but under President Trump's order, it applies to every program that falls under global health assistance. This means that it puts at risk 15 times more funding and millions more women and families. This targets some of the most effective health organizations that work in the developing world—organizations that are doing great work to provide HIV services and maternal health care and to counsel women on the risks of the Zika infection—and it ignores decades of research. We know that when family planning services and contraceptives are accessible, there are fewer unplanned pregnancies, fewer maternal deaths and child deaths, and fewer abortions. So if you want to prevent abortion—something I think we all agree on—then why not give women and their families access to family planning services? I don't think we can allow extreme ideology to triumph over the urgent practical needs of women and families across the world.

The facts make clear that when family planning services are accessible and contraceptives are affordable, rates of unplanned pregnancies and abortions go down. Here in the United States, the abortion rate has dropped to the lowest level since 1943—a success that is directly attributed to reduced cost-sharing for contraception under the Affordable Care Act. And what do we have? We have the leadership and Congress trying to reverse that assistance to women and families.

In recent days, we have been presented with a fateful choice. We can stand aside and allow the Trump administration to lead an across-the-board assault on women's rights—on women's access to health care, on programs that protect women from sexual assault and other forms of violence—or we can come together on a bipartisan basis to protect the important gains women have made in recent years and decades.

Back in the early 1980s, I chaired a committee in New Hampshire that was working on women's employment in the State. One of the conclusions we came to was when women are supported, their families are supported. So this is not just about women in this country; this is about families. It is about women and their children and their husbands and their brothers and their fathers and their mothers. This is about what is in the best interests of the American people.

Millions of Americans joined together on Saturday, peacefully and passionately, to urge Congress to make the right choice, to protect women's constitutional rights, to protect our access to health care. I urge my Senate colleagues on both sides of the aisle to listen to those voices, and I urge my colleagues to join with me in ending the global gag rule once and for all.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, this past Sunday was the 44th anniversary of Roe v. Wade. I wish to take a moment to reflect on how far we have come since the Supreme Court decision.

Because of Roe v. Wade, American women for the last 44 years have had the right, the freedom, the privacy to make their own decisions about their own bodies with their doctors and with their families, without the Federal Government barging its way into the conversation and telling them what they can or can't do with their own bodies.

Roe v. Wade was one of the most important Supreme Court decisions in the history of women's rights in this Nation, but it was only a start. In the 44 years since, we have made so much progress with women's health, and much of that progress has to do with what we accomplished in the Affordable Care Act.

Millions of American women now have access to health care coverage that used to be extremely difficult and expensive for a lot of women to get. Millions of American women now have access to affordable preventive health care services, including contraception, birth control, STD screenings, mammograms, breastfeeding support and supplies, and cervical cancer screenings, and since the Affordable Care Act was passed, the number of unwanted pregnancies has gone down, in part, because more women have access to affordable contraception.

There is no doubt that American women have better access to safe and affordable health care because of Roe v. Wade and the Affordable Care Act, but some of my colleagues are committed to turning back the clock on women's health and taking away women's access to this lifesaving care. They are doing everything in their power to get rid of the Affordable Care Act, and they are determined to see Roe v. Wade get overturned.

One of President Trump's first Executive orders was so extreme that it would take away funding for any international organizations that even talk about whether a woman might want to terminate a pregnancy. We should never let this happen. If we take away women's access to the health care they need, it would be devastating—even life-threatening—for millions of American women.

This weekend, a massive group of women and men and children joined together in women's marches across the globe. They were there to speak out, to be heard, to protest some of these issues that would deeply affect American families and women in particular. I was so proud to march with them. I was inspired by them—their passion, their determination, and their commitment to never give up.

The women's marches were truly the biggest outpouring of support and activism I have seen in my lifetime and certainly that we have seen in this generation. They were loud and clear statements that we will not let the government dictate to us how we should manage these most personal decisions—when you are going to have a family, how big your family is going to be. Those are decisions that are made by husbands and wives, by spouses all across this country about what their family is going to look like.

I urge all of my colleagues in this Chamber to listen to the millions of Americans, the millions of women who would like to make those decisions themselves, who would like to choose their health care, who would not like to be charged more just because they are women, who would not like to see their health care coverage dropped the minute they become pregnant, who would not like to be told: You have a preexisting condition and we will not cover you. That is what we go back to.

We have to fight for the Affordable Care Act, and we have to make sure the Supreme Court does not overturn Roe v. Wade. Listen to your constituents. These marches weren't just in New York; they were in every State across the country. These marches were real, they were powerful, they were determined, and these men and women want to be heard.

Members of Congress, I hope you are listening to them. That is our job, to represent our country. Their voices must be heard. We shall not ignore them.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 5 p.m., on Tuesday, January 24, the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nominations en bloc: Executive Calendar Nos. 6 and 7; I further ask unanimous consent that there be 30 minutes of debate on the nominations en bloc, equally divided in the usual form; and that following the use or yielding back of time, the Senate vote on the nominations en bloc, with no intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and no further motions be in order; and that any statements related to the nominations be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

FUTURE OF THE EPA AND NOMINATION OF SCOTT PRUITT

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, last week the Committee on Environment

and Public Works held a hearing on the nomination of Oklahoma attorney general Scott Pruitt to lead the Environmental Protection Agency. The hearing was really about the future of this Agency and how we can get it back to doing the job it was meant to do from the very beginning.

We are blessed in this country with enormous natural resources. Our goal should be to use these resources responsibly in ways that protect our environment and help make our economy strong.

Over the past 8 years, the leaders of the Environmental Protection Agency created broad and legally questionable new regulations that undermined the American people's faith in the Agency. The political leaders of this Agency have been reckless, irresponsible, and arrogant.

A course of correction is long overdue, and it is exactly what we are going to get.

If my colleagues have any doubts that the EPA lost its way, they can just look at two of the biggest environmental scandals we have seen in a long time. In the summer of 2015, there was what became known as the Gold King Mine disaster. The Environmental Protection Agency spilled 3 million gallons of toxic wastewater into a river in Colorado. This was water filled with toxic substances like arsenic and lead. It flowed to New Mexico and Utah, through the land of the Navajo Nation and the Southern Ute Indian tribe. There are 200,000 people who drink water from the river system that the EPA poisoned. Farmers and ranchers couldn't use the water for their crops or their animals.

The other disaster the Environmental Protection Agency helped to cause was what happened in Flint, MI. The EPA failed to do the proper oversight. As a result, thousands of children were exposed to high levels of lead in their drinking water. The Agency knew about the dangers to the public health and for months did nothing to warn the people.

These are just two scandals where the Environmental Protection Agency actually harmed people's health because the EPA was negligent. There are also many ways the Agency has harmed families and the American economy, not by accident but intentionally. It has issued thousands of pages of regulations trying to shut down the entire coal industry in the United States. Since 2009, the Environmental Protection Agency has come out with nearly 200 new regulations.

According to the American Action Forum, the total cost of all of this new redtape is about $340 billion. The Agency has piled enormous new restrictions and costs onto American families and businesses, all to produce miniscule benefits.

One of them was the so-called Clean Power Plan. States sued to block this destructive bureaucratic overreach. The courts had to step in and tell Washington not so fast.

We should be looking for ways to make American energy as clean as we can, as fast as we can, without raising costs for American families. That is not what the Environmental Protection Agency did with its power regulations.

The EPA also put out a new rule that dramatically expanded its own control over what it calls waters of the United States. The Agency declared that it has control over things like irrigation ditches and backyard ponds all across America. Two different courts have blocked this rule from taking effect. Why? Because it goes far beyond the Agency's own authority.

For 8 years now, the leaders of the EPA have not had their priorities straight. They have been pursuing a political agenda instead of focusing on what should be the Agency's core mission. The Environmental Protection Agency was created for a reason. It was created because America needed someone to perform this mission. There is a right way to do the job. We can strike the right balance so we protect our environment while allowing our economy to grow.

My home State of Wyoming is one of the most pristine States in the country, one of the most beautiful places in the world, as well as one of the most energy-rich States in the country. Wyoming has struck the right balance. We have done it successfully and so have many other States. We can address threats to our environment best through the cooperation of States, towns, Indian tribes, and Washington—a cooperation.

The quality of America's air, water, and land are local concerns as much as they are national concerns. The Environmental Protection Agency should not try to dictate regulations from Washington without consulting its partners at all levels.

Much of the work of the EPA was intended to give States a chance to take action first. Federal regulators are meant to be a backstop, acting when States or communities fail to act. Restoring this proper order and restoring the partnership of States with the EPA is essential to making sure people see the Agency as legitimate once again. The Agency needs to learn to listen before it acts.

We can also restore the Environmental Protection Agency by restating its commitment to the rule of law. That is why the American people elect a Congress—because of the rule of law. The Agency must enforce the laws as they are written by Congress. The Agency cannot write the laws, cannot ignore the parts of the laws it doesn't like, although that is exactly what this EPA has been doing.

We all know the EPA used to do very good work. In the past, it protected America's environment while understanding that there need to be reasonable regulations that allow people to use our natural resources. Every American wants clean air, clean water, and commonsense protection for our species. That will not change. We need the EPA to do its job, and we need it to do the job right.

Through 6 hours of questioning before our committee last week, Scott Pruitt showed that he understands the need to return the Environmental Protection Agency back to its proper course. He showed he is committed to working as a partner with Americans all across the country to find the best ways to address the threats to our environment. His record as the attorney general of Oklahoma showed that he is committed to restoring and maintaining the rule of law.

I am confident that Attorney General Pruitt will be able to right the ship at the EPA. I am confident that he can restore the balance between the benefits the Agency can deliver for Americans with the costs that it imposes.

As chairman of the Committee on Environment and Public Works, I am committed to making sure the Senate exercises appropriate oversight to make sure that this happens.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

REPEALING THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, Republicans in Congress have been on the warpath for a long time to repeal the Affordable Care Act. In fact, in this new Congress, their first order of business has been to pave the way for dismantling this law. Despite the fact that 20 million Americans have gained health insurance coverage thanks to this law, despite people no longer being denied coverage for preexisting conditions, despite big savings in health care costs, and despite everyone with insurance being able to access important preventive health services for free, my Republican colleagues have decided to repeal it. And, after 7 years to get ready, they have no replacement, not even a path to a replacement at this point.

Yes, they are set on repealing a law that has provided both health and financial security to millions of Americans, with no replacement in sight, just at this point some empty IOU for some future piece of legislation that may or may not be any good. It is a little like being asked to jump out of an airplane without a parachute and being told: Trust us. We will build the parachute for you before you hit the ground.

We don't know what this nonexistent Republican replacement would look

like, but we sure do know what a repeal would do; it would gut health insurance premium tax credits that help millions of Americans obtain health insurance they could not otherwise afford. It would unwind an expansion of the Medicaid Program that covers millions more Americans in some 30 States that have chosen to participate, casting tens of millions of Americans—men, women, and children—out of their health insurance.

At the same time, it would deliver an enormous tax boon to millionaires and billionaires, as usual for Republicans, by repealing the revenue we used to pay for ObamaCare. This tax boon is a 16-percent reduction in the taxes owed by millionaires and billionaires on their investment income.

Republicans want to take health insurance away from tens of millions of ordinary Americans and simultaneously reward those at the very top of the income pile with a big tax benefit. So much for all the talk we have heard from Republicans about the deficit.

At least in Rhode Island, the Affordable Care Act is working. The law launched accountable care organizations that are improving care while lowering costs. In Rhode Island, Coastal Medical and Integra Community Care Network—two primary care-focused ACOs—are not only driving down per person health expenditures but achieving high marks on quality and on patient experience. In total, Coastal has saved $24 million over 3 years and Integra has saved $4 million in its first year as an ACO.

The Affordable Care Act also has protected seniors from the dreaded drug price doughnut hole, and I can tell you I heard a lot about the doughnut hole from seniors in Rhode Island when I was running for the Senate. The Affordable Care Act has protected families where someone had a chronic condition and couldn't get insurance, and the Affordable Care Act has prevented insurers from throwing customers off coverage when they get sick.

It is true that some of the health insurance exchanges haven't attracted enough competition. We can fix that. Indeed, to help with that issue, Senators BROWN, FRANKEN, and I are today introducing the Consumer Health Options and Insurance Competition Enhancement Act, or the CHOICE Act, to add a public health insurance option to the health insurance exchanges. This public option would guarantee that consumers always have an affordable, high-quality option when shopping for health insurance and a strong health care fallback when markets fail.

ObamaCare may not be perfect, but it has done an awful lot of good. Millions of Americans who lacked insurance now have it, and the rate of uninsured Americans has fallen to 8.6 percent, about half of what it was in 2010. Projected Federal health care costs are down nearly $3 trillion.

Instead of demolishing a system that works well for millions of Americans with no replacement on the horizon, let's use our proposal to make it better. Let's add a public option to our health insurance exchanges.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, if I could address another topic now and ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 15 minutes in morning business.

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

NOMINATION OF SCOTT PRUITT

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, the question I bring to the floor today is what is Scott Pruitt hiding? Last week, the Environment and Public Works Committee held a hearing on President Trump's nominee to the Environmental Protection Agency. Today, for my 155th ''Time to Wake Up'' speech, I have unanswered questions about Mr. Pruitt's fitness for that role. His evasiveness at his hearing signaled nothing good about his ties to the industry he would regulate if confirmed, and the lack of curiosity about these industry ties from my Republican colleagues speaks volumes about the political clout of that industry.

One question stood out. Our new chairman, Senator BARRASSO, posed the standard question of nominees to Mr. Pruitt in our hearing: ''Do you know of any matters, which you may or may not have disclosed, that might place you in any conflict of interest if you are confirmed?''

Mr. Pruitt answered: ''No.''

Scott Pruitt crawls with conflict of interest. He has conflicts of interest with the fossil fuel industry from his political fundraising. We just don't know how bad. He likely has conflicts of interest from confidential private meetings with fossil fuel companies at Republican Attorneys General Association get-togethers, but we just don't know how bad. There is almost certainly evidence of conflict of interest in his undisclosed emails with fossil fuel companies, but again we don't know how bad. He came clean on none of this in his confirmation hearing.

This chart is a simple, and a likely incomplete, representation of the many financial links reported between Pruitt and the fossil fuel industry. At the top are the companies and the entities that have supported Mr. Pruitt with political funding. Down below are the political organizations for which he has raised money.

Pruitt for Attorney General was his reelection campaign. The polluters gave to Pruitt for Attorney General. Oklahoma's Strong PAC was his leadership PAC, a separate political fundraising vehicle. The polluters gave to Oklahoma Strong.

There was another one here called Liberty 2.0, Mr. Pruitt's super PAC, but he closed it down so we don't list it. While it existed, his super PAC took nearly $200,000 in fossil fuel industry contributions. Mr. Pruitt served as the chair of the Republican Attorneys General Association in 2012 and 2013 and was a member of RAGA's executive committee through 2015. Between 2014 and 2016, RAGA received $530,000 from Koch Industries. It received $350,000 from Murray Energy. It received $160,000 from ExxonMobil, and it received $125,000 from Devon Energy.

Devon Energy, by the way, is the company whose letter Mr. Pruitt transposed virtually verbatim onto his official letterhead to send to the EPA as the official position of the Oklahoma attorney general.

During his hearing, Mr. Pruitt refused to provide details about any solicitations he made from regulated industries for the Republican Attorneys General Association. We know they got special attention from RAGA. Here is a confidential 2015 meeting agenda from RAGA when Pruitt was on its executive committee. I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the meeting agenda page.

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

RAGA SUMMER NATIONAL MEETING 2015, THE GREENBRIER, WEST VIRGINIA

MEETING AGENDA

The Greenbrier; 300 West Main Street, White Sulphur Springs, WV; (855) 616–2441.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 1, 2015

A Cyber Lounge and Hospitality Suite are provided all day for your convenience by Rent-A-Center in the Chesapeake Bay Room,

5:40 PM—Lead Shuttles for West Virginia Host Committee Dinner. Location: Front Main Entrance of the Hotel.

6:00 PM–8:00 PM—West Virginia Host Committee Reception & Dinner; Location: Kate's Mountain Lodge; Special Guest: Homer Hickam—American author; Vietnam veteran, and a former NASA engineer. His autobiographical novel Rocket Boys: A Memoir, was a No. 1 New York Times Best Seller, and was the basis for the 1999 film October Sky.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 2, 2015

A Cyber Lounge and Hospitality Suite are provided all day for your convenience by Rent-A-Center in the Chesapeake Bay Room

7:00 AM–10:30 AM—Breakfast (on your own); Location: Main Dining Room; *Breakfast is included, please provide your room key to the waiter. Please note: denim and exercise attire are not permitted.

11:00 AM–12:30 PM—AG Business Meeting; *Attorneys General and Staff Only; Location: Eisenhower A & B.

12:30 PM–2:00 PM—RAGA ERC & Capital Club Lunch: What Difference Does It Make? Measuring the Success of Republican AGs; Location: Chesapeake Room; Speaker: Attorney General Pam Bondi, Florida.

2:00 PM–5:30 PM—Private Meetings with Attorneys General and Staff; *Attorneys General and Staff Only; Location: Eisenhower A & B.

2:00 PM–2:40 PM—Private meeting with Murray Energy: *Attorneys General and Staff Only; Location: Eisenhower A & B.

2:50 PM–3:10 PM—Private meeting with Microsoft; *Attorneys General and Staff Only; Location: Eisenhower A & B.

3:15 PM–3:35 PM—Private meeting with Southern Company; *Attorneys General and Staff Only; Location: Eisenhower A & B.

3:40 PM–4:00 PM—Private meeting with American Fuel Petrochemical Manufacturers; *Attorneys General and Staff Only; Location: Eisenhower A & B.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. This confidential agenda mentions a private meeting

with Murray Energy. It mentions a private meeting with Southern Company, and it mentions a private meeting with American Fuel Petrochemical Manufacturers, which represents a lot of these characters. Murray Energy, of course, is right there. Southern Company is right there, and the American Fuel Petrochemical Manufacturers organization, I am sure, represents the others.

This confidential meeting agenda is all we have about what took place in those private meetings. I asked Mr. Pruitt in our hearings about the content of these private meetings, and he wouldn't answer any questions. He doesn't want us to know what was discussed there with the big fossil fuel polluters—companies whose pollution he will oversee as EPA Administrator.

Pruitt was also a chairman of the Rule of Law Defense Fund. The so-called Rule of Law Defense Fund is a dark money political operation that launders the identity of donors giving money to the Republican Attorneys General Association. As the New York Times said, the fund is a ''legal entity that allows companies benefiting from the actions of Mr. Pruitt and other Republican attorneys general to make anonymous donations, in unlimited amounts.'' It is a complete black hole of political cash.

In the hearing, Pruitt refused to shine any light into the dark money he solicited or received from these fossil fuel polluters or others for the Rule of Law Defense Fund—not whom he asked for money, not who gave money, not what they gave, nothing. This is an organization that appears to have a million-dollar-a-year budget so someone was busy raising a lot of money. How much exactly, from whom, and what was the deal? Scott Pruitt doesn't want our committee or this Senate or the American people to know.

Colleagues and I sent letters to the Office of Government Ethics and to the Environmental Protection Agency's top ethics official. Their responses indicate that their ethics rules predate Citizens United and its torrent of dark political money. Their regulatory authority on government ethics has not caught up with the post-Citizens United dark money world. Since their ethics authorities have not been updated for these dark money conflicts, if Pruitt doesn't disclose any of this information before the Senate, no one will know, and even those government ethics watchdogs may end up blind to conflicts of interest.

That doesn't mean there isn't a conflict of interest here. What it means is it is a hidden conflict of interest. That makes it our duty in the Senate to examine those relationships, except for the fact that the fossil fuel industry now, more or less, runs the Republican Party, so there is a scrupulous lack of interest in this fossil fuel industry dark money.

How badly does Mr. Pruitt want to hide his dealings with his fossil fuel patrons? An Open Records Act request was filed with the Oklahoma attorney general's office—Mr. Pruitt's office—for emails with energy firms, fossil fuel trade groups, and their political arms, with companies like Devon Energy, Murray Energy, and Koch Industries, and the American Petroleum Institute, which is the industry's trade association.

Let me share three facts about this Open Records Act inquiry: No. 1, the Open Records Act request was filed more than 745 days ago—over 2 years, 2 years. No. 2, Pruitt's office has admitted that there are at least 3,000 responsive documents to that Open Records Act request. Consider that fact alone for a moment. There were 3,000 emails and other documents between his office and these fossil fuel companies and front groups—3,000. No. 3, zero, exactly zero of those documents have been produced—745 days, 3,000 documents, zero produced.

Think how smelly those 3,000 emails must be when he would rather have this flagrant Open Records Act compliance failure than have any of those 3,000 emails see the light of day. Given the important financial interests of these groups before the EPA, do we really not think that 3,000 emails back and forth between him and his office and those groups might be relevant to his conflicts of interest as Administrator? Until very recently, Republicans had a keen interest in emails. Chairman BARRASSO asked that important question: ''Do you know of any matters which you may or may not have disclosed that might place you in any conflict of interest if you are confirmed?'' Scott Pruitt answered: ''No.''

On this record, there is every reason to believe that his statement is false. Might having raised significant dark money from the industry that he would regulate create a conflict of interest? Let's say that he made a call to Devon Energy and said: I slapped your letter on my letterhead and turned it in as if it were the official work of the Oklahoma attorney general's office. Now I need a million bucks. And you can give it to the Rule of Law Defense Fund as dark money, without anyone knowing that it was you.

Might such a quid pro quo create a conflict of interest in his ability to carry out the duties of EPA Administrator in matters affecting Devon Energy? It is impossible to say that it would not be a conflict of interest.

Let's say that at those confidential private meetings with Murray Energy and Southern Company, something went on. Might something that takes place in private meetings with Big Energy interests that he is going to have to regulate create a possible conflict of interest? They paid to be there. They wanted something. Might that not give rise to a conflict of interest?

And who knows what conflicts of interest would be divulged if his office were not sitting on 3,000 undisclosed emails with fossil fuel industries that he will be regulating as EPA Administrator?

I challenge anyone to come to this Senate floor and tell me with a straight face that there is nothing that those emails could reveal that might create a conflict of interest for the man discharged with regulating the companies on the other end of those emails. ''No'' just doesn't cut it as an answer from Mr. Pruitt when there is still so much that he is hiding.

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

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

NOMINATION OF BETSY DEVOS

Mr. PETERS. Madam President, I rise today to speak on the nomination of Betsy DeVos for Secretary of Education.

Public education is deeply personal for me. I am proud to have attended Michigan public schools, and I have three children who did so as well. I know firsthand the importance of a strong public education system. My father Herb was a proud teacher and taught English for 32 years in Rochester, MI, where I grew up.

My father was part of the ''greatest generation.'' He fought for our country in World War II and returned home to help build America's middle class. Our Nation owes these men and women a debt of gratitude for building a country where anyone who is willing to work hard and play by the rules can find opportunity.

But too many families today feel that the American dream remains just out of reach. It seems that they can hardly get by, much less get ahead. At a time of growing income inequality, public schools can and do provide a ladder of opportunity in communities across the Nation—urban, rural, and suburban alike. Strong public schools are vital to our economy, our democracy, and to our Nation's global competitiveness.

I think we can all agree that a child's chance to succeed should not be dictated by his or her ZIP Code. While many crucial education decisions are made at the State and at the local levels, the Federal Government also has a role to play in providing the necessary educational tools and proper protections for all of our children to flourish.

We need a Secretary of Education who is dedicated to improving access to quality public education based on sound evidence and ensuring the proper implementation of Federal laws designed to protect and to help all of our children. That is why I am deeply troubled by President Trump's nomination

of Betsy DeVos of Michigan to serve as the Secretary of Education.

Mrs. DeVos, like so many recent graduates, is effectively applying for a job. And like any employer, the American people should look at her resume, her interview, and her past performance.

Mrs. DeVos's resume contains no experience in public education at any level—not as a teacher, not as an administrator, not as a student or a parent, not as a school board member, and not even as a borrower of public loans for college.

Her only experience in education is her work lobbying for the transfer of taxpayer money to private schools and the rapid expansion of charter schools without sufficient accountability to parents and to students.

So let's look at her interview. Her appearance before the Senate HELP Committee last week raised many more questions and did not provide answers. During her confirmation hearing, Mrs. DeVos showed herself to be unfamiliar with some basic educational concepts, like the debate over whether we should measure students' success by growth or proficiency. If Mrs. DeVos doesn't know how to measure success, how can she ever be expected to achieve success in our schools?

Mrs. DeVos also appeared to have never heard of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, one of the most important pieces of education and civil rights legislation in our country's history. This law has provided access to education for children with unique needs and supports their parents, who depend on the law that Mrs. DeVos will be in charge of enforcing, if confirmed. And it appeared as if this was the first time that she had ever heard of this law, just last week.

So finally, let's take a look at her past performance. I am particularly troubled by Mrs. DeVos's long-time advocacy to funnel Michigan taxpayer dollars to private and charter school systems that are not held accountable for their performance.

Let me be clear. Our education system is far from perfect, and I support effective, innovative educational reforms that lift up our children. But these reforms need to be driven by facts and not ideology.

Unfortunately, in my home State of Michigan, the charter school experiment has not lived up to the promises made. In fact, 65 percent of charter schools in Michigan fail—yes, fail—to significantly outperform traditional public schools in reading outcomes. In Detroit, 70 percent of charter schools are in the bottom quartile of Michigan's schools. These are certainly not the results that we would want to replicate at the national level.

Despite these outcomes, Mrs. DeVos stated during her confirmation hearing that she did not think that public charter schools should be held to the same standards as traditional public schools.

Well, that simply doesn't make sense. It doesn't make sense that many charter schools accepting taxpayer money not only performed worse than traditional public schools in terms of academic success but also get to skirt laws that protect against discrimination and support disabled youth. We should hold all schools receiving Federal dollars to the same level of accountability.

I have reviewed her resume, her interview, and her track record, and I have no confidence that Mrs. DeVos will fully support our traditional public schools, our teachers, our parents, and, most importantly, our children, who only get one shot. They just get one shot to get an excellent K–12 education.

Her approach to education has failed the children of Michigan, and her confirmation process gives me no reason to think that she will bring a more successful approach to our Nation.

American children deserve the opportunity for a quality education no matter who they are and no matter where they live. I stand with the many educators and parents in Michigan and across the Nation when I say: Mrs. DeVos lacks the experience, qualifications, and the right vision to oversee our Nation's educational system. Simply put, our children deserve a whole lot better.

I cannot and will not support Betsy DeVos's nomination to serve as the Secretary of Education, and I hope my colleagues will join me in unity against her nomination.

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

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

COMMERCE COMMITTEE AGENDA AND NEW INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, it is hard to believe, but the Internet as we know it is already in its third decade. While it is no longer novel, this essential technology continues to transform the world around us in often very unexpected ways. Just a few short years ago, the idea of the Internet being built into farm equipment would have been unthinkable. Yet, today, wireless Internet in tractors and combines is making agriculture more and more efficient. This is just one small example of how new information technologies have become a fundamental part of our economy. There isn't a job creator in America who doesn't have a story to tell about how or when he or she realized the Internet had become a critical part of his or her business.

But while the digital economy is creating massive opportunities, our Nation's laws are not keeping pace. Over the past several years, Netflix and Amazon have completely disrupted the video world. The iPhone, which redefined personal computing and connectivity, just celebrated its 10th anniversary. Yet most of the government policies dealing with video, wireless, and Internet platforms were written for a world where none of these things existed. It is a testament to the ingenuity of American businesses and entrepreneurs that they have been able to adapt and succeed with laws that are increasingly out of date. While I don't doubt that they will continue to work around these challenges, American companies and consumers deserve better.

It is past time to modernize our communication laws to facilitate the growth of the Internet, and it is high time to update government policies to better reflect the innovations made possible by digital technologies. As the chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee, I have committed to modernizing government policies for the digital age, and that will be one of our top priorities in the Commerce Committee this year.

One way the government can boost investment in our digital infrastructure is by finding ways to make it cheaper and easier to build broadband networks. At the Commerce Committee, I introduced legislation called the MOBILE NOW Act to ensure that huge swaths of wireless spectrum are made available for use by the year 2020. By then, we hope to see the next generation of ultra-high speed services known as 5G, which will need more spectrum than is available today. The MOBILE NOW Act will also cut through much of the bureaucratic redtape that makes it difficult to build wireless infrastructure on Federal property.

I am happy to report that the Commerce Committee passed the MOBILE NOW Act earlier today, but this legislation is just the start. The Commerce Committee will continue to develop legislative proposals to spur broadband deployment, make more spectrum available for the public, and improve connectivity throughout rural America.

Good Internet infrastructure policies and investments matter very little, however, if government bureaucrats can overregulate the digital world. The Federal Communications Commission has long been the main government regulator for telecommunications. As we have turned away from traditional telecom services and toward new technologies, the FCC has found its role gradually diminishing. This is inevitable and a good byproduct of technological innovation. But instead of accepting this, over the last several years the FCC has aggressively pushed for government interference in the Internet. Speaking about new economic opportunities on the Internet, the last FCC Chairman declared: ''Government

is where we will work this out.'' The government is where we will work this out? Well, I believe consumers and job creators should be the ones deciding about new technologies, not the government. I think most Americans would agree.

Right now, Internet providers are offering innovative service plans that allow you to stream video, music, or other content for free. These innovative offers are a sign of strong competition in the marketplace. Yet, 2 weeks ago, the outgoing FCC issued a report raising what it called ''serious concerns'' that such practices ''likely . . . harm consumers.'' That is right, it seems the FCC thinks that being able to do more online for less money is somehow bad for consumers. Meanwhile, consumers themselves seem to strongly disagree because a lot of these free data offerings are turning out to be quite popular.

One of the most important takeaways from the last election is that people are tired of bureaucrats trying to micromanage their lives. One way we can address this concern is to see how the FCC operates and reform what it is allowed to do. The FCC should be focused on fixing fundamental problems in the marketplace, not dictating the direction of technological progress. The last time Congress passed meaningful laws affecting the FCC was when the Internet was in its infancy. It is clearly time for the FCC's reform once again.

At the Commerce Committee, we have had many conversations about improving this agency, and I believe this year presents a real opportunity to turn those conversations into solutions. I am confident that we can attract the bipartisan support that is needed to move legislation modernizing the FCC across the Senate floor.

Another area where I would like to achieve bipartisan agreement is on legislation to protect the open Internet. We need clear and reasonable rules for the digital road that everyone can understand. Complex and ambiguous regulations that shift with the political winds aren't in anyone's best interests. For Americans to get the maximum benefit from the Internet, they need certainty about what the rules are and, most importantly, what the rules will be in the coming years. The only way to achieve that is for Congress to pass bipartisan legislation. I have been working with my colleagues to find a legislative solution. While we are not there yet, I am committed to getting there.

The Commerce Committee was incredibly productive last year, with 60 measures enacted into law. We made real progress on Internet-focused legislation, including committee approval of the MOBILE NOW Act that I mentioned earlier. We will build on that foundation in this Congress. I look forward to taking advantage of the good ideas of our committee members on both sides of the aisle.

At the end of the day, it is not, as I said, Congress that is going to come up with the best solutions. It will be American innovators and entrepreneurs who will determine what the digital future holds, not us here in Washington, DC. Government should focus on facilitating their success while making sure that we are not accidentally standing in their way.

I am excited to see how the Internet and other emerging technologies will continue to change our world in the coming years, and I am eager to do my small part to ensure that all Americans benefit from these amazing advances.

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

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

NOMINATION OF SCOTT PRUITT

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I was not preparing to come down to speak today, but I just want to make a few comments because I have been listening to what is going on in one of the other rooms out there. Everyone is zeroing in and targeting a guy named Scott Pruitt, who they don't think should be confirmed to be the Administrator of the EPA. I know Scott Pruitt very well, and he happens to be the attorney general for my State of Oklahoma. In fact, I recruited him to run for the State legislature many years ago, and he is someone I know very well. He resides in my city of Tulsa, OK, and he is eminently qualified for this position. I would just like to make a couple of comments in response.

I chaired the Environment and Public Works Committee for some number of years, and during that timeframe, we started considering his nomination. I heard all kinds of criticism. I say to the Chair that they talk about the fact that he has sued the EPA and how can a person who has sued the EPA be qualified to serve as the Administrator of the EPA? Well, I think that is a pretty good qualification, considering what the EPA was doing during the Obama administration. Look at some of the lawsuits he has been involved with.

''WOTUS'' is the acronym for ''waters of the United States.'' Of the many regulations they have come up with, this is one of the most onerous. In fact, I would say that probably in all States—Louisiana, Oklahoma, and the rest of them—they gave the same response as the farm girl gave when we asked the question—I asked the question: What is the worst thing that could happen or has happened to the farmers and ranchers of America—not just in Oklahoma but throughout America? And they said it is not anything that is in the Agriculture bill, it is the overregulation of the EPA. When we ask the question ''Which of all the overregulations of the EPA is the worst one?'' according to farmers, it is the WOTUS regulation, the waters of the United States.

For as long as I can remember, liberals have tried to get the jurisdiction of water away from the States and give it to the Federal Government. I mean, that is the general philosophy of someone who is liberal—they want the power of the United States to be concentrated in Washington. So this is a part of that effort. As a matter of fact, it was 6 years ago that there was a House Member and a Senate Member who introduced a bill to take the word ''navigable'' out of our laws. State governments have control of all water rights except for navigable waters. If they had taken the word ''navigable'' out, the Federal Government could have taken over the entire jurisdiction. The two who were doing that were Senator Feingold from Wisconsin and Congressman Oberstar from Minnesota. Not only did we defeat both of those pieces of legislation 6 years ago, but they were both defeated at the polls afterward. So if this is an issue, it is an issue that has been around for a long time.

So yes, in fact, Scott Pruitt, as the attorney general of Oklahoma, from Tulsa, joined 15 other States, including the State of Louisiana, in suing to stop the rule that the Obama administration had put through in WOTUS, the water resources. To show how he was on sound ground, the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals has since that time said that, yes, he was right. They put a stay on it.

The next bill, the next of the regulations—I just did a TV thing where they were asking about the most onerous of regulations. It is kind of hard to answer that question because they are all so bad—they all inflict such a hardship on the business community throughout America—but the Clean Power Plan, let's go back and look at the history of that.

The Clean Power Plan all started back in about 2002, when at that time they wanted to do it when they first started talking about global warming so they were going to somehow do away with the emissions of CO_2. So they tried to do it with legislation in 2002, and then again in 2004, again in 2005, and about every other year since then, and it has always been rejected by the Senate. It has been rejected by the Senate by an increased margin each time. Yet they keep saying, no, we are going to have some type of cap-and-trade legislation. We calculated what that would cost. It is between $300 billion and $400 billion a year, and frankly it wouldn't accomplish anything.

The first administrator for the EPA under Obama was Lisa Jackson. I enjoyed her. I asked her the question: If

we were to do away with CO_2 altogether in the United States, would this have the effect of reducing it worldwide, and she said: No, because this isn't where the problem is. The problem is in China, India, and in Mexico. So the more we chase our ability to generate electricity to those areas, the more—and they don't have any restrictions on CO_2 emissions—then that is going to increase, not decrease.

They were not able to pass it legislatively. So along comes President Obama, and he said: Well, we can't do it through legislation, we will do it through regulation, so they had the Clean Power Plan. The Clean Power Plan was essentially the same thing as the legislation we defeated.

So Scott Pruitt, the attorney general from Oklahoma, came along, and he filed a lawsuit against the EPA, and this worked out really pretty well. It had a lot of support behind it. It wasn't the Sixth Circuit, it was the U.S. Supreme Court that stayed this. So what I am saying is, sure, he has had the occasion, along with some 26 other States, in the case of the Clean Power Plan, of filing a lawsuit against the EPA, but he has been successful in doing that.

Let me clarify another thing that has been misrepresented on this floor several times. They referred to a characterization I gave about 4 or 5 years ago called the hoax. The hoax is not climate change. We all know the climate is constantly changing. All the evidence is there. There is scriptural evidence, historical evidence. It has always been there. The climate has always changed. The hoax is that the world is coming to an end because of manmade gases. That is the clarification that needs to be made if we are going to be completely honest.

By the way, when they criticized Scott Pruitt for suing the EPA, I am reminding them that he also has sued several oil companies, including ConocoPhillips—he had a lawsuit against them for alleged double dipping—as well as BP and Chevron, so it is not just as if he is somehow owned by the oil companies. I always have to say, when people say the oil companies contribute to campaigns, not anything like the far left environmentalists do.

I remember Tom Steyer. Tom Steyer said before the 2014 elections: I am going to put $100 million of my money to elect people who go along with all of these far-left programs. Of course, it didn't work in 2014. He actually at that time spent $75 million. This is one individual we are talking about. So those guys over there, they are the ones who are putting money into campaigns, and I understand that.

The last thing I want to correct—and I wish more people would talk about this. Frankly, I wish President Trump would say more about this because they always talk about how 97 percent of the scientists go along with the global warming thing. That isn't true at all. In fact, if you go to my Web site, you will find a piece that was in the Wall Street Journal that makes it very clear that isn't true and documents that case. The scientists who have been saying this are one group that is called the IPCC, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. That is the United Nations, in case there is someone who doesn't understand that. They are the ones who have provided all the credibility in terms of the science that backs up all the statements that are made about global warming.

I had the occasion—some people are not aware that once every December, now for 21 years, the United Nations has had the biggest party of the year. It is always in some exotic place. I remember in 2009 it was in Copenhagen. We had all the people—several friends I love dearly here in the U.S. Senate and in the House went over there to tell 192 countries that we were going to pass legislation that would have cap and trade. I went over as the truth squad of one person to tell them what had been represented to them was, in fact, not going to happen.

Well, right before going, Lisa Jackson was the first nominee, or the first confirmed Administrator of the EPA. I asked her the question on the record, live on TV, in the committee room, on the committee that I chaired, I said: I am going to be going over to Copenhagen to tell them the truth over there, and, in the meantime, you are going to take over jurisdiction so you can try to do this with a regulation. To do that, you have to have an endangerment finding. To have an endangerment finding, you have to have science behind that. She was smiling. She is a very honest person.

I asked her: What science are you going to use for your endangerment finding that gives you the opportunity to do what you couldn't do with legislation that you think you can do with regulation? She said: The IPCC, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

As luck would have it, it was a matter of days after that that climategate came about. How many people remember climategate? They never talk about it. Let me just tell you how it was characterized. Climategate was those individuals who were at the top of the IPCC had gotten together and tried to alter the science to support their point of view, and they got caught doing it. The world responded to it. Newsweek: ''Once celebrated climate researchers feeling like the used car salesman.''

''Some of the IPCC's most quoted data and recommendations were taken straight out of unchecked activist brochures. . . . ''

The U.N. scientist Dr. Philip Lloyd said: ''The result is not scientific.''

They were all talking about climategate. They were talking about how the IPCC rigged the science.

A guy that was an IPCC physicist said that ''Climategate was a fraud on a scale I've never seen.''

Clive Crook of the Financial Times said that ''the stink of intellectual corruption is overpowering.''

Christopher Booker with the UK's Telegraph—that is one of the largest in London—said it is the ''worst scientific scandal of our generation.''

They are talking about the science that is behind the accusations they have made.

So if anyone hears these claims repeated, or even if it has been repeated, saying that at least 97 percent of the scientists agree, they are not right.

My time has expired, but I just wanted to clarify that so people know—because one thing I know that is going to happen is, Scott Pruitt, the attorney general of the State of Oklahoma, will be confirmed by a good margin—I think by a party margin—to be the Administrator of the EPA. It will be a great change.

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

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations en bloc, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nominations of Nikki R. Haley, of South Carolina, to be the Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations, with the rank and status of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, and the Representative of the United States of America in the Security Council of the United Nations; and Nikki R. Haley, of South Carolina, to be Representative of the United States of America to the Sessions of the General Assembly of the United Nations during her tenure of service as Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There will now be 30 minutes of debate, equally divided in the usual form.

The Senator from South Carolina.

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. President, today I stand in support of my good friend and Governor, Nikki Haley, who has been nominated for the position of Ambassador to the United Nations. Simply put, Governor Haley is the right choice, and I could not be prouder to support her nomination. She has shown amazing leadership during very trying times in South Carolina, and I know that she will bring the same strength and resolve in reinforcing and

strengthening our relationships with our allies.

As she showed through her confirmation hearing, Nikki is a strong, principled leader. During a time with so much international instability, we need a decisive and compassionate leader like Governor Haley representing our Nation. She is the type of visionary leader who will help turn the diplomatic tide of the past few years and reassure our allies that the United States stands in strong support of them.

Nikki has served the people of South Carolina very well, and she will be missed. But now, I look forward to addressing her by her new title—Ambassador.

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

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

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I know we are going to vote here fairly soon, but I just want to address the body before the vote.

Nikki Haley is soon to be the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, I believe with a very strong vote in the committee, 19 to 2. Senators CORKER and CARDIN did an excellent job of running the hearing. Governor Haley conducted herself very well. I know that, as Governor of South Carolina, she has brought us together at home.

She has dealt with some things that are incredibly difficult for any State. We had a thousand-year flood, and we had the tragedy in Charleston, with Dylann Roof shooting nine parishioners praying at Mother Emanuel Church in Charleston. She handled these historic crises with dignity and grace. She was able to rally the State and remove the Confederate battle flag from the capitol grounds.

All I can say is that the skill set she has of bringing people together I have seen. As she goes into this new job, she can learn the nuances of foreign policy, but diplomacy is something you either have or you don't. She is tough and determined, and I think she is very capable of being the United States' voice in the United Nations. As a matter of fact, I think she will represent us extremely well.

The bottom line is that her story is a uniquely American story—immigrant parents coming to a small town in South Carolina. She said very pointedly: I was too light to be African American or Black, and I was too dark to be White. She is Indian American. She and her family have contributed greatly to our State.

I think all of us can be proud that Nikki Haley will soon be our voice and America's face in the United Nations. I think President Trump chose wisely. I look forward to helping her in her new job. I urge this body to support her nomination because I have seen her in action. I think she will represent us all very well.

I yield the floor.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, it has become fashionable, particularly among supporters of the Trump administration, to accuse the United Nations of just about everything. This is, however, nothing new. The U.N has been an easy target, especially for some Republicans, for a long time, because like any unwieldy international organization comprised of member states with very different priorities and interests it will probably never be as efficient or effective as we would like.

But there is simply no question that the U.N. serves many vital functions that are fully consistent with key U.S. interests and values. For that reason, it is essential that the U.S. continues to play a leadership role in the U.N., which we were instrumental in creating seven decades ago, in a manner that strengthens the institution.

At times, I have expressed my own frustrations with the U.N. It wastes inordinate amounts of time debating and adopting redundant resolutions that accomplish next to nothing. It has suffered from personnel policies that make it difficult if not impossible to fire underperforming employees. It pays its officials at rates that dwarf what many could earn in their own countries. It has been too slow to implement procedures to ensure transparency and accountability, including for whistleblowers who have suffered retaliation for exposing corruption and other misconduct.

So there is no dispute that the U.N. needs to do better. The new Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, knows this as well as anyone and he has made clear that he is going to do his best to put the institution on a road to real reform.

But, of course, he cannot do that by himself. He is empowered only to the extent that the U.N. member states, and particularly the permanent members of the Security Council, support him.

Attempts by past the Secretary Generals to implement reforms have been partly stymied by resistance from governments that prefer the status quo. While I believe the prospects for U.N.reform have never been better, that will not be possible without the active leadership and skillful diplomacy of the United States.

And that is where our U.N. Ambassador comes in.

I have known many of them, although I was only 7 years old in 1947 when Warren Austin of Vermont, nominated by President Truman, became our third U.N. Ambassador.

The position of U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. has also been held by such accomplished people as Henry Cabot Lodge, Adlai Stevenson, George H.W. Bush, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Thomas Pickering, and Madeleine Albright. Each was recognized and widely admired across the political spectrum for his or her depth of foreign policy experience and wisdom.

Today we are considering the nomination of Nikki Haley to be the next U.S. Ambassador. Governor Haley's record as Governor of South Carolina was decidedly mixed, and I will not take time today to discuss that record. What is most relevant here, however, is her dearth of experience for the job she has been selected for. That is not so much a criticism of Governor Haley as it is of President Trump, as there are certainly well qualified, seasoned diplomats in the Republican Party who would be well received by members of both parties.

Instead, we are asked to support a nominee who will no doubt be confirmed but will be starting from square one. If there ever were a case of having to learn on the job, this will be it. That might not concern me if it were not for the indispensable role of the United Nations in an increasingly dangerous and polarized world, the importance of this position, and the complex challenges the next U.S. Ambassador will face on her first day on the job.

It was painfully apparent during her confirmation hearing that virtually everything Governor Haley said in her opening remarks and in her responses to questions of Senators, she had learned in the previous 2 months since she was chosen for the job. Her answers largely parroted popular Republican talking points with little substance to back up her response and revealed only an elementary understanding of how the U.N. functions. Her stated interest in U.N. reform is well placed, but it did not appear that she grasps what U.N. reform entails or what it takes to build the necessary support for reform.

Again, I do not blame her for that. Her career has focused entirely on issues relevant to the State of South Carolina. But that does not make her qualified to be our Ambassador to the U.N.

As Governor, she jumped on the politically expedient bandwagon and opposed the resettlement of any Syrian refugees in her State over ''security concerns,'' although it being a Federal decision some Syrians have been resettled there. In other words, she supported a blanket prohibition against an entire nationality of people—men, women, and children—regardless of the merits of their individual status as refugees fleeing war.

She stated, in spite of the fact that all of our major European allies supported the nuclear agreement with Iran, that Russia's and China's support was a ''red flag,'' without acknowledging the reality that without their support it would be impossible to achieve an agreement to halt Iran's nuclear weapons program or any of our other key objectives at the U.N.

She condemned the U.S. abstention on U.N. Security Council Resolution

2334 regarding Israeli settlements and incorrectly implied that it is inconsistent with longstanding U.S. policy and interests. In fact, she insisted that the resolution, not settlements themselves, makes peace negotiations more difficult—a view with which I disagree. She seemed to acknowledge that the U.S. does not support settlement construction, but stated that the U.S. should have vetoed the resolution anyway.

She mischaracterized U.S. law regarding our share of dues in support of U.N. peacekeeping missions that the U.S.—Republican and Democratic administrations—voted for, failing to acknowledge that we have a treaty obligation to pay 28.5 percent of U.N. peacekeeping costs. She made little mention of and gave little if any credit to the troop-contributing countries themselves, other than to highlight incidents of sexual exploitation and abuse. This is a critical issue that I and others here have been working with the U.S. Mission to the U.N. to address, and progress is being made in developing meaningful accountability procedures.

She stated that the cut-off of U.S. funding for UNESCO as a result of the vote of a majority of its members to accept Palestine as a member state, which led to our loss of influence, is a ''good thing'' and that she would continue to support the cut-off of funding. She and I disagree about that and what it could mean for the future. I think even the Israeli Government has come to recognize that it is better for the U.S. to be at the table, using our influence to deflect attempts to unfairly target Israel, than on the sidelines.

Governor Haley suggested that the U.S. may want to reconsider participation in and funding for the U.N. Human Rights Council, despite overwhelming evidence that our role serves to protect our interests and has reduced substantially the council's disproportionate and wasteful focus on Israel. At no time did she acknowledge the many council resolutions that are fully consistent with U.S. interests or that the influence lost by the U.S. is simply ceded to the very governments she opposes having a say in the council.

On the other hand, Governor Haley did repeatedly reject what she described as ''slash and burn'' tactics when it comes to budget cutting, and on that, I fully agree with her.

She said she supports moving our embassy to Jerusalem, although there is no compelling need to do so, it is strongly opposed by our ally Jordan, would likely incite a violent reaction in Arab countries, and could do more to drive a nail in the coffin of what little remains of the Middle East peace process than anything else.

In responses to written questions she betrayed a serious lack of understanding about Cuba, its economy, and the failures of the 55-year-old U.S. embargo. Indeed, if she were to apply her answers regarding Cuba to other countries with repressive governments, we would have to close dozens of U.S. Embassies, end diplomatic relations, and impose ineffective, unilateral sanctions against each of them.

I urge Governor Haley, as our U.N. Ambassador, to listen to the overwhelming majority of Americans and Cubans, including many Republican Members of Congress, who support a policy of engagement. I urge her to travel to Cuba and see and hear for herself, unlike those who continue to favor a Cold War embargo that has been exploited by the Cuban Government to justify its repressive policies and that has hurt the Cuban people.

I have been a congressional delegate to the United Nations three times, after being nominated by Presidents of both Republican and Democratic parties. I appreciated that opportunity because I have long believed that it is in the strong interest of the United States to play an active, leadership role in the U.N.

That is only possible if we, by far the world's wealthiest country, meet our financial commitments. And it is only possible if we build coalitions through skillful diplomacy and refrain from the tactics that some critics of the U.N. advocate, such as bullying and ultimatums, which are often self-defeating.

I recognize that Governor Haley will be confirmed, and I wish her the best. I hope she becomes a great U.S. Ambassador. I urge her to seek out and listens to a wide range of views, particularly on controversial issues like the Middle East, Iran, and how the U.S. can best help make the U.N. work better for everyone.

I will do everything I can to support Secretary General Guterres, the budget of the U.S. Mission to the U.N., and funding for U.N. agencies like the World Food Program, the U.N. Development Program, UNICEF, the U.N. Environment Program, the U.N. Population Fund, U.N. Women, the U.N. Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture, and so many others that carry out lifesaving humanitarian and development programs around the world.

And if there are other ways that I can help soon-to-be Ambassador Haley to defend the values and effectively advance the interests of the United States at the U.N. and to bring about needed reforms I will gladly do so.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, in 1945, at the close of World War II, the 50 Allied nations formed the United Nations to help prevent another world war. Since its founding, the U.N. has grown to 193 nations. While it has many serious flaws, it has been an important tool for promoting peace, protecting human rights, providing humanitarian assistance, and safeguarding the environment.

U.S. Ambassadors to the U.N. have included some of America's leading figures, including Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr., Adlai Stevenson, Arthur Goldberg, George H.W. Bush, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Andrew Young, Madeleine Albright, Bill Richardson, and John Danforth. President Eisenhower raised the ambassadorship to cabinet rank. Although both Presidents Bush removed the position from Cabinet level, President Obama restored it to that level. I am pleased that President Trump has decided to keep it there.

The U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. must advance principles that the United States has promoted over the years—the rule of law, individual liberties, and human rights. Our ambassador must not only maintain, but strengthen our relationships with our allies.

Unlike many past ambassadors to the U.N., Governor Nikki Haley has little experience in foreign policy. But as Governor, she developed important experience building coalitions, and that skill should serve her well as ambassador to the U.N.

Some positions that Governor Haley took during her confirmation hearing give me pause. For example, Governor Haley made some statements about the 2015 Iran nuclear agreement that indicated unfamiliarity with the joint comprehensive plan of action. I am pleased, however, that Governor Haley distanced herself from some of President Trump's most divisive positions, and I will support her nomination.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, shortly we will be voting on the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, Nikki Haley. She went through her confirmation hearings at the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and I had a chance during those confirmation hearings to ask her a series of questions. I have also had an opportunity to meet with her and talk personally about her vision of the United Nations and the United States' role in how she would conduct her leadership at the United Nations.

I must say, originally there was some concern because of her lack of foreign policy experience, but I must tell you, I was extremely impressed about her competency as Governor of South Carolina—the work that she did, dealing with some very difficult issues, including a tragedy that occurred in her State, as well as dealing with the Confederate flag and removing it from the State Capitol.

She handled these issues with real professionalism and sensitivity to all communities, and during her confirmation hearing, she displayed a willingness to reach out, to understand more about world affairs, and to become fully knowledgeable in these areas. She

exercised, I thought, a commitment and passion for the commitments that are important to this country—good governance, human rights, and democracy.

I was impressed during the confirmation hearing about her commitment to the importance of the United Nations and the important work that it does. The United Nations, as we all know, does do work as peacekeepers to try to avoid conflicts but also does an incredible job on humanitarian needs with refugee assistance, as well as the sustainable development goals that provide help to people around the world, increasing maternal health, reducing infant mortality, dealing with women's education needs. These original Sustainable Development Goals—originally the Millennium Development Goals, now the Sustainable Development Goals—have saved millions of lives.

I must tell you, Governor Haley was very mindful of this and very committed to the United Nations and the work that it does and the U.S. participation in the United Nations. She recognized that it is important that we engage the international community in the work that is done within the United Nations.

When she was questioned about whether she thought it was a good idea to slash funds to the United Nations in order to make a point about votes that we thought were unpopular, she said no. She opposed that slash-and-burn strategy; we need to engage and find ways to leverage our participation to get more favorable results.

I might tell you, she was very strong about her sensitivity that the United Nations has not been fair to one of our key allies, Israel, and she would be a strong voice to make sure those types of issues are dealt with and the United States uses all the tools at its disposal to fight against those types of bias and prejudice within the United Nations.

We have talked a great deal in our committee about moral clarity from our nominees, so there is no misunderstanding anywhere in the world that the United States stands for human rights, that the United States stands against abuses that take place around the world, and that it will fight for democracy in all parts of the world and support those causes through our diplomacy, through our development assistance, through our tools.

She was very clear about the moral certainty issue. Just to give a few examples, we talked a great deal about Russia and its conduct and what it is doing in the United States about the attack on our free election system. She was very clear about how outraged she was with that type of conduct—what Russia has done in Ukraine, its occupation of Crimea. She acknowledged that Crimea is not Russian, that it belongs to Ukraine, and she spoke very strongly about defending Ukraine's rights and sovereignty.

We talked specifically about what was happening in Syria and Russia's support for the Assad regime and the atrocities that have taken place in that country, most recently in Aleppo. When we asked if she would characterize that type of conduct as war crimes, without any equivocation she said: Absolutely—that this was a matter that required international accountability.

I also brought up with her what was happening in the Philippines, one of our allies, where the President of the Philippines, Mr. Duterte, has done extrajudicial killings and how she would characterize that as gross violations of human rights. She agreed that type of conduct cannot be tolerated, that we need to speak to whether they are friend or foe when they commit this type of conduct, that this is wrong and the United States must stand up for our principles. I was impressed by the way that she spoke to those types of issues.

One of the more telling questions that we asked was whether she would support any registry for any subgroup of ethnic or religious Americans, and she said: Absolutely not.

We had, I thought, moral clarity in her response to some of the most important questions. I think all of us feel that she has the passion to represent the United States and our views well at the United Nations.

What was particularly important to us is how she would speak out to power within the United Nations; that she had no problem in dealing with Mr. Putin and calling his conduct exactly what it was and would not be intimidated by Mr. Putin saying ''Well, you need me for some other issue''; that we have to be clear that we will not tolerate that type of conduct that violates basic human rights.

She gave us confidence that, on behalf of the American people, she would speak up in the Cabinet room with Mr. Trump and the Cabinet as to these values. For all those reasons, it was a comfortable vote for me to support her nomination and confirmation.

I do want to relay the fact that she does represent the American story. She is a daughter of immigrants who came to this country at great risk in order to seek a better life for their children. She experienced some of the discrimination against immigrant communities as she grew up in this country and tried to participate in the business and political sphere. She overcame all of those types of challenges and is extremely sensitive, I think, to all the needs of Americans.

For all those reasons, I am proud to recommend her to our colleagues on both sides of the aisle. I hope we will support her confirmation. I think she is the right person now to represent us at the United Nations. For all those reasons, I will support her nomination.

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

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

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I am going to speak only for a few minutes so that we can have the vote occur at 5:30, on time. I wanted to say that I am pleased to be here to support Governor Nikki Haley as our Ambassador to the United Nations.

The United Nations is at a crossroads and really needs someone who is very reform-minded for the United States to lead our efforts in that regard. That not only would benefit U.S. interests, but candidly it would benefit the world. She is someone who has shown that ability as Governor of South Carolina.

She also has a clarity about her as it relates to representing U.S. interests. People on both sides of the aisle in our committee were able to recognize that her instincts relative to where the United States needs to be on certain issues—I think most of us understand that the United States leading on issues of human rights, leading on issues of conscience, that the American values we all hold dear and want to promote around the world are things that she has the ability to communicate and cares deeply about, and I think people were very impressed.

The United Nations has multiple issues relative to peacekeeping that have not been addressed. Sexual exportation and abuse by peacekeepers have been rampant, and things have not been done in that regard to curtail that activity or at least not in the ways that they should, and I know she is very passionate about that issue.

There is no question that she is not the most adept person at foreign policy. She would be the first person to say that. She has spent most of her time out of the country solely on economic development trips. I think where the United Nations is today is at a place where we need a really driven person who cares about our own U.S. national interests but also has the ability to break through the clutter and reform.

She has worked with legislators to bring people together, to make that happen in her own State. She has had an exemplary record in that regard. My guess is that is really the first effort that needs to take place. Over time, through the relationships she develops there, the travel that will take place, I am absolutely certain—especially with the drive that she has—she will develop some of the other capacity that I know she will want to utilize there at the United Nations.

I am here to recommend her. I look forward to supporting her. Our committee did so in a voice vote with only two dissents.

In spite of the fact that I am disappointed that we are handling our Secretary of State in a manner that is not in keeping with bipartisan precedent, and in spite of the fact that we

are not going to handle that in a way that we should and could today, through a vote on that, I am appreciative of the minority leader allowing this vote to take place today, and I am glad she is going to be confirmed overwhelmingly as our United Nations Ambassador.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. RUBIO). Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Haley nominations en bloc?

Mr. CORKER. Mr. 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.

The result was announced—yeas 96, nays 4, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 33 Ex.]

YEAS—96

Alexander	Flake	Murphy
Baldwin	Franken	Murray
Barrasso	Gardner	Nelson
Bennet	Gillibrand	Paul
Blumenthal	Graham	Perdue
Blunt	Grassley	Peters
Booker	Harris	Portman
Boozman	Hassan	Reed
Brown	Hatch	Risch
Burr	Heitkamp	Roberts
Cantwell	Heller	Rounds
Capito	Hirono	Rubio
Cardin	Hoeven	Sasse
Carper	Inhofe	Schatz
Casey	Isakson	Schumer
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott
Cochran	Kaine	Sessions
Collins	Kennedy	Shaheen
Corker	King	Shelby
Cornyn	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Cortez Masto	Lankford	Sullivan
Cotton	Leahy	Tester
Crapo	Lee	Thune
Cruz	Manchin	Tillis
Daines	Markey	Toomey
Donnelly	McCain	Van Hollen
Duckworth	McCaskill	Warner
Durbin	McConnell	Warren
Enzi	Menendez	Whitehouse
Ernst	Merkley	Wicker
Feinstein	Moran	Wyden
Fischer	Murkowski	Young

NAYS—4

Coons	Sanders
Heinrich	Udall

The nominations were confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motions to reconsider are considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The majority leader.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move that the Senate proceed to legislative session.

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

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 2, Rex Tillerson to be Secretary of State.

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

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Rex W. Tillerson, of Texas, to be Secretary of State.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The assistant bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Rex W. Tillerson, of Texas, to be Secretary of State.

Mitch McConnell, John Cornyn, Richard Burr, Tom Cotton, Jerry Moran, Pat Roberts, James Lankford, Johnny Isakson, Bob Corker, Orrin G. Hatch, Thom Tillis, Dan Sullivan, David Perdue, James M. Inhofe, Deb Fischer, Cory Gardner, John Barrasso.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call with respect to the cloture motion be waived.

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

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

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, at 12 noon on Tuesday, January 30, the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of Executive Calendar No. 4. I further ask that there be 20 minutes of debate on the nomination, equally divided in the usual form, and that following the use or yielding back of time, the Senate vote on the nomination with no intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; that no further motions be in order; and that any statements relating to the nomination be printed in the RECORD.

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

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for consideration of the Chao nomination be modified to occur on Tuesday, January 31.

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

REPLACING OBAMACARE

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, in 2010, when I ran for Congress, all the questions circled around the Affordable Care Act. Every townhall meeting, every conversation, everyone who caught me in the grocery store, everywhere I went there was a conversation about the Affordable Care Act. What is going to happen? Where are things going to go? And there was a lot of concern about it.

The President promised at the time that if you liked your insurance, your doctor, and your hospital, you would keep it, and it would just get better. Prices would go down; options for insurance would go up. There would be marketplaces where more and more companies would rush in, and that would drive the prices down.

Now, 7 years later, the greatest fears of a lot of the Oklahomans I am around all the time have come true. Here is the crisis in Oklahoma dealing with health care: We have the highest rate increase in the entire Nation. Last year, our rates went up in Oklahoma 76 percent; the year before that, they went up 35 percent. That is an 111-percent rate increase in 2 years in my State. Over the course of the last 3 years, insurance companies have left my State. All 77 counties of Oklahoma now have one insurance carrier left. I met with that insurance carrier before, and they are seriously looking at how they stay functional in Oklahoma in the days ahead, which is a concern to me. There is a possibility that we may have zero on our marketplace in some counties and in some locations in Oklahoma.

With a 76-percent increase, I have had some folks who caught me and said: Well, your State didn't expand Medicaid. That is the problem. If you had expanded Medicaid, then it wouldn't have been an issue. Well, I will tell you that a study from HHS has now come back, and they have confirmed that it is true. If our State would have expanded Medicaid, it would have reduced our costs by 7 percent. That means instead of having a 76-percent increase, as we had, we would have had only a 69-percent increase of health care costs in our

State. Zero competition, dramatically higher deductibles, dramatically higher premiums—every hospital in my State, rural and urban, has more charity care now and more bad debt now than they had 7 years ago.

Insure Oklahoma, a program we set up a decade ago to take care of people who did not have access to insurance, continues to falter because my State is playing ''Mother May I?'' every year with the Federal Government on whether we can maintain a program that our State had and was growing. Small risk pools are not allowed. People still don't know the price of their health care. Electronic health records still can't talk to each other. There is still a rise in the cost of prescription drugs. We still have overlapping administrative costs on dual eligibles, Medicare and Medicaid, for senior adults. Compliance costs for our doctors, clinics, and hospitals have skyrocketed. Physician-owned hospitals, which we have quite a few of in Oklahoma, have been cut off and limited since 2010 and are slowly struggling just to be able to stay afloat. Fewer doctors are taking Medicare and Medicaid patients.

On the horizon, it gets even worse because most people don't realize that the Affordable Care Act was backloaded and that the worst of the worst of it wouldn't be for several years out. Well, guess what. It is now several years out.

Union households in my State are about to take a major hit with the Cadillac tax that is coming because union households in my State have insurance that is too good, and those individuals will face a tax increase.

The insurance company tax is coming, which is a massive tax increase on insurance companies. They will pass that cost directly down to consumers, so it will go up again. We continue to fight off the Independent Payment Advisory Board, a board specifically set up to be able to cut options for patients if they cost too much. That is still out there on the horizon, not to mention the tax penalties that go up even more next year.

People ask me: Why are you still focused on repealing ObamaCare? Why is this such a big deal? It is because the people in my State are struggling under the negative effects of this, and it has to be dealt with. Let me just give you a couple of real life stories.

An Oklahoman from Altus, OK, in the southwest part of my State wrote me and he said:

> Senator Lankford, I came home tonight . . . having finished cotton harvest and looking forward to celebrating with my wife and kids. I was greeted at the supper table with somber news about our health care premiums from my distraught wife. Our premium is going from $960 a month to $1,755 per month! That's with a deductible of $6,000. I can't even process how to handle this. I think I'm through. Done with any hope of a bright future for my family.

An Oklahoman from Poteau, OK, wrote me and said:

> My husband and I have had Healthcare Marketplace health insurance for the past 3 years. The first year my monthly premium was over $1,200.00, this year I pay $1,923.84 monthly. Now I get a letter from [my health insurance carrier] that my monthly premium will [go up next year to] $3,540.07. That is an increase of approx. 84%. . . . How is this possible? Why can't anything be done about this?

When individuals ask me about ObamaCare, they say: You are just arguing about something because of disdain for the President. No, this is what we have disdain for; this is what people are frustrated about: People who work, people who pay for their health care insurance cannot pay their mortgage and their health insurance anymore because they are literally priced out of it. This is what Bill Clinton meant in October of last year when he made this statement:

> So you've got this crazy system where all of a sudden 25 million more people have health care and then the people who are out there busting it, sometimes 60 hours a week, wind up with their premiums doubled and their coverage cut in half. It's the craziest thing in the world.

I could not agree with Bill Clinton more on that because that is exactly what is happening in Oklahoma.

But now, here is what is happening because for years Americans and Oklahomans have said: We have to do something to stop this. It is choking out my family.

We are finally at a point we are going to do something about it, but I have colleagues who are now spreading fear all over the country that suddenly everyone is going to be thrown off their insurance and we are going to have people living out on the streets without coverage.

I have heard on the floor of this Senate that 30 million people could die if we repeal ObamaCare. I have heard 20 million people will lose their insurance. I have heard there is no replacement plan, and people will get sick because their coverage will be gone.

Well, let me just go through a couple of those because there are people calling my office and writing me who are very concerned. They are cancer patients, they are diabetics, they are people with long-term blood diseases, they are people who have difficulty getting insurance, and they are being told: All those mean Republicans up there don't like you and don't care about you, and all they want to do is throw you out on the street. When people say that, it couldn't be further from the truth. It may make for good politics, but it is using people who are in a very vulnerable spot in a negative way.

First, let me get a couple of facts straight. This ''30 million'' number that is being thrown around—even past President Obama doesn't agree with that. It is not 30 million; in fact, it is not 20 million. It is 14 million people who gained access to health care coverage, if you count the people who have actually gained coverage and paid for their premiums through the course of the year or have been a part of the expansion of Medicaid. Of those 14 million people, 11.8 million gained additional coverage from Medicaid, not from the exchanges, and, of that, almost 12 million people got expanded coverage from Medicaid. Jonathan Gruber, as one of the architects of ObamaCare, made the statement that from their own studies, the vast majority of those people who were added to Medicaid weren't added to Medicaid because of expanded coverage; they were added to Medicaid because of promotions through advertising. They were already eligible for Medicaid.

So we are talking about 6 million people or so that have been added to it. I am not belittling those 6 million people; that is a lot of people. But it is not 20 million, and it is not 30 million.

So now what? As people address this to me, they ask about what just happened on January 6 when the Senate and later when the House voted to start the legislative process to repeal ObamaCare. What happened was we just actually started the process. It wasn't a total repeal. No one has been thrown out. It starts a legislative process.

As we start that legislative process of what is called reconciliation and as we work through that process, it is a very simple process. It starts the opening conversation to work through committees, to work through debate on the floor so that in the days ahead we will bring a full repeal of ObamaCare and a replacement. But that replacement is not going to be a 2,700-page bill to replace the previous 2,700-page bill. It will be a series of solutions, and it will deal with things on a long-term basis.

There was no vote to suddenly end people's health care in one day. This begins a transition point to make sure that we are watching out for those individuals, such as those cancer patients, diabetics, and individuals who are in very vulnerable situations and over the next couple of years will be able to transition to other care. We are watching to make sure this is not some sudden shift for those individuals. There are very vulnerable people who are in health care options right now and need to know that there is still that safety net there for them and that moving forward, we will continue to be able to watch for them.

We want to be able to move a lot of those decisions back to the States. Quite frankly, that is where those decisions were before. And we want to be able to allow those individuals who are in very vulnerable situations to seek out the doctor they want, to get the options for health care coverage they want, and to have greater access to health insurance, not less.

The people in my State who had been added and who received those subsidies are grateful to be able to have health care, but there are also individuals in my State who can now literally no longer afford to have health care because they have been priced out of the

market, and they are stuck. ObamaCare moved the system from one uninsured group of people to now another uninsured group of people.

Let me read a statement coming from a person from Oklahoma who said:

> My wife and I will be going without health insurance next year! I do not resent anyone who is able to afford healthcare, I just resent a government system that causes [us] to be priced out of the reach of working people.

Why is it we can argue about ObamaCare and people can say those individuals got coverage and people are not paying attention to a whole new group of Americans who no longer have coverage because they literally have been priced out of the market?

Why is it that for the sake of 6 million people, we have affected the cost of health care for millions and millions of other Americans?

We can do this transition. We will do this transition. It will take a couple of years. It is not going to be rapid, and there will be a large debate that will happen nationally in the process. That is appropriate, but allow us to be able to walk through this process together.

One quick illustration and then I will be done. I have a friend who discovered last year that she had mold in her house. Initially, there were some treatments that were done. She had been very sick for a while and didn't know why. They did treatments to the house and such and thought that would settle it. It didn't. Eventually, she had to move out of her own home.

Now they have had to actually strip out the walls and take out all the sheetrock. They are literally replacing studs and everything in the house. It will be a long-term issue to be able to get it all right.

I tell that simple story to say that anyone who says replacing health care is going to be some simple ''spray everything down and that will fix it'' strategy just doesn't understand the difficulties of the American health care system. This will be much like my friend who is having to do a pretty radical transition that is going to take a long time, but that will actually get her house whole and healthy again.

If we want to have a healthy nation again with people who have access to health care, regardless of what class they are in, it is going to take a while to make this transition, and it will be difficult in the process. But I can assure my colleagues that this Congress is watching out for all people, of all ethnicities, of all neighborhoods, of all diseases, to make sure that we are paying attention to this one simple thing: When ObamaCare was put into place, it punished people. We should encourage people to be able to get health care, and we should be able to walk through it with people in their most vulnerable moments and make sure they are able to make personal decisions, have access to their own doctors, have access to hospitals that can afford to stay afloat, and to provide the ability for people to choose their own health care. Why is that so radical? It used to not be.

There are things that need to be fixed, but it begins with giving the power of the decision back to the patient and back to people, where it needs to be.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). The majority leader.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

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 JOHN MCCARTER, JR., AND SHIRLEY ANN JACKSON

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I want to take a moment to recognize two exceptional members of the Smithsonian Institution's board of regents: John W. McCarter, who has served as chair of the board, and Shirley Ann Jackson, who has served as the vice chair. I have had the honor of serving with both of them and believe that their dedication and leadership have greatly benefitted the Smithsonian. Both are stepping down from their roles, and while John will continue to serve on the board, Shirley will be moving on to dedicate her considerable talents to other initiatives.

John W. McCarter, Jr., of Illinois has had a long and distinguished career. He was first appointed as a regent in 2009 and was elected chair in 2013. In addition, John has lent his expertise and wisdom to a number of the regents' other committees.

During his tenure, John has overseen a number of important strategic initiatives, including the search for the Smithsonian's 13th secretary; the development of the Institution's relationship with the Victoria & Albert Museum in London; the reopening of the Arts and Industries Building to the American public; and most recently, the opening of the National Museum of African American History and Culture. These opportunities will help to ensure the Smithsonian's continued success.

John also led the charge in reopening the historic Arts and Industries Building on the National Mall to the public. The building, shuttered since 2004, was reopened to the public for the secretary's installation ceremony in October 2015 and was the site of a very successful pop-up cultural exhibition over Memorial Day weekend in May 2016. John's vision and leadership have made this national treasure available to the American people once more.

A tireless advocate for the Smithsonian in his home State of Illinois, John has raised the institution's profile across the Nation and around the world. Thanks to his recruitment efforts, the Smithsonian advisory boards are more diverse, more dynamic, and more engaged than ever before. Through all of these initiatives, John has pushed the Smithsonian to be more ambitious and to renew its commitment to ''the increase and diffusion of knowledge.''

I want to thank John for his exceptional leadership as chairman of the board of regents, and I look forward to working with him through the remainder of his term as a regent.

Dr. Shirley Ann Jackson of New York is the president of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. She was appointed as a regent in 2005 and has served as board and executive committee vice chair since 2013.

Shirley was the regents' representative for the successful events that opened the Smithsonian's 19th museum, the National Museum of African American History and Culture, in September 2016. Alongside other notable guests, Shirley helped inaugurate the newest Smithsonian museum by delivering remarks at the museum's dedication ceremony. As she noted during her speech, the museum furthers ''the Smithsonian's founding mission, to promote 'the increase and diffusion of knowledge,' by opening a museum dedicated to the African-American experience in the United States, and its crucial place in the American experience.''

Shirley has a remarkable life story: She was the first African-American woman to earn a doctorate from MIT, and since 1999, she has served as the president of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute—marking the first time an African-American woman has led a top research university. She was also the first woman and the first African-American to serve as chair of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Shirley is emblematic of everything the Museum was founded to celebrate about the African-American experience, and we were proud to have her serve as the board's representative at all of the opening ceremonies.

The Smithsonian has also benefitted from Shirley's demonstrated commitment to the sciences. As a trained physicist, she is particularly passionate about inspiring the next generation of scientists and conservationists. As vice chair, she has been a staunch advocate for the Smithsonian's scientific researchers, trumpeting their successes and inviting them to speak at Rensselaer. She has made a point of going beyond the brick and mortar of the Smithsonian museums to visit the Smithsonian's many research centers, including the Smithsonian Tropical Research Center in Panama.

This past year, Secretary David Skorton tapped into Shirley's extensive leadership and management experience, asking her to cochair the institution's initiative to create a new strategic plan for 2017–2022. Shirley has

rolled up her sleeves, asking tough questions and meeting with a variety of stakeholders regarding the institution's priorities for the next 5 years. As a chief architect of this plan, Shirley will be instrumental in charting the future of the institution long after she has left the board of regents.

As a member of the board of regents, it has been my honor to serve alongside Shirley. I believe her contributions to the Smithsonian community will be witnessed and appreciated by generations to come.

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

RULES OF PROCEDURE

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs has adopted rules governing its procedures for the 115th Congress. Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 2, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, on behalf of myself and Senator BROWN, I ask unanimous consent that a cony of the committee rules be printed in the RECORD.

RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR THE COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

[Amended February 24, 2009]

RULE 1.—REGULAR MEETING DATE FOR COMMITTEE

The regular meeting day for the Committee to transact its business shall be the last Tuesday in each month that the Senate is in Session; except that if the Committee has met at any time during the month prior to the last Tuesday of the month, the regular meeting of the Committee may be canceled at the discretion of the Chairman.

RULE 2.—COMMITTEE

[a] Investigations.—No investigation shall be initiated by the Committee unless the Senate, or the full Committee, or the Chairman and Ranking Member have specifically authorized such investigation.

[b] Hearings.—No hearing of the Committee shall be scheduled outside the District of Columbia except by agreement between the Chairman of the Committee and the Ranking Member of the Committee or by a majority vote of the Committee.

[c] Confidential testimony.—No confidential testimony taken or confidential material presented at an executive session of the Committee or any report of the proceedings of such executive session shall be made public either in whole or in part or by way of summary, unless specifically authorized by the Chairman of the Committee and the Ranking Member of the Committee or by a majority vote of the Committee.

[d] Interrogation of witnesses.—Committee interrogation of a witness shall be conducted only by members of the Committee or such professional staff as is authorized by the Chairman or the Ranking Member of the Committee.

[e] Prior notice of markup sessions.—No session of the Committee or a Subcommittee for marking up any measure shall be held unless [1] each member of the Committee or the Subcommittee, as the case may be, has been notified in writing via electronic mail or paper mail of the date, time, and place of such session and has been furnished a copy of the measure to be considered, in a searchable electronic format, at least 3 business days prior to the commencement of such session, or [2] the Chairman of the Committee or Subcommittee determines that exigent circumstances exist requiring that the session be held sooner.

[fl Prior notice of first degree amendments.—It shall not be in order for the Committee or a Subcommittee to consider any amendment in the first degree proposed to any measure under consideration by the Committee or Subcommittee unless fifty written copies of such amendment have been delivered to the office of the Committee at least 2 business days prior to the meeting. It shall be in order, without prior notice, for a Senator to offer a motion to strike a single section of any measure under consideration. Such a motion to strike a section of the measure under consideration by the Committee or Subcommittee shall not be amendable. This section may be waived by a majority of the members of the Committee or Subcommittee voting, or by agreement of the Chairman and Ranking Member. This subsection shall apply only when the conditions of subsection [e][1] have been met.

[g] Cordon rule.—Whenever a bill or joint resolution repealing or amending any statute or part thereof shall be before the Committee or Subcommittee, from initial consideration in hearings through final consideration, the Clerk shall place before each member of the Committee or Subcommittee a print of the statute or the part or section thereof to be amended or repealed showing by stricken-through type, the part or parts to be omitted, and in italics, the matter proposed to be added. In addition, whenever a member of the Committee or Subcommittee offers an amendment to a bill or joint resolution under consideration, those amendments shall be presented to the Committee or Subcommittee in a like form, showing by typographical devices the effect of the proposed amendment on existing law. The requirements of this subsection may be waived when, in the opinion of the Committee or Subcommittee Chairman, it is necessary to expedite the business of the Committee or Subcommittee.

RULE 3.—SUBCOMMITTEES

[a] Authorization for.—A Subcommittee of the Committee may be authorized only by the action of a majority of the Committee.

[b] Membership.—No member may be a member of more than three Subcommittees and no member may chair more than one Subcommittee. No member will receive assignment to a second Subcommittee until, in order of seniority, all members of the Committee have chosen assignments to one Subcommittee, and no member shall receive assignment to a third Subcommittee until, in order of seniority, all members have chosen assignments to two Subcommittees.

[c] Investigations.—No investigation shall be initiated by a Subcommittee unless the Senate or the full Committee has specifically authorized such investigation.

[d] Hearings.—No hearing of a Subcommittee shall be scheduled outside the District of Columbia without prior consultation with the Chairman and then only by agreement between the Chairman of the Subcommittee and the Ranking Member of the Subcommittee or by a majority vote of the Subcommittee.

[e] Confidential testimony.—No confidential testimony taken or confidential material presented at an executive session of the Subcommittee or any report of the proceedings of such executive session shall be made public, either in whole or in part or by way of summary, unless specifically authorized by the Chairman of the Subcommittee and the Ranking Member of the Subcommittee, or by a majority vote of the Subcommittee.

[f] Interrogation of witnesses.—Subcommittee interrogation of a witness shall be conducted only by members of the Subcommittee or such professional staff as is authorized by the Chairman or the Ranking Member of the Subcommittee.

[g] Special meetings.—If at least three members of a Subcommittee desire that a special meeting of the Subcommittee be called by the Chairman of the Subcommittee, those members may file in the offices of the Committee their written request to the Chairman of the Subcommittee for that special meeting. Immediately upon the filing of the request, the Clerk of the Committee shall notify the Chairman of the Subcommittee of the filing of the request. If, within 3 calendar days after the filing of the request, the Chairman of the Subcommittee does not call the requested special meeting, to be held within 7 calendar days after the filing of the request, a majority of the members of the Subcommittee may file in the offices of the Committee their written notice that a special meeting of the Subcommittee will be held, specifying the date and hour of that special meeting. The Subcommittee shall meet on that date and hour. Immediately upon the filing of the notice, the Clerk of the Committee shall notify all members of the Subcommittee that such special meeting will be held and inform them of its date and hour. If the Chairman of the Subcommittee is not present at any regular or special meeting of the Subcommittee, the Ranking Member of the majority party on the Subcommittee who is present shall preside at that meeting.

[h] Voting.—No measure or matter shall be recommended from a Subcommittee to the Committee unless a majority of the Subcommittee are actually present. The vote of the Subcommittee to recommend a measure or matter to the Committee shall require the concurrence of a majority of the members of the Subcommittee voting. On Subcommittee matters other than a vote to recommend a measure or matter to the Committee no record vote shall be taken unless a majority of the Subcommittee is actually present. Any absent member of a Subcommittee may affirmatively request that his or her vote to recommend a measure or matter to the Committee or his vote on any such other matters on which a record vote is taken, be cast by proxy. The proxy shall be in writing and shall be sufficiently clear to identify the subject matter and to inform the Subcommittee as to how the member wishes his or her vote to be recorded thereon. By written notice to the Chairman of the Subcommittee any time before the record vote on the measure or matter concerned is taken, the member may withdraw a proxy previously given. All proxies shall be kept in the files of the Committee.

RULE 4.—WITNESSES

[a] Filing of statements.—Any witness appearing before the Committee or Subcommittee [including any witness representing a Government agency] must file with the Committee or Subcommittee [24 hours preceding his or her appearance] 75 copies of his or her statement to the Committee or Subcommittee, and the statement must include a brief summary of the testimony. In the event that the witness fails to file a written statement and brief summary in accordance with this rule, the Chairman of the Committee or Subcommittee has the discretion to deny the witness the privilege of testifying before the Committee or Subcommittee until the witness has properly complied with the rule.

[b] Length of statements.—Written statements properly filed with the Committee or

Subcommittee may be as lengthy as the witness desires and may contain such documents or other addenda as the witness feels is necessary to present properly his or her views to the Committee or Subcommittee. The brief summary included in the statement must be no more than 3 pages long. It shall be left to the discretion of the Chairman of the Committee or Subcommittee as to what portion of the documents presented to the Committee or Subcommittee shall be published in the printed transcript of the hearings.

[c] Ten-minute duration.—Oral statements of witnesses shall be based upon their filed statements but shall be limited to 10 minutes duration. This period may be limited or extended at the discretion of the Chairman presiding at the hearings.

[d] Subpoena of witnesses.—Witnesses may be subpoenaed by the Chairman of the Committee or a Subcommittee with the agreement of the Ranking Member of the Committee or Subcommittee or by a majority vote of the Committee or Subcommittee.

[e] Counsel permitted.—Any witness subpoenaed by the Committee or Subcommittee to a public or executive hearing may be accompanied by counsel of his or her own choosing who shall be permitted, while the witness is testifying, to advise him or her of his or her legal rights.

[f] Expenses of witnesses.—No witness shall be reimbursed for his or her appearance at a public or executive hearing before the Committee or Subcommittee unless such reimbursement is agreed to by the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Committee.

[g] Limits of questions.—Questioning of a witness by members shall be limited to 5 minutes duration when 5 or more members are present and 10 minutes duration when less than 5 members are present, except that if a member is unable to finish his or her questioning in this period, he or she may be permitted further questions of the witness after all members have been given an opportunity to question the witness.

Additional opportunity to question a witness shall be limited to a duration of 5 minutes until all members have been given the opportunity of questioning the witness for a second time. This 5-minute period per member will be continued until all members have exhausted their questions of the witness.

RULE 5.—VOTING

[a] Vote to report a measure or matter.—No measure or matter shall be reported from the Committee unless a majority of the Committee is actually present. The vote of the Committee to report a measure or matter shall require the concurrence of a majority of the members of the Committee who are present.

Any absent member may affirmatively request that his or her vote to report a matter be cast by proxy. The proxy shall be sufficiently clear to identify the subject matter, and to inform the Committee as to how the member wishes his vote to be recorded thereon. By written notice to the Chairman any time before the record vote on the measure or matter concerned is taken, any member may withdraw a proxy previously given. All proxies shall be kept in the files of the Committee, along with the record of the rollcall vote of the members present and voting, as an official record of the vote on the measure or matter.

[b] Vote on matters other than to report a measure or matter.—On Committee matters other than a vote to report a measure or matter, no record vote shall be taken unless a majority of the Committee are actually present. On any such other matter, a member of the Committee may request that his or her vote may be cast by proxy. The proxy shall be in writing and shall be sufficiently clear to identify the subject matter, and to inform the Committee as to how the member wishes his or her vote to be recorded thereon. By written notice to the Chairman any time before the vote on such other matter is taken, the member may withdraw a proxy previously given. All proxies relating to such other matters shall be kept in the files of the Committee.

RULE 6.—QUORUM

No executive session of the Committee or a Subcommittee shall be called to order unless a majority of the Committee or Subcommittee, as the case may be, are actually present. Unless the Committee otherwise provides or is required by the Rules of the Senate, one member shall constitute a quorum for the receipt of evidence, the swearing in of witnesses, and the taking of testimony.

RULE 7.—STAFF PRESENT ON DAIS

Only members and the Clerk of the Committee shall be permitted on the dais during public or executive hearings, except that a member may have one staff person accompany him or her during such public or executive hearing on the dais. If a member desires a second staff person to accompany him or her on the dais he or she must make a request to the Chairman for that purpose.

RULE 8.—COINAGE LEGISLATION

At least 67 Senators must cosponsor any gold medal or commemorative coin bill or resolution before consideration by the Committee.

EXTRACTS FROM THE STANDING RULES OF THE SENATE

RULE XXV, STANDING COMMITTEES

1. The following standing committees shall be appointed at the commencement of each Congress, and shall continue and have the power to act until their successors are appointed, with leave to report by bill or otherwise on matters within their respective jurisdictions:

* * * * *

[d][1] Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, to which committee shall be referred all proposed legislation, messages, petitions, memorials, and other matters relating to the following subjects:

1. Banks, banking, and financial institutions.
2. Control of prices of commodities, rents, and services.
3. Deposit insurance.
4. Economic stabilization and defense production.
5. Export and foreign trade promotion.
6. Export controls.
7. Federal monetary policy, including Federal Reserve System.
8. Financial aid to commerce and industry.
9. Issuance and redemption of notes.
10. Money and credit, including currency and coinage.
11. Nursing home construction.
12. Public and private housing [including veterans' housing].
13. Renegotiation of Government contracts.
14. Urban development and urban mass transit.

[2] Such committee shall also study and review, on a comprehensive basis, matters relating to international economic policy as it affects United States monetary affairs, credit, and financial institutions; economic growth, urban affairs, and credit, and report thereon from time to time.

COMMITTEE PROCEDURES FOR PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEES

Procedures formally adopted by the U.S. Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, February 4, 1981, establish a uniform questionnaire for all Presidential nominees whose confirmation hearings come before this Committee.

In addition, the procedures establish that:

[1] A confirmation hearing shall normally be held at least 5 days after receipt of the completed questionnaire by the Committee unless waived by a majority vote of the Committee.

[2] The Committee shall vote on the confirmation not less than 24 hours after the Committee has received transcripts of the hearing unless waived by unanimous consent.

[3] All nominees routinely shall testify under oath at their confirmation hearings.

This questionnaire shall be made a part of the public record except for financial information, which shall be kept confidential.

Nominees are requested to answer all questions, and to add additional pages where necessary.

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP AND SUBCOMMITTEE JURISDICTION

Mr. CRAPO. I ask unanimous consent that the subcommittee membership and subcommittee jurisdiction of the U.S. Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, which was approved by the committee at today's executive session, be printed in the RECORD.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE JURISDICTION OF THE COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

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Any subcommittee issue is available at any time for full Committee consideration where appropriate, as determined by the Chairman in consultation with the other members of the Committee. All mark-ups of legislation and consideration of nominations would take place at the full Committee level.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SECURITIES, INSURANCE, AND INVESTMENT

Securities, annuities, and other financial investments; SEC: SIPC: CFTC (single stock futures and other financial instruments within CFTC jurisdiction); Government securities; Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac; Financial exchanges and markets; Financial derivatives; Accounting standards; Insurance.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

Banks, savings associations, credit unions, and other financial institutions; Deposit Insurance; Federal Home Loan Bank System; Regulatory activities of the Federal Reserve System; OCC, FDIC, NCUA; E-commerce; Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND FINANCE

Export and foreign trade promotion; Export controls; Export financing; International economic policy; International financial and development institutions; Export-Import Bank; International Trade Administration; Bureau of Export Administration; Defense Production Act.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC POLICY

Economic growth, employment and price stability; Monetary policy, including monetary policy functions of the Federal Reserve

System; Financial Stability Oversight Counsel; Office of Financial Research; Council of Economic Advisors; Money and credit, including currency, coinage and notes; Control of prices of commodities, rents and services; Economic stabilization; Financial aid to commerce and industry; Loan guarantees; Flood insurance; Disaster assistance; Small Business Lending.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HOUSING, TRANSPORTATION, AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Urban mass transit, urban affairs and development; Federal Transit Administration; HUD; Affordable Housing; Foreclosure Mitigation; Mortgage Servicing; HAMP; FHA; Senior Housing; Nursing home construction; Rural Housing Service; Indian Housing.

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Unless otherwise noted, Mike Crapo, Chairman, and Sherrod Brown, Ranking Democratic Member, serve on all subcommittees as ex-officio, non-voting members.

HOUSING, TRANSPORTATION, AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Tim Scott, SC, Chairman;

Robert Menendez, NJ, Ranking Democratic Member.

Richard C. Shelby, AL; Dean Heller, NV; Mike Rounds, SD; Thom Tillis, NC; Joe Kennedy, LA; Jack Reed, RI; Heidi Heitkamp, ND; Brian Schatz, HI; Chris Van Hollen, MD.

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

Patrick J. Toomey, PA, Chairman;

Elizabeth Warren, MA, Raking Democratic Member.

Richard C. Shelby, AL; Bob Corker, TN; Dean Heller, NV; Tim Scott, SC; Ben Sasse, NE; Tom Cotton, AR; David Perdue, GA; John Kennedy, LA; Jack Reed, RI; Jon Tester, MT; Mark Warner, VA; Joe Donnelly, IN; Brian Schatz, HI; Chris Van Hollen; Catherine Cortez Masto, NY.

SECURITIES, INSURANCE, AND INVESTMENT

Dean Heller, NV, Chairman;

Mark Warner, VA, Ranking Democratic Member.

Richard C. Shelby, AL; Bob Corker, TN; Patrick J. Toomey, PA; Tim Scott, SC; Ben Sasse, NE; Mike Rounds, SD; Thom Tillis, NC; Jack Reed, RI; Robert Menendez, NJ; Jon Tester, MT; Elizabeth Warren, MA; Chris Van Hollen, MD; Catherine Cortez Masto, NV.

NATIONAL SECURITY AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND FINANCE

Ben Sasse, NE, Chairman;

Joe Donnelly, IN, Ranking Democratic Member.

Bob Corker, TN; Tom Cotton, AR; Mike Rounds, SD; David Perdue, GA; Mark Warner, VA; Heidi Heitkamp, ND; Brian Schatz, HI.

ECONOMIC POLICY

Tom Cotton, AR, Chairman;

Heidi Heitkamp, ND, Ranking Democratic Member.

Patrick J. Toomey, PA; David Perdue, GA; Thom Tillis, NC; John Kennedy, LA; Robert Menendez, NJ; Elizabeth Warren, MA; Joe Donnelly, IN.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

RULES OF PROCEDURE

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation has adopted rules governing its procedures for the 115th Congress. Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 2, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that the rules for the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be printed in the RECORD.

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

RULES OF THE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

115TH CONGRESS

RULE I—MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE

1. IN GENERAL.—The regular meeting dates of the Committee shall be the first and third Wednesdays of each month. Additional meetings may be called by the Chairman as the Chairman may deem necessary, or pursuant to the provisions of paragraph 3 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate.

2. OPEN MEETINGS.—Meetings of the Committee, or any subcommittee, including meetings to conduct hearings, shall be open to the public, except that a meeting or series of meetings by the Committee, or any subcommittee, on the same subject for a period of no more than 14 calendar days may be closed to the public on a motion made and seconded to go into closed session to discuss only whether the matters enumerated in subparagraphs (A) through (F) would require the meeting to be closed, followed immediately by a record vote in open session by a majority of the members of the Committee, or any subcommittee, when it is determined that the matter to be discussed or the testimony to be taken at such meeting or meetings—

(A) will disclose matters necessary to be kept secret in the interests of national defense or the confidential conduct of the foreign relations of the United States;

(B) will relate solely to matters of Committee staff personnel or internal staff management or procedure;

(C) will tend to charge an individual with crime or misconduct, to disgrace or injure the professional standing of an individual, or otherwise to expose an individual to public contempt or obloquy, or will represent a clearly unwarranted invasion of the privacy of an individual;

(D) will disclose the identity of any informer or law enforcement agent or will disclose any information relating to the investigation or prosecution of a criminal offense that is required to be kept secret in the interest of effective law enforcement;

(E) will disclose information relating to the trade secrets of, or financial or commercial information pertaining specifically to, a given person if—

(1) an Act of Congress requires the information to be kept confidential by Government officers and employees; or

(2) the information has been obtained by the Government on a confidential basis, other than through an application by such person for a specific Government financial or other benefit, and is required to be kept secret in order to prevent undue injury to the competitive position of such person; or

(F) may divulge matters required to be kept confidential under other provisions of law or Government regulations.

3. STATEMENTS.—Each witness who is to appear before the Committee or any subcommittee shall file with the Committee, at least 24 hours in advance of the hearing, a written statement of the witness's testimony in as many copies as the Chairman of the Committee or subcommittee prescribes. In the event a witness fails to file a timely written statement in accordance with this rule, the Chairman of the Committee or subcommittee, as applicable, may permit the witness to testify, or deny the witness the privilege of testifying before the Committee, or permit the witness to testify in response to questions from members without the benefit of giving an opening statement.

4. FIELD HEARINGS.—Field hearings of the full Committee, and any subcommittee thereof, shall be scheduled only when authorized by the Chairman and ranking minority member of the full Committee.

RULE II—QUORUMS

1. BILLS, RESOLUTIONS, AND NOMINATIONS.—A majority of the members, which includes at least 1 minority member, shall constitute a quorum for official action of the Committee when reporting a bill, resolution, or nomination. Proxies may not be counted in making a quorum for purposes of this paragraph.

2. OTHER BUSINESS.—One-third of the entire membership of the Committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of all business as may be considered by the Committee, except for the reporting of a bill, resolution, or nomination or authorizing a subpoena. Proxies may not be counted in making a quorum for purposes of this paragraph.

3. TAKING TESTIMONY.—For the purpose of taking sworn testimony a quorum of the Committee and each subcommittee thereof, now or hereafter appointed, shall consist of 1 member of the Committee.

RULE III—PROXIES

When a record vote is taken in the Committee on any bill, resolution, amendment, or any other question, the required quorum being present, a member who is unable to attend the meeting may submit his or her vote by proxy, in writing or through personal instructions.

RULE IV—CONSIDERATION OF BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

It shall not be in order during a meeting of the Committee to move to proceed to the consideration of any bill or resolution unless the bill or resolution has been filed with the Clerk of the Committee not less than 48 hours in advance of the Committee meeting, in as many copies as the Chairman of the Committee prescribes. This rule may be waived with the concurrence of the Chairman and the ranking minority member of the full Committee.

RULE V—SUBPOENAS; COUNSEL; RECORD

1. SUBPOENAS.—The Chairman, with the approval of the ranking minority member of the Committee, may subpoena the attendance of witnesses for hearings and the production of memoranda, documents, records, or any other materials. The Chairman may subpoena such attendance of witnesses or production of materials without the approval of the ranking minority member if the Chairman or a member of the Committee staff designated by the Chairman has not received notification from the ranking minority member or a member of the Committee staff designated by the ranking minority member of disapproval of the subpoena within 72 hours, excluding Saturdays and Sundays, of being notified of the subpoena. If a subpoena is disapproved by the ranking minority member as provided in this paragraph, the subpoena may be authorized by vote of the Members of the Committee, the quorum required by paragraph 1 of rule II being present. When the Committee or Chairman authorizes a subpoena, it shall be issued upon the signature of the Chairman or any other Member of the Committee designated by the Chairman. At the direction of the Chairman, with notification to the ranking minority member of not less than 72 hours, the staff is authorized to take depositions

from witnesses. The ranking minority member, or a member of the Committee staff designated by the ranking minority member, shall be given the opportunity to attend and participate in the taking of any deposition. Witnesses at depositions shall be examined upon oath administered by an individual authorized by law to administer oaths, or administered by any member of the Committee if one is present.

2. COUNSEL.—Witnesses may be accompanied at a public or executive hearing, or the taking of a deposition, by counsel to advise them of their rights. Counsel retained by any witness and accompanying such witness shall be permitted to be present during the testimony of the witness at any public or executive hearing, or the taking of a deposition, to advise the witness, while the witness is testifying, of the witness's legal rights. In the case of any witness who is an officer or employee of the government, or of a corporation or association, the Chairman may rule that representation by counsel from the government, corporation, or association or by counsel representing other witnesses, creates a conflict of interest, and that the witness may only be represented during testimony before the Committee by personal counsel not from the government, corporation, or association or by personal counsel not representing other witnesses. This paragraph shall not be construed to excuse a witness from testifying in the event the witness's counsel is ejected for conducting himself or herself in such manner as to prevent, impede, disrupt, obstruct, or interfere with the orderly administration of a hearing or the taking of a deposition. This paragraph may not be construed as authorizing counsel to coach the witness or to answer for the witness. The failure of any witness to secure counsel shall not excuse the witness from complying with a subpoena.

3. RECORD.—An accurate electronic or stenographic record shall be kept of the testimony of all witnesses in executive and public hearings and depositions. If testimony given by deposition is transcribed, the individual administering the oath shall certify on the transcript that the witness was duly sworn in his or her presence and the transcriber shall certify that the transcript is a true record of the testimony. The transcript with these certifications shall be filed with the chief clerk of the Committee. The record of a witness's testimony, whether in public or executive session or in a deposition, shall be made available for inspection by the witness or the witness's counsel under Committee supervision. A copy of any testimony given in public session, or that part of the testimony given by the witness in executive session or deposition and subsequently quoted or made part of the record in a public session, shall be provided to that witness at the witness's expense if so requested. Upon inspecting the transcript, within a time limit set by the Clerk of the Committee, a witness may request changes in the transcript to correct errors of transcription and grammatical errors. The witness may also bring to the attention of the Committee errors of fact in the witness's testimony by submitting a sworn statement about those facts with a request that it be attached to the transcript. The Chairman or a member of the Committee staff designated by the Chairman shall rule on such requests.

RULE VI—BROADCASTING OF HEARINGS

Public hearings of the full Committee, or any subcommittee thereof, shall be televised or broadcast only when authorized by the Chairman and the ranking minority member of the full Committee.

RULE VII—SUBCOMMITTEES

1. HEARINGS.—Any member of the Committee may sit with any subcommittee during its hearings.

2. CHANGE OF CHAIRMANSHIP.—Subcommittees shall be considered de novo whenever there is a change in the chairmanship, and seniority on the particular subcommittee shall not necessarily apply.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

RULES OF PROCEDURE

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, the Committee on Veterans' Affairs has adopted rules governing its procedures for the 115th Congress. Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 2, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, on behalf of myself and Senator TESTER, I ask unanimous consent that a copy of the committee rules be printed in the RECORD.

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

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

RULES OF PROCEDURE

115TH CONGRESS

I. MEETINGS

(A) Unless otherwise ordered, the Committee shall meet on the first Wednesday of each month. The Chairman may, upon proper notice, call such additional meetings as deemed necessary.

(B) Except as provided in subparagraphs (b) and (d) of paragraph 5 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, meetings of the Committee shall be open to the public. The Committee shall prepare and keep a complete transcript or electronic recording adequate to fully record the proceedings of each meeting whether or not such meeting or any part thereof is closed to the public.

(C) The Chairman of the Committee, or the Ranking Majority Member present in the absence of the Chairman, or such other Member as the Chairman may designate, shall preside over all meetings.

(D) Except as provided in rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, no meeting of the Committee shall be scheduled except by majority vote of the Committee or by authorization of the Chairman of the Committee.

(E) The Committee shall notify the office designated by the Committee on Rules and Administration of the time, place, and purpose of each meeting. In the event such meeting is canceled, the Committee shall immediately notify such designated office.

(F) Written or electronic notice of a Committee meeting, accompanied by an agenda enumerating the items of business to be considered, shall be sent to all Committee Members at least 72 hours (not counting Saturdays, Sundays, and federal holidays) in advance of each meeting. In the event that the giving of such 72-hour notice is prevented by unforeseen requirements or Committee business, the Committee staff shall communicate notice by the quickest appropriate means to Members or appropriate staff assistants of Members and an agenda shall be furnished prior to the meeting.

(G) Subject to the second sentence of this paragraph, it shall not be in order for the Committee to consider any amendment in the first degree proposed to any measure under consideration by the Committee unless a written or electronic copy of such amendment has been delivered to each Member of the Committee at least 24 hours (not counting Saturdays, Sundays, and federal holidays) before the meeting at which the amendment is to be proposed. This paragraph may be waived by a majority vote of the Members and shall apply only when 72-hour written notice has been provided in accordance with paragraph (F).

II. QUORUMS

(A) Subject to the provisions of paragraph (B), eight Members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum for the reporting or approving of any measure or matter or recommendation. Five Members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum for purposes of transacting any other business.

(B) In order to transact any business at a Committee meeting, at least one Member of the minority shall be present. If, at any meeting, business cannot be transacted because of the absence of such a Member, the matter shall lay over for a calendar day. If the presence of a minority Member is not then obtained, business may be transacted by the appropriate quorum.

(C) One Member shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of receiving testimony.

III. VOTING

(A) Votes may be cast by proxy. A proxy shall be written and may be conditioned by personal instructions. A proxy shall be valid only for the day given.

(B) There shall be a complete record kept of all Committee actions. Such record shall contain the vote cast by each Member of the Committee on any question on which a roll call vote is requested.

IV. HEARINGS AND HEARING PROCEDURES

(A) Except as specifically otherwise provided, the rules governing meetings shall govern hearings.

(B) At least one week in advance of the date of any hearing, the Committee shall undertake, consistent with the provisions of paragraph 4 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, to make public announcements of the date, place, time, and subject matter of such hearing.

(C)(1) Each witness who is scheduled to testify at a hearing of the Committee shall submit 40 copies of such witness' testimony to the Committee not later than 48 hours (not counting Saturdays, Sundays, and federal holidays) before the witness' scheduled appearance at the hearing.

(2) Any witness who fails to meet the deadline specified in paragraph (1) shall not be permitted to present testimony but may be seated to take questions from Committee members, unless the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member determine there is good cause for the witness' failure to meet the deadline or it is in the Committee's interest to permit such witness to testify.

(D) The presiding Member at any hearing is authorized to limit the time allotted to each witness appearing before the Committee.

(E) The Chairman, with the concurrence of the Ranking Minority Member of the Committee, is authorized to subpoena the attendance of witnesses and the production of memoranda, documents, records, and any other materials. If the Chairman or a Committee staff member designated by the Chairman has not received from the Ranking Minority Member or a Committee staff member designated by the Ranking Minority Member notice of the Ranking Minority Member's non-concurrence in the subpoena within 48 hours (not counting Saturdays, Sundays, and federal holidays) of being notified of the Chairman's intention to subpoena attendance or production, the Chairman is authorized following the end of the 48-hour

period involved to subpoena the same without the Ranking Minority Member's concurrence. Regardless of whether a subpoena has been concurred in by the Ranking Minority Member, such subpoena may be authorized by vote of the Members of the Committee. When the Committee or Chairman authorizes a subpoena, the subpoena may be issued upon the signature of the Chairman or of any other Member of the Committee designated by the Chairman.

(F) Except as specified in Committee Rule VII (requiring oaths, under certain circumstances, at hearings to confirm Presidential nominations), witnesses at hearings will be required to give testimony under oath whenever the presiding Member deems such to be advisable.

V. MEDIA COVERAGE

Any Committee meeting or hearing which is open to the public may be covered by television, radio, and print media. Photographers, reporters, and crew members using mechanical recording, filming, or broadcasting devices shall position and use their equipment so as not to interfere with the seating, vision, or hearing of the Committee Members or staff or with the orderly conduct of the meeting or hearing. The presiding Member of the meeting or hearing may for good cause terminate, in whole or in part, the use of such mechanical devices or take such other action as the circumstances and the orderly conduct of the meeting or hearing may warrant.

VI. GENERAL

All applicable requirements of the Standing Rules of the Senate shall govern the Committee.

VII. PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATIONS

(A) Each Presidential nominee whose nomination is subject to Senate confirmation and referred to this Committee shall submit a statement of his or her background and financial interests, including the financial interests of his or her spouse and of children living in the nominee's household, on a form approved by the Committee, which shall be sworn to as to its completeness and accuracy. The Committee form shall be in two parts:

(1) Information concerning employment, education, and background of the nominee, which generally relates to the position to which the individual is nominated and which is to be made public; and

(2) Information concerning the financial and other background of the nominee, to be made public when the Committee determines that such information bears directly on the nominee's qualifications to hold the position to which the individual is nominated.

(B) At any hearing to confirm a Presidential nomination, the testimony of the nominee and, at the request of any Member, any other witness shall be under oath.

(C) Committee action on a nomination, including hearings or a meeting to consider a motion to recommend confirmation, shall not occur until at least five days (not counting Saturdays, Sundays, and federal holidays) after the nominee submits with respect to the currently pending nomination the form required by this rule unless the Chairman, with the concurrence of the Ranking Minority Member, waives this waiting period.

VIII. NAMING OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FACILITIES

It is the policy of the Committee that a Department of Veterans Affairs facility may be named only after a deceased individual and only under the following circumstances:

(A) Such individual was:

(1) A veteran who (i) was instrumental in the construction or the operation of the facility to be named, or (ii) was a recipient of the Medal of Honor or, as determined by the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, otherwise performed military service of an extraordinarily distinguished character;

(2) A Member of the United States House of Representatives or Senate who had a direct association with such facility;

(3) An Administrator of Veterans' Affairs, a Secretary of Veterans Affairs, a Secretary of Defense or of a service branch, or a military or other Federal civilian official of comparable or higher rank; or

(4) An individual who, as determined by the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, performed outstanding service for veterans.

(B) Each Member of the Congressional delegation representing the State in which the designated facility is located must indicate in writing such Member's support of the proposal to name such facility after such individual. It is the policy of the Committee that sponsoring or cosponsoring legislation to name such facility after such individual will not alone satisfy this requirement.

(C) The pertinent State department or chapter of each Congressionally chartered veterans' organization having a national membership of at least 500,000 must indicate in writing its support of such proposal.

IX. AMENDMENTS TO THE RULES

The rules of the Committee may be changed, modified, amended, or suspended at any time provided, however, that no less than a majority of the entire membership so determine at a regular meeting with due notice or at a meeting specifically called for that purpose. The rules governing quorums for reporting legislative matters shall govern rules changes, modification, amendments, or suspension.

NOMINATION OF REX W. TILLERSON

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a letter from Lee Boothby be printed in the RECORD in support of the nomination of Rex Tillerson as Secretary of State of the United States.

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

NEWFIELD EXPLORATION COMPANY,
The Woodlands, Texas, January 11, 2017.

Hon. JAMES M. INHOFE,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

Hon. JAMES LANKFORD,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATORS INHOFE AND LANKFORD: As leader of Oklahoma's third largest producer of crude oil and natural gas, I write to urge your vote to confirm Rex Tillerson as U.S. Secretary of State.

Mr. Tillerson has been rightly lauded for his effective stewardship of one the world's largest and most successful companies, his deep exposure to and knowledge of both foreign and domestic public policies impacting our nation and his extensive global experience. He is intelligent, highly regarded and has accomplished many achievements in the private sector through vision, hard work and sound judgment. He is extremely qualified to lead U.S. foreign policy.

Over the past several years, I have had the privilege of working with Rex professionally and I've also had the opportunity to get to know him personally. His personal attributes are equally as impressive as his professional characteristics. He is a man of integrity and strong moral character.

We both share a fondness for the outdoors and regularly have found ourselves discussing not the day-to-day happenings in our industry, but rather his love for the United States of America—an affection deepened by his exposure to countries where democracy and human rights do not exist.

I am proud to call Rex Tillerson a friend, and I am confident our nation will benefit from his service and the many attributes he will contribute as U.S. Secretary of State.

Sincerely,

LEE K. BOOTHBY.

CONFIRMATION OF MICHAEL POMPEO

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I oppose Mr. POMPEO'S confirmation to be Director of the Central Intelligence Agency because I believe he will take the CIA in a dangerously wrong direction.

America needs a CIA Director who will uphold American values by resolutely condemning torture and mass surveillance. Mr. POMPEO'S last-minute attempt to walk back his opposition to torture is very disturbing and suggests the Trump administration is readying to abandon our commitment to international human rights.

Second, Mr. POMPEO'S enthusiasm for bringing back programs that sweep up massive amounts of Americans' private information is deeply troubling. I have no confidence that Donald Trump would sufficiently protect the private emails of Americans if he had access to them, and Mr. POMPEO'S support for large-scale data collection programs is inconsistent with the bipartisan reforms of the PATRIOT Act that passed in the last Congress.

Third, I am very worried that Mr. POMPEO, as CIA Director, will continue the trend of covert agencies usurping the power of the State Department and the Defense Department. Mr. POMPEO, under questioning, refused to acknowledge the longstanding precedent of diplomatic embassies having primary authority for final signoff on overseas operations. This suggests Mr. POMPEO could lead a rogue agency that will frustrate rather than aid our diplomatic objectives overseas.

TRIBUTE TO THOMAS D. HOMAN

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. Speaker, today I want to recognize Thomas D. Homan, who will step down this month as U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Executive Associate Director for Enforcement and Removal Operations. Mr. Homan has served in law enforcement for 36 years, including 33 years enforcing our Nation's border and immigration laws. He began his career in 1981 as a police officer in New York. In 1984, he became a U.S. Border Patrol agent with his first assignment in the San Diego sector. In 1988, he became a special agent with the former U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service in Phoenix, AZ. There, he climbed through the ranks, first to supervisory special agent, and later to deputy assistant director for investigations.

In 1999, Mr. Homan became the assistant district director for investigations in San Antonio, TX. Upon the creation of ICE in 2003, Mr. Homan was named as the assistant special agent in charge in Dallas, TX. He was later promoted to deputy special agent in charge. In March 2009, Mr. Homan accepted the position of Assistant Director for Enforcement at ICE headquarters in Washington, DC. He was subsequently promoted to Deputy Executive Associate Director in 2010 and was again promoted in May 2013 to lead ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations as its Executive Associate Director.

In December 2015, Mr. Homan was awarded the Presidential Rank Award for Distinguished Service. He has served this country for many years and has had a notable career in helping to protect the homeland.

I ask that my colleagues join me in offering our appreciation for his service and congratulations on his retirement.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING AARON E. BAER

● Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, today I would like to pay tribute to a dear friend, the Honorable Aaron A. Baer, who died yesterday, just 2 days shy of what would have been his 103rd birthday. He was the oldest living judge in Maryland.

Judge Baer was known to his family as the ''centennial cowboy'' who had ''a great ride,'' as his family put it. He was a Baltimore native, the son of a Russian immigrant who worked in a clothing factory and became a tailor. Judge Baer graduated from the University of Baltimore Law School in 1937. He supported himself and paid for law school by repairing and replacing tar roofs.

Judge Baer practiced real estate law for several years before becoming an assistant Baltimore City solicitor, an assistant attorney general, and a State senator for the 5th District in 1959. He was appointed to the Municipal Court of Baltimore City in 1961 by then-Governor J. Millard Tawes. In 1971, he was appointed to the newly created District Court of Maryland by then, Governor Marvin Mandel. He retired as a district court judge in 1981 at the age of 67.

Judge Baer was married to Judy Weinberg for 66 years before her passing in 2007. He and his wife had two daughters. The older daughter is Susan Reichmister, who is married to Dr. Jerome Reichmister. They have two children: Beth, who is married to Bart Casper, and Jodi, who is married to Craig Kessler. The younger daughter is the Honorable Barbara Baer Waxman, who is administrative judge of the District Court of Maryland for Baltimore City. She is married to Dr. Carl Waxman. Judge Baer had four great-grandchildren: Nicole, Sloane, Mitchell, and Blair, and numerous nieces and nephews.

The Cardin family is friends with many members of the Baer family. Judge Baer and my parents were close friends. It has been a great privilege to know Judge Baer, to receive his counsel, and to count him not just as a close friend of my father's, but as my close friend, too.

Judge Baer lived an exemplary life devoted to public service, the community, and to his family. He started riding Indian motorcycles as a youth and then became an avid horseback rider until he turned 100, which is how he earned the nickname ''centennial cowboy.'' He did have ''a great ride,'' and I am grateful for having been along for some of it. My wife, Myrna, and I send our deepest condolences and prayers to his family.●

TRIBUTE TO BELLE WENDELBURG

● Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, this week, I have the distinct honor of recognizing Mrs. Belle Wendelburg for her continued work in serving her community all the way to the age of 95. Belle retired from Dahl Memorial Nursing Home in Ekalaka, MT, in July of 2016 after working there for more than 20 years. She loved the residents and enjoyed the opportunity to work and serve others.

Belle was born on May 3, 1921, on a family homestead near Westmore, MT. She was the youngest of three children. Growing up around Westmore, Belle attended Spring Hill Grade School where she had to ride a horse 7 miles to get to school.

Belle enrolled in the ''Green Thumb'' program, a government work program, and then began working in activities for Dahl Memorial Nursing Home. While her primary job was to work in activities, Belle wasn't afraid to work wherever she was needed. She helped make meals, set up for meals, wash dishes, read to residents, and work with Alzheimer's patients. She continued to work at the nursing home even after she was diagnosed with cancer. Her family reports that she is still as fit as ever and can probably outrun most people much younger than she.

Belle also worked every Christmas at the home, ensuring the residents got the presents they were supposed to get and helping them write thank you letters for the gifts. She was involved with the spiritual health of the residents by reading devotionals to them. Belle worked at the home every Sunday when extra staff were needed to help residents attend chapel services. Through her giving spirit, she provides residents encouragement and inspiration every day. To her coworkers, she is also an inspiration. The nursing home CEO, Nadene Elmore says, ''Whenever I see Belle, I tell her I want to be just like her when I grow up.'' Belle entertains staff at lunches with stories and endless knowledge of the community's history.

Throughout the past 20 years, Belle has remained faithful in her love for her home and the eastern Montana prairie. I want to express my deep gratitude to Mrs. Belle Wendelburg for her dedication and service to her community, Montana, and our country.●

130TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LONGMONT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

● Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I ask to have printed in the RECORD a copy of my remarks to the Longmont Chamber of Commerce on its 130th anniversary.

The material follows:

REMARKS TO THE LONGMONT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

I rise today to honor the Longmont Chamber of Commerce on its 130th anniversary. For more than 100 years, this chamber of commerce has been an important resource for businesses of all sizes in the Longmont area.

Colorado's Northern front range has experienced significant growth within the past few years, with an influx of residents moving to this region. Longmont, which sits in Weld and Boulder counties, is now home to nearly 100,000 people. The community's strong manufacturing, agriculture, and innovative technology companies have all contributed to Longmont's development.

The Longmont Chamber of Commerce has been an active participant in helping all industries succeed and grow. Annual events, like the ''Unity in the Community'' event, draw more than 1,000 representatives from business, government, and nonprofit organizations. In addition, Longmont has received multiple recognitions for its ability to problem solve, and make their community a better place to live for all residents. In 2006, Longmont received the All-America City Award from the National Civic League, and in 2008, was named as one of the Top 100 Best Places to Live by Money Magazine.

The Chamber of Commerce will continue to play a critical role in the growth and development of Longmont, as the Front Range sees an increase in population and business endeavors. Longmont is fortunate to have a dedicated organization like the Chamber helping its residents grow their businesses. Congratulations to the Longmont Chamber of Commerce on reaching this significant milestone.●

STATE OF THE UNION ESSAY CONTEST FINALISTS

● Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask to have printed in the RECORD some of the finalist essays written by Vermont high school students as part of the seventh annual State of the Union essay contest conducted by my office.

The material follows:

EMMA CARLSON, ST JOHNSBURY ACADEMY JUNIOR (FINALIST)

America is one of the wealthiest countries in the world. Home to world-leading companies in technology, consumer goods, pharmaceutical, and financial industries, the U.S. has a gross domestic product of 18.56 trillion dollars. And yet, poverty impacts people in both rural and urban areas who are working for minimum wage, elderly people who must live on a fixed income, and those who have lost their jobs. For a country as rich and resourceful as ours, we have the ability to solve the complex situation of poverty if we work together as a nation to find a solution.

Despite all of our wealth, we still have nearly 15% of people living below the poverty line. In 2016, the poverty threshold for a family of four is $24,036 per year. These individuals are forced to make difficult choices between paying for food, medicine, heat, gas, or rent. Today we are seeing increase in the loss of manufacturing jobs, causing many additional people to become unemployed and drop below the poverty line. We are losing these jobs due to technological advances that have replaced a lot of workers, while other jobs have been moved to lower-cost countries because the labor to perform those jobs is much cheaper. Another cause of long term poverty is the lack of access to high-quality early education. In addition, children of families in poverty do not consistently receive a college education, and therefore, lack the skills and opportunities to acquire a well-paying job in today's economy.

Poverty in America needs to be solved for every individual to receive opportunities to live a quality life. There are several political debates as to how we can most effectively reduce poverty, and as a result, very little gets accomplished toward achieving this goal and poverty continues to be on the rise. The first step toward helping to lower poverty rates is to create more jobs in America. The majority of companies in the U.S. are small businesses. If the government can help small businesses thrive, it can create more jobs for those in poverty. By pulling families out of poverty, it gives their children better opportunities to receive a quality education, making it easier for them to get jobs to support their future families. This can help to break the vicious cycle of children being born into poverty without any control over it. In addition, we need to make a basic college education available and affordable to any citizen who is willing to obtain one. Without addressing the fundamental needs of education and jobs, the cycle of poverty in America will not be resolved.

Our politicians need to recognize that poverty is a serious problem, and must work together on common goals towards defeating it. There are many solutions and sometimes there will need to be compromises as to what the best solution may be. If we do not solve this poverty problem, our nation will continue to decline and overall living conditions will become worse for a lot more people.

MASON CHARLEBOIS, VERGENNES UNION HIGH SCHOOL JUNIOR (FINALIST)

We do not live in a democracy anymore. We live in an oligarchy obscured by the word democracy. For too long our country, a nation established upon ideals of impeccable freedoms and liberties, has discarded the will and determination of the American people. The rich get richer while the poor grow poorer and there seems to exist no hope, no persistence, and no optimism in the people, but instead there resides feelings of despair and anguish. Why would I blame them? Today in our nation's capital, almost every bill that is made, every law that is passed, every donation given proclaims in a final respect, a refusal to aid the poor and middle class of the United States. The loyalties, affairs, and interests of our government no longer lie with the American populace, but with immense multinational corporations and the wealthy who value profit over people.

If you don't believe me, allow me to introduce some daunting numbers. According to Inequality.org, ''Income disparities have become so pronounced that America's top 10 percent now average nearly nine times as much income as the bottom 90 percent.'' But wait, there's more. They also mention ''Americans in the top I percent tower stunningly higher. They average over 38 times more income than the bottom 90 percent.'' Citizens of the United States, this is the most critical issue of the century and possibly the history of America. This is not something that can be disregarded as irrelevant because this not only hurts you, it hurts every aspect that makes this country for the people.

So, what can we, the American people, do to vanquish this unjust society that we find ourselves giving in? First, we start by establishing a tax on institutions that make more than $1,000,000 a year. For years, these monarchs of trade and commerce have sneaked through loopholes in legislation and haven't been paying their taxes. This is unacceptable in the country this great nation of America. Secondly, we dissolve major institutions or establishments that are taking advantage of Americans every single day. Wells Fargo, Capital One and Citigroup are just some of the financial institutions paying their fair share. Finally, it is vital for Americans to be educated on these issues in the first place. That is why I support a universal childcare schooling program where no one will be denied access to education based on their annual income. When we have an informed public, we will be one step closer to ''the people's'' victory: your victory.

To close, I would like to introduce a quote from the late Thomas Jefferson who said ''Experience demands that man is the only animal which devours his own kind, for I can apply no milder term to the general prey of the rich on the poor.'' Change never takes place from the top down. It takes place when people, just like you and me, rise up in peaceful protest and say we want a different America. We want change.

RAINBOW CHEN, WINOOSKI HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR (FINALIST)

The ''American Dream'' states that every American has the opportunity to become successful if they work hard. In reality, the American Dream is a blatant lie that falsely guides citizens on an idealistic path. If our country truly wants to make the American Dream a reality, we must provide citizens with the opportunity to best change their lives: a new education system. Education will help us give the poor what they need, help vulnerable children from birth to five, and create a meaningful life for our citizens.

Right now, a poor citizen has a slim chance of rising to middle or upper-middle class. A study from the Pew Charitable Trust says that 70% of lower income households stay in the lower income bracket; only 30% rise to middle class or high-income status. In 2015, nearly 48% of Americans live in low-income and impoverished situations, including my own family. Vermont may only have a 12% poverty rate, but disadvantages in resources, opportunities, and financial support have prevented me from reaching the same level of achievement and opportunity as my middle class peers. We need to readjust food stamp and welfare programs to support low-income families. Educational opportunities for the poor must become equitable so that low-income students can perform as well as their middle-class peers. If education becomes equitable, we may see more people working and fewer children suffering.

A study from Concordia University showed that ''. . . high-quality education early in a child's life leads to continued success later in school, at work . . . spending resources toward education earlier in life is much more fiscally responsible than paying later to help a struggling child catch up.'' Our country tends to take early childhood for granted, ignoring the benefits of early education. If we increased paid maternity/paternity leave, children could engage with their families for a longer part of their childhood, helping them become the strong leaders of the future throughout early education and their futures.

A flaw in the education system consistently prevents all students from achieving their potential. Schools need to push away from what a Purdue University study calls the ''superchicken'' model, which studies the ''best chickens of the coop''. This study showed that after separating the superchickens from the normal chickens, the superchickens pecked each other to death while the regular chickens proved successful regardless of productivity rates. In our educational system, we cannot place the ''smartest kids'' in one system, as it will damage all children's education.

Overall, education must be changed. Everyone needs access to learning opportunities, an equitable education for the poor and the average, and revitalize public school funding to ensure that all schools receive a fair share of distributed money. Fixing education will allow America to fix poverty, improve early childhood development, and allow more citizens to reach the American Dream. As the best country in the world, we need to create a possible dream, which means fixing the broken rungs in society's ''ladder of success''.

JESSICA DAIGLE, OXBOW HIGH SCHOOL JUNIOR (FINALIST)

My fellow Americans, I have one question for you. How do we, the United States of America, have the best economy in the world, yet can't afford to give our people basic necessities? We're one of the richest countries in the world, but we can't feed our population, or give them healthcare? Why are so many people living without a roof over their head? We can't run from these problems; we must face them and find a solution.

First and foremost, we must address our food problem. In 2015 alone, 42.2 million Americans lived in food insecure households; 13.1 million were children. How are we supposed to build a strong future if we can't feed our children? In fact, one in five children are at risk of hunger. In Latino and African American societies, it's one in three. This is an urgent problem we must fix. We must stop throwing away edible food and find a way to give it to those without. Every year in the US, 40% of food is thrown away. This equates to $165 billion's worth. All of this uneaten food could feed 25 million Americans. In order to feed those in need, we must stop wasting resources. We cannot keep throwing away perfectly edible food.

Healthcare is another demanding issue. In 2014, 29 million Americans didn't have health insurance; that's ten percent of our population. And, in that 29 million, 4.5 million were children. Those statistics are unacceptable. We must find a solution. In 2010, President Obama tried with the Affordable Care Act- commonly known as Obamacare. This worked well, as 20 million people were able to get insurance. Yet, Presidential Elect Donald Trump wants to repeal it. If he does, he must instate a new and more affordable healthcare system. We cannot go without it. What would those 29 million people do? They're relying on Obamacare, and can't afford to be without it.

Homelessness is defined as a social crisis in the United States today, as it should be, considering this fact: on any given night, about half a million Americans experience homelessness. Out of those people, 15% have been homeless for over a year, 50% are over the age of fifty, and 8% are veterans. Not to mention the 1.14 million veterans who are at risk of homelessness. Again, we're one of the richest countries in the world, yet we can't afford to house our population? We can't house those who fought for our country, for

our freedom? We must do something. We must create more safe havens or emergency shelters. We can't allow so many Americans to be living in such horrible conditions.

Clearly, these tasks will be difficult to take on. If we want to boast about our prestigious economy and wealth, we must first fix our problems with poverty in the lower class. We cannot be considered an esteemed country until every last one of us has food, healthcare, and a roof over our heads.●

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:41 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 290. An act to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to provide for greater transparency and efficiency in the procedures followed by the Federal Communications Commission, and for other purposes.

H.R. 423. An act to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to expand and clarify the prohibition on provision of misleading or inaccurate caller identification information, and for other purposes.

H.R. 460. An act to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to ensure the integrity of voice communications and to prevent unjust or unreasonable discrimination among areas of the United States in the delivery of such communications.

H.R. 511. An act to provide for consideration of the extension under the Energy Policy and Conservation Act of nonapplication of No-Load Mode energy efficiency standards to certain security or life safety alarms or surveillance systems, and for other purposes.

H.R. 518. An act to amend the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to exclude power supply circuits, drivers, and devices designed to be connected to, and power, light-emitting diodes or organic light-emitting diodes providing illumination from energy conservation standards for external power supplies, and for other purposes.

H.R. 555. An act to direct the Federal Communications Commission to amend its rules so as to prohibit the application to amateur stations of certain private land use restrictions, and for other purposes.

H.R. 582. An act to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to require multi-line telephone systems to have a configuration that permits users to directly initiate a call to 9–1–1 without dialing any additional digit, code, prefix, or post-fix, and for other purposes.

H.R. 587. An act to amend the Federal Power Act to provide that any inaction by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission that allows a rate change to go into effect shall be treated as an order by the Commission for purposes of rehearing and court review.

H.R. 588. An act to direct the Federal Communications Commission to conduct a study on network resiliency during times of emergency, and for other purposes.

H.R. 590. An act to foster civilian research and development of advanced nuclear energy technologies and enhance the licensing and commercial deployment of such technologies.

H.R. 599. An act to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to consolidate the reporting obligations of the Federal Communications Commission in order to improve congressional oversight and reduce reporting burdens.

The message also announced that pursuant to section 603 of the Department of State Authorities Act, Fiscal Year 2017 (Public Law 114–323), and the order of the House of January 3, 2017, the Minority Leader appoints the following Member of the House of Representatives to the Western Hemisphere Drug Policy Commission: Mr. Sam Farr of Carmel, California.

The message further announced that pursuant to section 553 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 (Public Law 114–328), and the order of the House of January 3, 2017, the Minority Leader appoints the following individual to the National Commission on Military, National and Public Service: Mr. Edward T. Allard III of Los Angeles, California.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 290. An act to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to provide for greater transparency and efficiency in the procedures followed by the Federal Communications Commission, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

H.R. 423. An act to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to expand and clarify the prohibition on provision of misleading or inaccurate caller identification information, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

H.R. 460. An act to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to ensure the integrity of voice communications and to prevent unjust or unreasonable discrimination among areas of the United States in the delivery of such communications; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

H.R. 511. An act to provide for consideration of the extension under the Energy Policy and Conservation Act of nonapplication of No-Load Mode energy efficiency standards to certain security or life safety alarms or surveillance systems, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 518. An act to amend the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to exclude power supply circuits, drivers, and devices designed to be connected to, and power, light-emitting diodes or organic light-emitting diodes providing illumination from energy conservation standards for external power supplies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 555. An act to direct the Federal Communications Commission to amend its rules so as to prohibit the application to amateur stations of certain private land use restrictions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

H.R. 582. An act to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to require multi-line telephone systems to have a configuration that permits users to directly initiate a call to 9–1-1 without dialing any additional digit, code, prefix, or post-fix, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

H.R. 587. An act to amend the Federal Power Act to provide that any inaction by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission that allows a rate change to go into effect shall be treated as an order by the Commission for purposes of rehearing and court review; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 588. An act to direct the Federal Communications Commission to conduct a study on network resiliency during times of emergency, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

H.R. 590. An act to foster civilian research and development of advanced nuclear energy technologies and enhance the licensing and commercial deployment of such technologies; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

H.R. 599. An act to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to consolidate the reporting obligations of the Federal Communications Commission in order to improve congressional oversight and reduce reporting burdens; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC–577. A communication from the Secretary of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to violations of the Antideficiency Act that occurred in the Department of Homeland Security's Office of the Chief Information Officer, Treasury Symbol 7012/140113; to the Committee on Appropriations.

EC–578. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Implementation of the February 2016 Australia Group (AG) Intersessional Decisions and the June 2016 AG Plenary Understandings'' (RIN0694–AH14) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 12, 2017; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–579. A communication from the Program Specialist of the Legislative and Regulatory Activities Division, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Community Reinvestment Act Regulations'' (RIN1557–AE11) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 18, 2017; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–580. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Addition of Certain Entities to the Entity List'' (RIN0694–AH27) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 18, 2017; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–581. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revisions to the Export Administration Regulations (EAR): Control of Spacecraft Systems and Related Items the President Determines No Longer Warrant Control Under the United States Munitions List (USML)'' (RIN0694–AG59) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 18, 2017; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–582. A communication from the Regulatory Affairs Specialist, Bureau of Ocean

Energy Management, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Oil and Gas and Sulphur Operations in the Outer Continental Shelf—Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustments'' (RIN1010–AD95) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 12, 2017; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–583. A communication from the Director, Office of Regulations and Reports Clearance, Social Security Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revisions to Rules Regarding the Evaluation of Medical Evidence'' (RIN0960–AH51) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 18, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–584. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Health Care Programs: Fraud and Abuse: Revisions to the Office of Inspector General's Exclusion Authorities'' (42 CFR Parts 1000, 1001, 1002, and 1006) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 18, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–585. A joint communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Attorney General, transmitting, pursuant to law, an annual report relative to the Health Care Fraud and Abuse Control Program for fiscal year 2016; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–586. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''2016 Actuarial Report on the Financial Outlook for Medicaid''; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–587. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, Bureau of the Fiscal Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Regulations Governing Retirement Savings Bonds'' ((RIN1530–AA13) (31 CFR Part 347)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 12, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–588. A communication from the Acting Director, Employee Services/Recruitment and Hiring, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Veterans' Preference'' (RIN3206–AN47) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 12, 2017; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–589. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Financial Report of the United States Government for Fiscal Year 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–590. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Semi-Annual Report of the Inspector General for the period from April 1, 2016 through September 30, 2016 and the Semi-Annual Report of the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–591. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Civil Rights Division, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability by Public Accommodations—Movie Theaters; Movie Captioning and Audio Description'' (RIN1190–AA63) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 12, 2017; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–592. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Health Resources and Services Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program: Revisions to the Vaccine Injury Table'' (RIN0906–AB01) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 18, 2017; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–593. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a performance report relative to the Animal Drug User Fee Act for fiscal year 2016; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–594. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a performance report relative to the Animal Generic Drug User Fee Act for fiscal year 2016; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–595. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects'' (RIN0937–AA02) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 18, 2017; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–596. A communication from the Secretary of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Assistance to States for the Education of Children with Disabilities and the Preschool Grants for Children with Disabilities Program; Early Intervention Program for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities'' (RIN1820–AB74) received in the Office of the President pro tempore of the Senate; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–597. A communication from the Secretary of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on the Self-Employment Assistance (SEA) program; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–598. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Report to Congress: Indian Health Prescription Drug Monitoring''; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

EC–599. A communication from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''2015 Annual Report of the National Institute of Justice''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–600. A communication from the Director, Office of Information Policy, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revision of Department of Justice Freedom of Information Act Regulations'' (RIN1105–AB51) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 18, 2017; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–601. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2014–0143)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–602. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–3631)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–603. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2016–7425)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–604. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2016–6894)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–605. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2016–9057)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–606. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2016–7424)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–607. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–3929)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–608. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–5807)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–609. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled '' Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters Deutschland GmbH Helicopters'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2016–5247)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–610. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal

Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–7531)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–611. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–3698)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–612. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–3142)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–613. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2016–8845)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–614. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2016–6898)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–615. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–7525)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–616. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2016–8850)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–617. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2016–8180)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–618. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2016–8847)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–619. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Turbomeca S.A. Turboshaft Engines'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–3753)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–620. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Defense and Space S.A. (Formerly Known as Construcciones Aeronatuicas, S.A.) Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2016–9109)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–621. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters (Previously Eurocopter France)'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2014–0498)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–622. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; AgustaWestland S.p.A. (Agusta) Helicopters'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2016–4278)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–623. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; BAE Systems (Operations) Limited Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2016–0457)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–624. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Viking Air Limited Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2016–9527)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–625. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Sikorsky Aircraft Coporation'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2016–9537)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–626. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Saab AB, Saab Aeronautics (Formerly known as Saab AB, Saab Aerosystems) Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2016–9056)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–627. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; PILATUS AIRCRAFT LTD. Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2016–7003)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–628. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; Robinson Helicopter Company Helicopters'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2016–0733)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–629. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; B–N Group Ltd. Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2016–9160)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–630. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Class E Airspace; Cedar City, UT'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2016–9119)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–631. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Class E Airspace; Blue Mesa, CO'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2016–7043)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–632. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of Class E Airspace; Kahului, HI''

((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2014–1068)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–633. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Establishment of Class E Airspace; Healy, AK'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2016–9159)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–634. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Extension of the Prohibition Against Certain Flights Within the Damascus (OSTT) Flight Information Region (FIR)'' ((RIN2120–AK93) (Docket No. FAA–2014–0708)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–635. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Establishment of an Air Traffic Service (ATS) Route; Western United States'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2015–1345)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–636. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revocation of Offshore Airspace Areas; Control 1154H, Control 1173H, Control 1154L, and Control 1173L, California'' ((RIN2120–AA66) (Docket No. FAA–2016–9263)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–637. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (62); Amdt. No. 3725'' (RIN2120–AA65) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–638. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (80); Amdt. No. 3723'' (RIN2120–AA65) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–639. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Reef Fish Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico; Red Grouper Management Measures'' (RIN0648–BG12) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 12, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–640. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries Off West Coast States; Coastal Pelagic Species Fisheries; Multi-Year Specifications for Monitored and Prohibited Harvest Species Stock Categories'' (RIN0648–XC808) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 12, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–641. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone off Alaska; Modifications to Recordkeeping and Reporting Requirements'' (RIN0648–BF83) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 12, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–642. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone off Alaska; Chinook Salmon Bycatch Management in the Gulf of Alaska Trawl Fisheries; Amendment 103'' (RIN0648–BF84) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 12, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–643. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Reallocation of Pacific Cod in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area'' (RIN0648–XF012) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 12, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–644. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone off Alaska; Groundfish Fishery by Vessels Using Trawl Gear in the Gulf of Alaska'' (RIN0648–XE990) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 12, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–645. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone off Alaska; Pacific Ocean Perch in the Bering Sea Subarea of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area'' (RIN0648–XE950) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 12, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–646. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revision of Airworthiness Standards for Normal, Utility, Acrobatic, and Commuter Category Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AK65) (Docket No. FAA–2015–1621)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–647. A communication from the Assistant Chief Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Pipeline Safety: Safety of Underground Natural Gas Storage Facilities'' (RIN2137–AF22) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–648. A communication from the Chairman of the Office of Proceedings and the Office of Economics, Surface Transportation Board, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Civil Monetary Penalty Inflation Adjustment Rule'' (Docket No. EP 716 (Sub–No. 1)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 18, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–649. A communication from the Chairman of the Office of Proceedings, Surface Transportation Board, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''United States Rail Service Issues—Performance Data Reporting'' (Docket No. EP 724 (Sub–No. 4)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 18, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–650. A communication from the Trial Attorney, Federal Railroad Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Monetary Threshold for Reporting Rail Equipment Accidents/Incidents for Calendar Year 2017'' (RIN2130–ZA14) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–651. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes'' ((RIN2120–AA64) (Docket No. FAA–2015–5816)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–652. A communication from the Deputy Chief of the Disability Rights Office, Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Transition from TTY to Real-Time Text Technology; Petition for Rulemaking to Update the Commission's Rules for Access to Support the Transition from TTY to Real-Time Text Technology, and Petition for Waiver of Rules Requiring Support of TTY Technology'' ((FCC 16–169) (CG Docket No. 16–145 and GN Docket No. 15–178)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 12, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. THUNE, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, without amendment:

S. Res. 20. An original resolution authorizing expenditures by the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. GRASSLEY, from the Committee on the Judiciary, without amendment:

S. Res. 21. An original resolution authorizing expenditures by the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CRAPO, from the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, without amendment:

S. Res. 22. An original resolution authorizing expenditures by the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. ISAKSON, from the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, without amendment:

S. Res. 24. An original resolution authorizing expenditures by the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. CRAPO for the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

*Benjamin S. Carson, Sr., of Florida, to be Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

By Mr. THUNE for the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

*Wilbur L. Ross, Jr., of Florida, to be Secretary of Commerce.

*Elaine L. Chao, of Kentucky, to be Secretary of Transportation.

By Mr. CORKER for the Committee on Foreign Relations.

*Nikki R. Haley, of South Carolina, to be the Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations, with the rank and status of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, and the Representative of the United States of America in the Security Council of the United Nations.

*Nikki R. Haley, of South Carolina, to be Representative of the United States of America to the Sessions of the General Assembly of the United Nations during her tenure of service as Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. FLAKE:

S. 195. A bill to expedite the deployment of highway construction projects; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. CASSIDY (for himself, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. NELSON, and Mr. COONS):

S. 196. A bill to provide for a Public Health Emergency Fund, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. CRAPO (for himself, Mr. UDALL, Mr. RISCH, Mr. HEINRICH, and Mr. BENNET):

S. 197. A bill to amend the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act to improve compensation for workers involved in uranium mining, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Mr. KAINE, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. NELSON, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. BROWN, Mr. SCHATZ, and Mr. HATCH):

S. 198. A bill to require continued and enhanced annual reporting to Congress in the Annual Report on International Religious Freedom on anti-Semitic incidents in Europe, the safety and security of European Jewish communities, and the efforts of the United States to partner with European governments, the European Union, and civil society groups, to combat anti-Semitism, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. BARRASSO (for himself and Mr. ENZI):

S. 199. A bill to authorize the use of the active capacity of the Fontenelle Reservoir; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. MARKEY:

S. 200. A bill to prohibit the conduct of a first-use nuclear strike absent a declaration of war by Congress; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. CRUZ):

S. 201. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that new wind turbines located near certain military installations are ineligible for the renewable electricity production credit and the energy credit; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CRAPO (for himself, Mr. PAUL, Mr. MORAN, Mr. HELLER, Mr. HATCH, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. DAINES, and Mr. ROBERTS):

S. 202. A bill to amend the Social Security Act relating to the use of determinations made by the Commissioner; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BURR (for himself, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. HELLER, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. MORAN, Mrs. ERNST, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. INHOFE, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. TESTER, and Mr. DONNELLY):

S. 203. A bill to reaffirm that the Environmental Protection Agency may not regulate vehicles used solely for competition, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. JOHNSON (for himself, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. CORKER, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. DAINES, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. ENZI, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. HATCH, Mr. HELLER, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. KING, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. LEE, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. MORAN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. PAUL, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SASSE, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. YOUNG):

S. 204. A bill to authorize the use of unapproved medical products by patients diagnosed with a terminal illness in accordance with State law, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. THUNE (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. DAINES, Mr. ENZI, Mrs. ERNST, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. HELLER, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. LEE, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. MORAN, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. TILLIS, and Mr. FLAKE):

S. 205. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the estate and generation-skipping transfer taxes, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. KAINE (for himself and Mr. PORTMAN):

S. 206. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to allow the Secretary of Education to award job training Federal Pell Grants; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. GRAHAM, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. TILLIS, and Mr. WARNER):

S. 207. A bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act relating to controlled substance analogues; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. KING (for himself and Mr. BURR):

S. 208. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit fully refundable, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CRAPO (for himself and Mr. RISCH):

S. 209. A bill to authorize an additional district judgeship for the district of Idaho; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Ms. COLLINS, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BROWN, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. COONS, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. KAINE, Mr. KING, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. PETERS, Mr. REED, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. SCHUMER, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. TESTER, Mr. UDALL, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WARNER, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. NELSON, Mr. CASEY, and Mrs. MCCASKILL):

S. 210. A bill to prohibit the application of certain restrictive eligibility requirements to foreign nongovernmental organizations with respect to the provision of assistance under part I of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. CRUZ (for himself and Mr. SHELBY):

S. 211. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to permit the Governor of a State to reject the resettlement of a refugee in that State unless there is adequate assurance that the alien does not present a security risk, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CORNYN:

S. 212. A bill to provide for the development of a United States strategy for greater human space exploration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Mr. SULLIVAN):

S. 213. A bill to designate the wilderness within the Lake Clark National Park and Preserve in the State of Alaska as the Jay S. Hammond Wilderness Area; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Mr. SULLIVAN):

S. 214. A bill to authorize the expansion of an existing hydroelectric project; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Mr. SULLIVAN):

S. 215. A bill to authorize the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to issue an order continuing a stay of a hydroelectric license for the Mahoney Lake hydroelectric project in the State of Alaska, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. BARRASSO (for himself and Mr. SCHATZ):

S. 216. A bill to require the Secretary of the Interior to submit to Congress a report on the efforts of the Bureau of Reclamation to manage its infrastructure assets; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Mr. SULLIVAN):

S. 217. A bill to amend the Denali National Park Improvement Act to clarify certain provisions relating to the natural gas pipeline authorized in the Denali National Park and Preserve; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. GARDNER:

S. 218. A bill to restrict the inclusion of social security account numbers on documents sent by mail by the Federal Government, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. COTTON (for himself, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. WICKER, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. SHELBY, and Mr. TILLIS):

S. 219. A bill to provide the force and effect of law for certain regulations relating to the taking of double-crested cormorants to reduce depredation at aquaculture facilities and protect public resources; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. SASSE (for himself, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. BURR, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. DAINES, Mr. ENZI, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. MORAN, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. ISAKSON):

S. 220. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit a health care practitioner from failing to exercise the proper degree of care in the case of a child who survives an abortion or attempted abortion; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. DAINES (for himself, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. LEE, Mr. JOHNSON, and Mr. RUBIO):

S. 221. A bill to allow a State to submit a declaration of intent to the Secretary of Education to combine certain funds to improve the academic achievement of students; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. PAUL:

S. 222. A bill to repeal provisions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and provide private health insurance reform, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. CASEY, Mr. TILLIS, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. WICKER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. TESTER, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. HELLER, Mr. KING, and Mr. KAINE):

S. 223. A bill to provide immunity from suit for certain individuals who disclose potential examples of financial exploitation of senior citizens, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Mr. HATCH, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. BLUNT, and Mr. DAINES):

S. 224. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit taking minors across State lines in circumvention of laws requiring the involvement of parents in abortions decisions; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 225. A bill to amend the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 to modify provisions relating to certain land exchanges in the Mt. Hood Wilderness in the State of Oregon; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. PORTMAN (for himself, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Ms. CANTWELL):

S. 226. A bill to exclude power supply circuits, drivers, and devices to be connected to, and power, light-emitting diodes or organic light-emitting diodes providing illumination or ceiling fans using direct current motors from energy conservation standards for external power supplies; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Mr. YOUNG, and Mr. CORNYN):

S. 227. A bill to impose nonnuclear sanctions with respect to Iran, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. DAINES (for himself and Mr. MANCHIN):

S. 228. A bill to ensure that small business providers of broadband Internet access service can devote resources to broadband deployment rather than compliance with cumbersome regulatory requirements, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. HEINRICH (for himself, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. UDALL, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. REED):

S. 229. A bill to provide for the confidentiality of information submitted in requests for the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CASSIDY:

S. 230. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a credit against income tax for facilities using a qualified methane conversion technology to provide transportation fuels and chemicals; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. PAUL (for himself, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. THUNE, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. INHOFE, and Mr. BOOZMAN):

S. 231. A bill to implement equal protection under the 14th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States for the right to life of each born and preborn human person; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Mr. GRASSLEY):

S. 232. A bill to terminate the EB–5 Visa Program and to reallocate the employment creation visas to the other employment-based visa classifications; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. WARNER (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Ms. WARREN, Mr. BURR, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. TESTER, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. NELSON, Mr. GARDNER, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. KING, Mr. KAINE, Mr. BENNET, Mr. DAINES, and Mr. PETERS):

S. 233. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out certain major medical facility leases of the Department of Veterans Affairs; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. DONNELLY (for himself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Mr. BROWN):

S. 234. A bill to provide incentives for businesses to keep jobs in America; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. SCOTT (for himself, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. HATCH, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. BOOZMAN):

S. 235. A bill to expand opportunity through greater choice in education, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. LEE (for himself and Mr. GRASSLEY):

S.J. Res. 7. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States requiring that the Federal budget be balanced; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. UDALL (for himself, Mr. BENNET, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. TESTER, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BROWN, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CASEY, Mr. COONS, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. KING, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MARKEY, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. NELSON, Mr. PETERS, Mr. REED, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. CARDIN):

S.J. Res. 8. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relating to contributions and expenditures intended to affect elections; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. THUNE:

S. Res. 20. An original resolution authorizing expenditures by the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation; from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. GRASSLEY:

S. Res. 21. An original resolution authorizing expenditures by the Committee on the Judiciary; from the Committee on the Judiciary; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. CRAPO:

S. Res. 22. An original resolution authorizing expenditures by the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs; from the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. GARDNER (for himself and Mr. COONS):

S. Res. 23. A resolution establishing the Select Committee on Cybersecurity; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. ISAKSON:

S. Res. 24. An original resolution authorizing expenditures by the Committee on Veterans' Affairs; from the Committee on Veterans' Affairs; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. CRAPO (for himself, Mr. UDALL, Mr. RISCH, Mr. HEINRICH, and Mr. BENNET):

S. Res. 25. A resolution designating January 27, 2017, as a national day of remembrance for people of the United States who, during the Cold War, worked and lived downwind from nuclear testing sites and were adversely affected by the radiation exposure generated by the above ground nuclear weapons testing; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SCOTT (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. CASSIDY,

Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. HATCH, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. WICKER, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. DAINES, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. ENZI, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. LANKFORD, and Mr. TOOMEY):

S. Res. 26. A resolution designating the week of January 22 through January 28, 2017, as ''National School Choice Week'' ; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. CRUZ (for himself, Mr. NELSON, Mr. PETERS, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. INHOFE, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. THUNE, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. GARDNER):

S. Res. 27. A resolution honoring the life and achievements of Eugene A. ''Gene'' Cernan; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

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

S. Con. Res. 6. A concurrent resolution supporting the Local Radio Freedom Act; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 21

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) were added as cosponsors of S. 21, a bill to amend chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, to provide that major rules of the executive branch shall have no force or effect unless a joint resolution of approval is enacted into law.

S. 26

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 26, a bill to amend the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 to require the disclosure of certain tax returns by Presidents and certain candidates for the office of the President, and for other purposes.

S. 27

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 27, a bill to establish an independent commission to examine and report on the facts regarding the extent of Russian official and unofficial cyber operations and other attempts to interfere in the 2016 United States national election, and for other purposes.

S. 47

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 47, a bill to prevent proposed regulations relating to restrictions on liquidation of an interest with respect to estate, gift, and generation-skipping transfer taxes from taking effect.

S. 54

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 54, a bill to prohibit the creation of an immigration-related registry program that classifies people on the basis of religion, race, age, gender, ethnicity, national origin, nationality, or citizenship.

S. 56

At the request of Mr. SULLIVAN, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST) was added as a cosponsor of S. 56, a bill to require each agency to repeal or amend 2 or more rules before issuing or amending a rule.

S. 80

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 80, a bill to protect the right of individuals to bear arms at water resources development projects.

S. 81

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 81, a bill to establish an advisory office within the Bureau of Consumer Protection of the Federal Trade Commission to prevent fraud targeting seniors, and for other purposes.

S. 86

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 86, a bill to amend the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 to modify the termination date for the Veterans Choice Program.

S. 104

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the names of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS), the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) were added as cosponsors of S. 104, a bill to provide for the vacating of certain convictions and expungement of certain arrests of victims of human trafficking.

S. 139

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 139, a bill to implement the use of Rapid DNA instruments to inform decisions about pretrial release or detention and their conditions, to solve and prevent violent crimes and other crimes, to exonerate the innocent, to prevent DNA analysis backlogs, and for other purposes.

S. 143

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 143, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a credit against income tax for amounts paid by a spouse of a member of the Armed Forces for a new State license or certification required by reason of a permanent change in the duty station of such member to another State.

S. 145

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 145, a bill to require the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to more efficiently develop domestic sources of the minerals and mineral materials of strategic and critical importance to the economic and national security and manufacturing competitiveness of the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 166

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 166, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of Muhammad Ali.

S. 168

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ), the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) and the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) were added as cosponsors of S. 168, a bill to amend and enhance certain maritime programs of the Department of Transportation.

S. 169

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) were added as cosponsors of S. 169, a bill to counter anti-Semitism at the United Nations, and for other purposes.

S. 170

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG), the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) and the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) were added as cosponsors of S. 170, a bill to provide for nonpreemption of measures by State and local governments to divest from entities that engage in commerce-related or investment-related boycott, divestment, or sanctions activities targeting Israel, and for other purposes.

S. 179

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 179, a bill to expand the use of E–Verify, to hold employers accountable, and for other purposes.

S. 184

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 184, a bill to prohibit taxpayer funded abortions.

S.J. RES. 5

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the names of the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 5, a joint resolution removing the deadline for the ratification of the equal rights amendment.

S.J. RES. 6

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of

S.J. Res. 6, a joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relative to equal rights for men and women.

S. CON. RES. 4

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 4, a concurrent resolution clarifying any potential misunderstanding as to whether actions taken by President-elect Donald Trump constitute a violation of the Emoluments Clause, and calling on President-elect Trump to divest his interest in, and sever his relationship to, the Trump Organization.

S. RES. 6

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 6, a resolution objecting to United Nations Security Council Resolution 2334 and to all efforts that undermine direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians for a secure and peaceful settlement.

S. RES. 9

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 9, a resolution honoring in praise and remembrance the extraordinary life, steady leadership, and remarkable, 70-year reign of King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand.

S. RES. 15

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 15, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that the Mexico City policy should be permanently established.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. FLAKE:

S. 195. A bill to expedite the deployment of highway construction projects; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I rise to speak of legislation I am introducing today—the Transportation Investment Recalibration to Equality Act, or the TIRE Act. The TIRE Act would suspend the Davis-Bacon prevailing wage requirement on all transportation-related infrastructure contracts. This would free up billions more in taxpayer dollars to be spent on jobs and on projects.

For those who are not familiar, Davis-Bacon is a Depression-era law that requires contractors on Federal construction projects to pay workers no less than the so-called local prevailing wage. Now, since its enactment over 80 years ago, the Department of Labor has been unable to devise an effective system for determining prevailing wages.

In fact, a 2004 Department of Labor inspector general report revealed that Federal wage reporting surveys, which are a key metric used to determine prevailing wages, are fundamentally flawed. Of all the wage report surveys reviewed by the IG, 100 percent contained flaws. Let me say that again: 100 percent of all the surveys were flawed.

In addition, some of the wage surveys have not been updated since the 1980s. The bottom line is that every time Davis-Bacon applies to a Federal project, less money is going to construction and more money is going to meet onerous wage requirements. According to the Beacon Hill Institute, Davis-Bacon forces taxpayers to pay 22 percent above the market rate for labor on Federal infrastructure projects.

This is largely the result of disproportionate union participation in flawed wage surveys that skew Federal decisionmaking. Now, despite representing only 4 percent of the construction industry, unions are able to leverage their clout with Federal bureaucrats to inflate more than 60 percent of prevailing wages—talk about benefitting a few at the expense of the many.

Here is some perspective on what it means in real dollars. In 2016, the Federal Government spent $23 billion on Federal construction projects, and 2.1 billion of these dollars was spent on above-rate labor costs.

Again, $2.1 billion of the $23 billion spent was on above-market-rate labor costs. This means that nearly 10 percent of all Federal construction spending last year went to inflated contracts. Not only does this translate into less construction funding going to actual construction, but according to George Mason University, it results in roughly 30,000 lost construction jobs.

So we lose both on the projects and the jobs that are created. More broadly, it discriminates against small businesses that don't have the resources to meet onerous Federal reporting and compliance requirements. Now, while it may be well-intentioned, Davis-Bacon ends up eliminating decent-paying construction jobs and hampering infrastructure spending.

I have often talked to State and local officials who will say that if you have two bridges across the same river, even if they are just 100 yards or 200 yards or a mile apart with the same underlying costs—or what should be the same underlying costs—if there are Federal moneys involved in one and no Federal moneys involved in the other, the one with Federal moneys will cost significantly more, and a big portion of that is because of Davis-Bacon requirements.

Now, in this body, we have to look for issues to bridge the partisan divide. It turns out that one of these issues is bridges, roads, dams, and other infrastructure projects. Fixing our Nation's crumbling infrastructure is a top priority for many in Congress, and the new administration has touted a large infrastructure package as one of its agenda items.

However, despite the bipartisan consensus on both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue for infrastructure investment, visions for the road ahead actually diverge. With a projected pricetag north of $800 billion for highways and bridges alone, every Federal dollar needs to be spent as efficiently as possible.

The TIRE Act will return wage determinations for Federal transportation projects where they belong, and that is the market.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. CRUZ):

S. 201. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that new wind turbines located near certain military installations are ineligible for the renewable electricity production credit and the energy credit; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 201

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Protection of Military Airfields from Wind Turbine Encroachment Act''.

SEC. 2. NEW WIND TURBINES LOCATED NEAR CERTAIN MILITARY INSTALLATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (1) of section 45(d) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''Such term'' and all that follows through the period and inserting the following: ''Such term shall not include—

''(A) any facility with respect to which any qualified small wind energy property expenditure (as defined in subsection (d)(4) of section 25D) is taken into account in determining the credit under such section, or

''(B) any facility which is originally placed in service after the date of the enactment of the Protection of Military Airfields from Wind Turbine Encroachment Act and is located within a 30-mile radius of—

''(i) an airfield or airbase under the jurisdiction of a military department which is in active use, or

''(ii) an air traffic control radar site, weather radar site, or aircraft navigation aid which is—

''(I) owned or operated by the Department of Defense, and

''(II) a permanent land-based structure at a fixed location.''.

(b) QUALIFIED SMALL WIND ENERGY PROPERTY.—Paragraph (4) of section 48(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraph (C) as subparagraph (D), and

(2) by inserting after subparagraph (B) the following:

''(C) EXCEPTION.—The term 'qualifying small wind energy property' shall not include any property which is originally placed in service after the date of the enactment of the Protection of Military Airfields from Wind Turbine Encroachment Act and is located within a 30-mile radius of any property described in clause (i) or (ii) of section 45(d)(1)(B).''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to property placed in service after the date of the enactment of this Act.

By Mr. KAINE (for himself and Mr. PORTMAN):

S. 206. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to allow the Secretary of Education to award job training Federal Pell Grants; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, by 2020, it is estimated that 65 percent of all jobs will require at least some form of postsecondary education and training. The National Skills Coalition estimates that nearly half of all job openings between now and 2022 will be middle skill jobs that require education beyond high school, but not a four-year degree. While the number of students pursing postsecondary education is growing, the supply of skilled workers still falls short of industry demand. According to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics, 5.5 million U.S. jobs are currently vacant, in part, because of a shortage of qualified workers.

Our current Federal higher education policy must be improved to help solve this problem. Pell Grants, needs-based grants for low-income and working students, can only be awarded towards programs that are over 600 clock hours or at least 15 weeks in length. These grants cannot be used to support many of the short-term occupational training programs at community and technical colleges and other institutions that provide skills and credentials employers need and recognize. When it comes to higher education, Federal policies need to support the demands of the changing labor market and support career pathways that align with industry demand. According the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, shorter-term educational investments pay off—the average postsecondary certificate holder has 20 percent higher lifetime earnings than individuals with only a high school diploma.

Today, I am pleased to introduce with my colleague, Senator PORTMAN, the Jumpstart Our Businesses by Supporting Students or JOBS Act. The JOBS Act would close the ''skills gap'' by expanding Pell Grant eligibility to cover high-quality and rigorous short-term job training programs so workers can afford the skills training and credentials that are in high-demand in today's job market. Since job training programs are shorter and less costly, Pell Grant awards would be half of the current discretionary Pell amount. The legislation defines eligible job training programs as those providing career and technical education instruction at an institution that provides at least 150 clock hours of instruction time over a period of at least 8 weeks and that provides training that meets the needs of the local or regional workforce. These programs must also provide students with licenses, certifications, or credentials that meet the hiring requirements of multiple employers in the field for which the job training is offered.

The JOBS Act also ensures that students who receive Pell Grants are earning high-quality postsecondary credentials by requiring that the credentials meet the standards under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, are recognized by employers, industry, or sector partnerships, and align with the skill needs of industries in the States or local economies. In Virginia, the Virginia Community College System has identified approximately 50 programs that would benefit from the JOBS Act including in the fields of manufacturing, architecture/construction, energy, health care, information technology, transportation, and business management and administration.

The JOBS Act is a commonsense, bipartisan bill that would help workers and employers succeed in today's economy. As Congress works to reauthorize the Higher Education Act, I hope that my colleagues ensure that Pell Grants are accessible for individuals participating in high-quality, short-term occupational training programs that are leading to industry-recognized credentials and certificates.

By Mr. CORNYN:

S. 212. A bill to provide for the development of a United States strategy for greater human space exploration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 212

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Mapping a New and Innovative Focus on Our Exploration Strategy for Human Spaceflight Act of 2017'' or the ''MANIFEST for Human Spaceflight Act of 2017''.

SEC. 2. REAFFIRMATION OF POLICY AND FINDINGS.

(a) REAFFIRMATION OF POLICY.—Congress reaffirms that the long-term goal of the human space flight and exploration efforts of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration shall be to expand permanent human presence beyond low-Earth orbit and to do so, where practical, in a manner involving international partners, as stated in section 202(a) of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (42 U.S.C. 18312(a)).

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

(1) In accordance with section 204 of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (Public Law 111–267; 124 Stat. 2813), the National Academy of Sciences, through its Committee on Human Spaceflight, conducted a review of the goals, core capabilities, and direction of human space flight, and published the findings and recommendations in a 2014 report entitled ''Pathways to Exploration: Rationales and Approaches for a U.S. Program of Human Space Exploration''.

(2) The Committee on Human Spaceflight included leaders from the aerospace, scientific, security, and policy communities. With input from the public, the Committee on Human Spaceflight concluded that many practical and aspirational rationales together constitute a compelling case for human space exploration. These rationales include economic benefits, national security, national prestige, inspiring students and other citizens, scientific discovery, human survival, and a sense of shared destiny.

(3) The Committee on Human Spaceflight affirmed that Mars is the appropriate long-term goal for the human space flight program.

(4) The Committee on Human Spaceflight recommended that the National Aeronautics and Space Administration define a series of sustainable steps and conduct mission planning and technology development as needed to achieve the long-term goal of placing humans on the surface of Mars.

SEC. 3. HUMAN EXPLORATION STRATEGY.

(a) HUMAN EXPLORATION OF MARS.—Section 202(b) of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (42 U.S.C. 18312(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in paragraph (4), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(5) to achieve human exploration of Mars, including the establishment of a capability to extend human presence to the surface of Mars.''.

(b) EXPLORATION STRATEGY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In accordance with this subsection, the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration shall submit an interim report and final report setting forth a strategy to achieve the objective in paragraph (5) of section 202(b) of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010, as amended by subsection (a) of this section, through a series of successive, sustainable, free-standing, but complementary missions making robust utilization of cis-lunar space and employing the Space Launch System, Orion crew capsule, and other capabilities provided under titles III, IV, V, and IX of that Act (42 U.S.C. 18301 et seq.).

(2) STRATEGY REQUIREMENTS.—In developing the strategy under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall include—

(A) the utility of an expanded human presence in cis-lunar space toward enabling missions to various lunar orbits, the lunar surface, asteroids, Mars, the moons of Mars, and other destinations of interest for future human exploration and development;

(B) the utility of an expanded human presence in cis-lunar space for economic, scientific, and technological advances;

(C) the opportunities for collaboration with—

(i) international partners;

(ii) private industry; and

(iii) other Federal agencies, including missions relevant to national security or scientific needs;

(D) the opportunities specifically afforded by the International Space Station (ISS) to support high priority scientific research and technological developments useful in expanding and sustaining a human presence in cis-lunar space and beyond;

(E) a range of exploration mission architectures and approaches for the missions identified under paragraph (1), including capabilities for the Orion crew capsule and the Space Launch System;

(F) a comparison of architectures and approaches based on—

(i) assessed value of factors including cost effectiveness, schedule resiliency, safety, sustainability, and opportunities for international collaboration;

(ii) the extent to which certain architectures and approaches may enable new markets and opportunities for United States private industry, provide compelling opportunities for scientific discovery and technological excellence, sustain United States competitiveness and leadership, and address critical national security considerations and requirements; and

(iii) the flexibility of such architectures and approaches to adjust to evolving technologies, partners, priorities, and budget projections and constraints;

(G) measures for setting standards for ensuring crew health and safety, including limits regarding radiation exposure and countermeasures necessary to meet those limits, means and methods for addressing urgent medical conditions or injuries, and other such safety, health, and medical issues that can be anticipated in the conduct of the missions identified under paragraph (1);

(H) a description of crew training needs and capabilities (including space suits and life support systems) necessary to support the conduct of missions identified under paragraph (1);

(I) a detailed plan for prioritizing and phasing near-term intermediate destinations and missions identified under paragraph (1);

(J) an assessment of the recommendations of the report prepared in compliance with section 204 of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (Public Law 111–267; 124 Stat. 2813), including a detailed explanation of how the Administrator has ensured such recommendations have been, to the extent practicable, incorporated into the strategy under paragraph (1); and

(K) technical information as needed to identify interest from potential stakeholder or partner communities.

(3) INDEPENDENT REVIEW.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall enter into an arrangement with the National Academy of Sciences to review and comment on each interim report pursuant to paragraph (1). Under the arrangement, the National Academy of Sciences shall review each interim report on the strategy described in paragraph (1) and identify the following:

(i) Matters in such interim report agreed upon by the National Academy of Sciences.

(ii) Matters in such interim report raising concerns for the National Academy of Sciences.

(iii) Such further recommendations with respect to matters covered by such interim report as the National Academy of Sciences considers appropriate.

(B) TIMING OF REVIEW AND COMMENT.—The Administrator shall ensure that the review and comment on an interim report provided for pursuant to subparagraph (A) is conducted in a timely manner to comply with the requirements of this subsection and, to the maximum extent practicable, to facilitate the incorporation of the comments of the National Academy of Sciences pursuant to subparagraph (A) into the applicable final report required by this subsection.

(4) DEADLINES.—

(A) INTERIM REPORTS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and not less than every five years thereafter, the Administrator shall submit to the National Academy of Sciences an interim report on the strategy required by paragraph (1) in order to facilitate the independent review and comment on the strategy as provided for by paragraph (3).

(B) FINAL REPORTS.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and not less than every five years thereafter, the Administrator shall submit to Congress a final report on the strategy required by paragraph (1), which shall include and incorporate the response of the National Academy of Sciences to the most recent interim report pursuant to paragraph (3).

By Mr. DAINES (for himself, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. LEE, Mr. JOHNSON, and Mr. RUBIO):

S. 221. A bill to allow a State to submit a declaration of intent to the Secretary of Education to combine certain funds to improve the academic achievement of students; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, as a fifth-generation Montanan and product of Montana public schools from kindergarten through college, husband to an elementary school teacher, and father of four children, I understand how important a first rate education is to our kids' future. That is why I am reintroducing the Academic Partnerships Lead Us to Success, or A-PLUS, Act this Congress. This measure will help expand local control of our schools and return Federal education dollars where they belong: closer to the classrooms. By shifting control back to the States, individual and effective solutions can be created to address the multitude of unique challenges facing schools across the country. Through these ''laboratories of democracy,'' Americans can watch and learn how students can benefit when innovative reforms are implemented on the local level. This bill would give states greater flexibility in allocating federal education funding and ensuring academic achievement in their schools. With A-PLUS, States would be freed from Washington-knows-best performance metrics and failed testing requirements. Should this legislation be adopted, states would need to adhere to all civil rights laws and work towards advancing educational opportunities for disadvantaged children as well. States would be held accountable by parents and teachers because a bright light would shine directly on the decisions made by State capitals and local school districts. With freedom from Federal mandates comes more responsibility, transparency, and accountability on States. It would also reduce the administrative and compliance burdens on state and local education agencies, and ensure greater public transparency in student academic achievement and the use of federal education funds. Increasing educational opportunity in Montana and across the country isn't going happen through federal mandates or one-size-fits-none regulations. We need to empower our States, our local school boards, our teachers, and parents to work together to develop solutions that best fit our kids' unique needs. That is precisely what my A-PLUS Act does. Washington is the problem—and we have the solutions in Montana and in states across the country. The A-PLUS Act goes a long ways towards returning the responsibility for our kids' education closer to home and reduces the influence of the Federal Government over our classrooms. I want to thank Senators CRUZ, PERDUE, JOHNSON, LEE, and RUBIO for helping reintroduce the A-PLUS Act this Congress. I ask my other Senate colleagues to join us in empowering our schools to serve their students, not DC bureaucrats, and support this important piece of legislation.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. CASEY, Mr. TILLIS, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. WICKER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. TESTER, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. HELLER, Mr. KING, and Mr. KAINE):

S. 223. A bill to provide immunity from suit for certain individuals who disclose potential examples of financial exploitation of senior citizens, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, as Chairman of the Senate Aging Committee, I am delighted to introduce, with my good friend and former ranking member, Senator CLAIRE MCCASKILL, the Senior$afe Act of 2017, a bill that would help protect American seniors from financial fraud. I'm pleased that Senators ISAKSON, CASEY, TILLIS, KLOBUCHAR, WICKER, SHAHEEN, CAPITO, TESTER, BARRASSO, DONNELLY, HELLER, and KING have joined us in sponsoring this bill.

According to the GAO, financial fraud targeting older Americans is a growing epidemic that costs seniors an estimated $2.9 billion annually. Stopping this tsunami of fraud is one of the top priorities of the Aging Committee. Last Congress, we held several hearings examining an endless variety of financial abuses targeting our nation's seniors. These range from the notorious IRS phone scam that burst onto the scene in 2015, to the incredible ''drug mule'' scam, where trusting seniors have been tricked by international narcotics traffickers into unwittingly serving as drug couriers, and then find themselves arrested and locked-up in foreign jails. The common denominator in these schemes involves innocent seniors falling prey and being tricked out of their hard-earned savings.

Sadly, not all scammers are strangers to their victims, in too many cases, seniors are exploited by someone they know well. Sometimes, that abuse is perpetrated by ''friends'' or family members who are handling the victim's affairs informally. Other times, the abuse is committed under color of a fiduciary relationship, such as a Power of Attorney or guardianship.

No matter the scheme, one factor is common to all—the fraudsters need to gain the trust and active cooperation of their victims. Without this, their schemes would fail. That is why it is so important that seniors recognize as quickly as possible the red flags that signal potential fraud.

Unfortunately, many seniors do not see these red flags. Sometimes they are

too trusting or are suffering from diminished capacity, but, just as often, they miss the signs because the swindlers who prey on them are extremely crafty and know how to sound convincing. Whatever the reason, a warning sign that can slip by a victim might trigger a second look by fmancial service representatives trained to spot common scams, who know enough about a senior's habits to question a transaction that doesn't look right. In our work on the Aging Committee, we have heard of many instances where quick action by bank and credit union employees has stopped a fraud in progress, saving seniors untold thousands of dollars.

Let me give you an example. Last year, an attorney in the small coastal city of Belfast, ME, was sentenced to 30 months in prison for bilking two elderly female clients out of nearly a half a million dollars over the course of several years.

The lawyer's brazen theft was uncovered when a teller at a local bank noticed that he was writing large checks to himself on his clients' accounts. When confronted by authorities, he offered excuses that the prosecutor later described as ''breathtaking.'' For example, according to press reports, he put one of his clients into a nursing home to recover from a temporary medical condition, and then kept her there for four years until the theft of her funds came to light. Meanwhile, he submitted bills for ''services,'' sometimes totaling $20,000 a month, including charging her $250 per hour for 6 to 7 hours to check on her house, even though his office was just a one-minute drive down the road.

In another example, in 2015, a senior citizen in Vassalboro, Maine, was looking to wire funds from his account at Maine Savings Federal Credit Union to an out-of-state location, supposedly to bail out a relative who was in jail. Something about this transaction did not sound right to the credit union employee. She asked the customer, and he said he had received a call from an ''official'' at the jail—but that ''official'' had instructed him not to speak to anyone about this. The ''official,'' of course, turned out to be a con artist.

Fortunately, the credit union worker recognized this as a scam, and her quick thinking saved her customer from falling victim and losing his savings.

These stories demonstrate the critical nexus that financial institutions occupy between fraudsters and their victims. Their employees, if properly trained, can be the first line of defense protecting our seniors from these criminals. Regrettably, various state and federal laws can inadvertently impede efforts to protect seniors, because financial institutions that report suspected fraud can be exposed to litigation. The Senior$afe Act encourages financial institutions to train their employees, and shields them from lawsuits when they make good faith, reasonable reports of potential fraud to the proper authorities.

There is no doubt that financial fraud and scams targeting seniors is a growing problem that we must act on. Last November, the Aging Committee heard testimony from Jaye Martin, the Executive Director of Maine Legal Services for the Elderly, who told the Committee that her organization has seen a 24 percent increase in reports of elder abuse in just one year. Many of these cases involve financial fraud.

In a letter describing her support for the Senior$afe Act, Ms. Martin says that:

In a landscape that includes family members who often wish to keep exploitation from coming to light because they are perpetrating the exploitation, the risk of facing potential nuisance or false complaints over privacy violations is all too real. This is a barrier that must be removed so that financial institutions will act immediately to report to the proper authorities upon forming a reasonable belief that exploitation is occurring. These professionals are on the front lines in the fight against elder financial exploitation and are often the only ones in a position to stop exploitation before it is too late.

Our bill is based on Maine's innovative Senior$afe program, a collaborative effort by Maine's regulators, financial institutions, and legal organizations to educate bank and credit union employees on how to identify and help stop financial exploitation of older Mainers. This program, pioneered by Maine Securities Administrator Judith Shaw, also serves as the template for model legislation developed for adoption at the state level by the North American Securities Administrators Association, or NASAA. The Senior$afe Act and NASAA's model state legislation are complementary efforts, and I am pleased that NASAA has endorsed our bill.

I am pleased that our bill has received bipartisan support in both houses of Congress. Last year, the House Financial Services Committee approved a version of the Senior$afe Act by a vote of 59 to zero, and it passed the full House by voice vote in July. In the Senate, the Senior$afe Act was cosponsored by a quarter of the Members of this body, balanced nearly evenly on both sides of the aisle, and was discharged out of the Banking Committee. Unfortunately, just one member of this body blocked it and prevented it from becoming law.

Besides receiving broad support in Congress, our bill has the support of a wide range of stakeholders, ranging from the State securities administrators and insurance commissioners to advocates for seniors.

Combating financial abuse of seniors requires regulators, law enforcement and social service agencies at all levels of government to work collaboratively with the private sector. The Senior$afe Act encourages financial institutions to train their employees, and shields them from lawsuits when they make good faith, reasonable reports of potential fraud to the proper authorities.

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

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

LEGAL SERVICES
FOR THE ELDERLY,
Augusta, ME, December 5, 2016.

Re Senior$afe (S. 2216).

Hon. SUSAN COLLINS,
Chair, Senate Special Committee on Aging, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR COLLINS: I want to thank you for inviting me to speak with the Senate Special Committee on Aging about the serious problem of financial exploitation of seniors by guardians and others in a position of power. I also want to thank you for your leadership in working to ensure there is training of financial institution employees in reporting elder abuse and an improvement in the timely reporting of financial exploitation when it is suspected through passage of the Senior$afe Act. I strongly support this legislation that is based upon work done here in Maine.

I served for over two years on the working group that developed Maine's SeniorSafe training program for financial institution managers and employees. It is a voluntary training program. Through that work I came to fully appreciate the very real concerns of the financial industry regarding the consequences of violating, or being perceived as violating, the broad range of state and federal privacy laws that apply to their industry. I also came to appreciate that absent broad immunity for reporting of suspected financial exploitation, privacy regulations would continue to be a barrier to good faith reporting of suspected financial exploitation. In a landscape that includes family members who often wish to keep exploitation from coming to light because they are perpetrating the exploitation, the risk of facing potential nuisance or false complaints over privacy violations is all too real.

This is a barrier that must be removed so that financial institution employees will act immediately to make a report to the proper authorities upon forming a reasonable belief that exploitation is occurring. These professionals are on the front lines in the fight against elder financial exploitation and are often the only ones in a position to stop exploitation before it is too late.

I want to add that tying the grant of immunity to required training for not just supervisors, compliance officers, and legal advisors, but to all who come in contact with seniors as a part of their regular duties, will have the direct result of bringing more cases of exploitation to the timely attention of the proper authorities because it will significantly increase the knowledge and awareness in the industry of the red flags for elder abuse. In Maine, where our training program is entirely voluntary and carries no legal status or benefit, we have already seen what a difference training can make.

Senior$afe is a much needed step in the fight against financial exploitation of seniors and there is no doubt it will make our nation's seniors safer. I thank you again for your leadership in this important area.

Sincerely,

JAYE L. MARTIN,
Executive Director.

NORTH AMERICAN SECURITIES ADMINISTRATION ASSOCIATION, INC.,
Washington, DC, January 24, 2017.

Re The Senior$afe Act of 2017.

Hon. SUSAN COLLINS,
Chair, U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR COLLINS: On behalf of the North American Securities Administrators Association (''NASAA''), I am writing to express strong support for your work to better protect vulnerable adults from financial exploitation through the introduction of the Senior$afe Act of 2017. Your legislation will better protect persons aged 65 and older from financial exploitation by increasing the likelihood it will be identified by financial services professionals, and by removing barriers to reporting it, so that together we as state securities regulators and other appropriate governmental authorities can help stop it.

Senior financial exploitation is a growing problem across the country. Many in our elderly population are vulnerable due to social isolation and distance from family, caregiver, and other support networks. Indeed, evidence suggests that as many as one out of every five citizens over the age of 65 has been victimized by a financial fraud. To be successful in combating senior financial exploitation, state and federal policymakers must come together to weave a new safety net for our elderly, breaking down barriers for those who are best positioned to identify red flags early on and to encourage reporting and referrals to appropriate local, county, state, and federal agencies, including law enforcement.

The Senior$afe Act consists of several essential features. First, to promote and encourage reporting of suspected elderly financial exploitation by financial services professionals, who are positioned to identify and report ''red flags'' of potential exploitation, the bill would incentivize financial services employees to report any suspected exploitation by making them immune from any civil or administrative liability arising from such a report, provided that they exercised due care, and that they make these reports in good faith. Second, in order to better assure that financial services employees have the knowledge and training they require to identify ''red flags'' associated with financial exploitation, the bill would require that, as a condition of receiving immunity, financial institutions undertake to train certain personnel regarding the identification and reporting of senior financial exploitation.

The Senior$afe Act's objectives and benefits are far-reaching. Older Americans stand to benefit directly from such reporting, because early detection and reporting will minimize their financial losses from exploitation, and because improved protection of their finances ultimately helps preserve their financial independence and their personal autonomy. Financial institutions stand to benefit, as well, through preservation of their reputation, increased community recognition, increased employee satisfaction, and decreased uninsured losses.

In conclusion, state securities regulators strongly support passage of the Senior$afe Act of 2017. Please do not hesitate to contact me, or Michael Canning, NASAA Director of Policy, if we may be of any additional assistance.

Sincerely,

MIKE ROTHMAN,
NASAA President and Minnesota, Commissioner of Commerce.

By Mr. DAINES (for himself and Mr. MANCHIN):

S. 228. A bill to ensure that small business providers of broadband Internet access service can devote resources to broadband deployment rather than compliance with cumbersome regulatory requirements, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, small businesses are the backbone of America. They generate more than half of the country's private GDP and support millions of families. In Montana, small businesses are innovating, offering new products and services, and creating jobs.

The business community relies on the Internet to access the global marketplace. In rural states like Montana where it is costly to provide internet access, consumers and businesses depend on small businesses to provide connectivity. Without small broadband providers, many Montanans would not have the internet access that most of us take for granted.

Burdensome regulations like the FCC's net neutrality rules are strangling our small businesses and preventing growth and investment. The enhanced transparency requirements in particular require small businesses to disclose an excess amount of information including network packet loss, network performance by geographic area, network performance during peak usage, network practices concerning a particular group of users, triggers that activate network practices, and the list goes on. Small companies operate with a small team of employees and do not have a team of attorneys dedicated to regulatory compliance. Small businesses simply do not have the bandwidth to take on additional regulatory burdens.

That is why I am proud to introduce the Small Business Broadband Deployment Act of 2017 with my colleague Senator MANCHIN. The bill provides a temporary small business exception to the net neutrality enhanced transparency requirements. There is broad support in the record for this exception, including support from the American Cable Association, Rural Wireless Association, Competitive Carriers Association, Wireless Internet Service Providers Association, CTIA—The Wireless Association, Rural Broadband Provider Coalition, WTA—Advocates for Rural Broadband.

Providing relief from burdensome disclosure rules will allow small businesses to focus on deploying infrastructure and serving their customers rather than spending time on regulatory compliance. I ask my colleagues to join me in cosponsoring this much needed legislation.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 228

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Small Business Broadband Deployment Act of 2017''.

SEC. 2. SMALL BUSINESS EXEMPTION.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(A) the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives;

(2) the term ''broadband Internet access service'' has the meaning given the term in section 8.2 of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations;

(3) the term ''Commission'' means the Federal Communications Commission; and

(4) the term ''small business'' means any provider of broadband Internet access service that has not more than 250,000 subscribers.

(b) EXCEPTION FOR SMALL BUSINESSES.—The enhancements to the transparency rule of the Commission under section 8.3 of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations, as described in paragraphs 162 through 184 of the Report and Order on Remand, Declaratory Ruling, and Order of the Commission with regard to protecting and promoting the open Internet (adopted by the Commission on February 26, 2015) (FCC 15–24), shall not apply to any small business.

(c) SUNSET.—Subsection (b) shall not have any force or effect after the date that is 5 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

(d) REPORT BY FCC.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commission shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that contains the recommendations of the Commission, and data supporting those recommendations, regarding whether—

(1) the exception provided under subsection (b) should be made permanent; and

(2) the definition of the term ''small business'' for the purposes of the exception provided under subsection (b) should be modified from the definition in subsection (a)(4).

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 20—AUTHORIZING EXPENDITURES BY THE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. THUNE submitted the following resolution; from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation; which was referred to the Committee on Rules and Administration:

S. RES. 20

Resolved, That, in carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, in accordance with its jurisdiction under Rule XXV of such rules, including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by paragraphs 1 and 8 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized from March 1, 2017, through September 30, 2017, October 1, 2017, through September 30, 2018, and October 1, 2018, through February 28, 2019, in its discretion—

(1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) to employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable or non-reimbursable basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

SEC. 2. (a) The expenses of the committee for the period from March 1, 2017, through September 30, 2017, under this resolution shall not exceed $3,879,581, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed $50,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946, as amended); and

(2) not to exceed $50,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946).

(b) For the period October 1, 2017, through September 30, 2018, expenses of the committee under this resolution shall not exceed $6,650,710, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed $50,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultations, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946, as amended); and

(2) not to exceed $50,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946).

(c) For the period October 1, 2018, through February 28, 2019, expenses of the committee under this resolution shall not exceed $2,771,129, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed $50,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946, as amended); and

(2) not to exceed $50,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946).

SEC. 3. The committee shall report its findings, together with such recommendations for legislation as it deems advisable, to the Senate at the earliest practicable date, but not later than February 28, 2019.

SEC. 4. Expenses of the committee under this resolution shall be paid from the contingent fund of the Senate upon vouchers approved by the chairman of the committee, except that vouchers shall not be required—

(1) for the disbursement of salaries of employees paid at an annual rate;

(2) for the payment of telecommunications provided by the Office of the Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper, United States Senate;

(3) for the payment of stationary supplies purchased through the Keeper of the Stationary, United States Senate;

(4) for payments to the Postmaster, United States Senate;

(5) for the payment of metered charges on copying equipment provided by the Office of the Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper, United States Senate;

(6) for the payment of Senate Recording and Photographic Services; or

(7) for the payment of franked and mass mail costs by the Office of the Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper, United States Senate.

SEC. 5. There are authorized such sums as may be necessary for agency contributions related to the compensation of employees of the committee from March 1, 2017, through September 30, 2017, October 1, 2017, through September 30, 2018, and October 1, 2018, through February 28, 2019.

SENATE RESOLUTION 21—AUTHORIZING EXPENDITURES BY THE COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. GRASSLEY submitted the following resolution; from the Committee on the Judiciary; which was referred to the Committee on Rules and Administration:

S. RES. 21

Resolved,

SECTION 1. GENERAL AUTHORITY.

In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, in accordance with its jurisdiction under rule XXV of the Standing Rules of the Senate, including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by paragraphs 1 and 8 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on the Judiciary (in this resolution referred to as the ''committee'') is authorized from March 1, 2017 through February 28, 2019, in its discretion, to—

(1) make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, use on a reimbursable or nonreimbursable basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

SEC. 2. EXPENSES.

(a) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2017.—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2017 through September 30, 2017 under this resolution shall not exceed $5,461,388, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed $116,667 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $11,667 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of the committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(b) EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018 PERIOD.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2017 through September 30, 2018 under this resolution shall not exceed $9,362,379, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed $200,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $20,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of the committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2019.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2018 through February 28, 2019 under this resolution shall not exceed $3,900,991, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed $83,333 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $8,333 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of the committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

SEC. 3. REPORTING LEGISLATION.

The committee shall report its findings, together with such recommendations for legislation as it deems advisable, to the Senate at the earliest practicable date, but not later than February 28, 2019.

SEC. 4. EXPENSES AND AGENCY CONTRIBUTIONS.

(a) EXPENSES OF THE COMMITTEE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), expenses of the committee under this resolution shall be paid from the contingent fund of the Senate upon vouchers approved by the chairman of the committee.

(2) VOUCHERS NOT REQUIRED.—Vouchers shall not be required for—

(A) the disbursement of salaries of employees paid at an annual rate;

(B) the payment of telecommunications provided by the Office of the Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper;

(C) the payment of stationery supplies purchased through the Keeper of the Stationery;

(D) payments to the Postmaster of the Senate;

(E) the payment of metered charges on copying equipment provided by the Office of the Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper;

(F) the payment of Senate Recording and Photographic Services; or

(G) the payment of franked and mass mail costs by the Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper.

(b) AGENCY CONTRIBUTIONS.—There are authorized to be paid from the appropriations account for ''Expenses of Inquiries and Investigations'' of the Senate such sums as may be necessary for agency contributions related to the compensation of employees of the committee—

(1) for the period March 1, 2017 through September 30, 2017;

(2) for the period October 1, 2017 through September 30, 2018; and

(3) for the period October 1, 2018 through February 28, 2019.

SENATE RESOLUTION 22—AUTHORIZING EXPENDITURES BY THE COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Mr. CRAPO submitted the following resolution; which was referred from the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs; to the Committee on Rules and Administration:

S. RES. 22

Resolved, That, in carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, in accordance with its jurisdiction under rule XXV of such rules, including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by paragraphs 1 and 8 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs is authorized from March 1, 2017 through September 30, 2017; October 1, 2017, through September 30, 2018, and October 1, 2018, through February 28, 2019, in its discretion (1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate, (2) to employ personnel, and (3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable or non-reimbursable basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

SEC. 2(a). The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2017, through September 30, 2017, under this resolution shall not exceed $3,119,153 of which amount (1) not to exceed $8,370 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946, as amended), and (2) not to exceed $503 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946).

(b) For the period October 1, 2017, through September 30, 2018, expenses of the committee under this resolution shall not exceed $5,347,119 of which amount (1) not to exceed $14,348 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946, as amended), and (2) not to exceed $861 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946).

(c) For the period of October 1, 2018, through February 28, 2019, expenses of the committee under this resolution shall not exceed $2,227,966 of which amount (1) not to exceed $5,978 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946, as amended), and (2) not to exceed $358 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946).

SEC. 3. The committee shall report its findings, together with such recommendations for legislation as it deems advisable, to the Senate at the earliest practicable date, but not later than February 28, 2017.

SEC. 4. Expenses of the committee under this resolution shall be paid from the contingent fund of the Senate upon vouchers approved by the Chairman of the committee, except that vouchers shall not be required (1) for the disbursement of salaries of employees paid at an annual rate, or (2) for the payment of telecommunications provided by the Office of the Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper, United States Senate, or (3) for the payment of stationery supplies purchased through the Keeper of the Stationery, United States Senate, or (4) for payments to the Postmaster, United States Senate, or (5) for the payment of metered charges on copying equipment provided by the Office of the Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper, United States Senate, or (6) for the payment of Senate Recording and Photographic Services, or (7) for payment of franked and mass mail costs by the Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper, United States Senate.

SEC. 5. There are authorized such sums as may be necessary for agency contributions related to the compensation of employees of the committee from March 1, 2017, through September 30, 2017; October 1, 2017, through September 30, 2018; and October 1, 2018, through February 28, 2019, to be paid from the Appropriations account for ''Expenses of Inquiries and Investigations.''

SENATE RESOLUTION 23—ESTABLISHING THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON CYBERSECURITY

Mr. GARDNER (for himself and Mr. COONS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Rules and Administration:

S. RES. 23

Resolved,

SECTION 1. SELECT COMMITTEE ON CYBERSECURITY.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term ''cybersecurity'' means the protection or defense of cyberspace from cyberattacks;

(2) the term ''cybersecurity breach'' means an attack via cyberspace, targeting an enterprise's use of cyberspace for the purpose of—

(A) disrupting, disabling, destroying, or maliciously controlling a computing environment or infrastructure; or

(B) destroying the integrity of data or stealing controlled information; and

(3) the term ''cyberspace'' means the global domain within the information environment consisting of the interdependent network of information systems infrastructures (including the Internet, telecommunications networks, computer systems, and embedded processors and controllers).

(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established a select committee of the Senate to be known as the Select Committee on Cybersecurity (in this resolution referred to as the ''select committee'')—

(1) to oversee and make continuing studies of and recommendations regarding cybersecurity threats to the United States; and

(2) which may report by bill or otherwise on matters within its jurisdiction.

(c) MEMBERSHIP.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The select committee shall be composed of 21 members as follows:

(A) The Chairman and Ranking Member of the Committee on Appropriations.

(B) The Chairman and Ranking Member of the Committee on Armed Services.

(C) The Chairman and Ranking Member of the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

(D) The Chairman and Ranking Member of the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

(E) The Chairman and Ranking Member of the Committee on Foreign Relations.

(F) The Chairman and Ranking Member of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

(G) The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Select Committee on Intelligence.

(H) The Chairman and Ranking Member of the Committee on the Judiciary.

(I) Five members who shall be appointed from the Senate at large.

(2) MEMBERS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES.—If the Chairman or Ranking Member of a committee named in subparagraphs (A) through (H) of paragraph (1) chooses not to serve on the select committee, the Chairman or Ranking Member of such committee, respectively, shall appoint 1 member of such committee to the select committee.

(3) APPOINTMENT OF OTHER MEMBERS.—The Majority Leader shall appoint 3 of the members under paragraph (1)(I) and the Minority Leader shall appoint 2 of the members under paragraph (1)(I).

(4) EX OFFICIO MEMBERS.—The Majority Leader and Minority Leader shall serve as ex officio, nonvoting members of the select committee.

(5) CHAIRPERSON AND VICE CHAIRPERSON.—At the beginning of each Congress, the Majority Leader shall select a chairperson of the select committee and the Minority Leader shall select a vice chairperson for the select committee.

(d) SUBCOMMITTEES AUTHORIZED.—The select committee may be organized into subcommittees. Each subcommittee shall have a chairperson and a vice chairperson who are selected by the chairperson and vice chairperson of the select committee, respectively.

(e) JURISDICTION.—There shall be referred to the select committee all proposed legislation, messages, petitions, memorials, and other matters relating to the following:

(1) Domestic and foreign cybersecurity risks (including state-sponsored threats) to the United States, including to—

(A) the computer systems of the United States;

(B) the infrastructure of the United States;

(C) citizens of the United States;

(D) corporations and other businesses in the United States; and

(E) the commerce of the United States.

(2) The activities of any department or agency relating to preventing, protecting against, or responding to cybersecurity threats to the United States, and relevant incidents or actions.

(3) The organization or reorganization of any department or agency to the extent that the organization or reorganization relates to a function or activity involving preventing, protecting against, or responding to cybersecurity threats to the United States, and relevant incidents or actions.

(4) Authorizations for appropriations, both direct and indirect, for preventing, protecting against, or responding to cybersecurity threats to the United States, and relevant incidents or actions.

(f) AUTHORITIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—For the purposes of this resolution, the select committee is authorized in its discretion—

(A) to make investigations into any matter within its jurisdiction;

(B) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(C) to employ personnel;

(D) to hold hearings;

(E) to sit and act at any time or place during the sessions, recesses, and adjourned periods of the Senate;

(F) to require, by subpoena or otherwise, the attendance of witnesses and the production of correspondence, books, papers, and documents;

(G) to take depositions and other testimony and authorize employees of the select committee to take depositions and other testimony;

(H) to procure the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof, in accordance with section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i));

(I) with the prior consent of the government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency;

(J) to make recommendations and report legislation on matters within its jurisdiction; and

(K) permit any personal representative of the President, designated by the President to serve as a liaison to the select committee, to attend any closed meeting of the select committee.

(2) OATHS.—The chairperson of the select committee or any member thereof may administer oaths to witnesses.

(3) SUBPOENAS.—

(A) AUTHORIZATION OF SUBPOENAS.—The issuance of a subpoena may only be authorized by the select committee upon an affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the select committee, which vote may not be held before the time that is 48 hours after notice of the request to authorize the issuance of the subpoena is provided to each member of the select committee, absent unanimous consent.

(B) ISSUANCE.—A subpoena authorized by the select committee—

(i) may be issued under the signature of the chairperson, the vice chairperson, or any member of the select committee designated by the chairperson; and

(ii) may be served by any person designated by the chairperson, the vice chairperson, or other member signing the subpoena.

(g) OBTAINING INFORMATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The select committee shall obtain from the President and the heads of departments and agencies the information relevant to cybersecurity risks and threats required to ensure that the members of the select committee have complete and current information relating to cybersecurity activities and threats, which may include obtaining written reports reviewing—

(A) the activities carried out by the department or agency concerned to prevent, protect against, or respond to cybersecurity threats;

(B) the cybersecurity threats from within the United States and from foreign countries that are directed at the United States or its interests;

(C) previously conducted or anticipated covert actions relating to cybersecurity; and

(D) any significant cybersecurity breaches that could—

(i) affect the diplomatic, political, economic, or military relations of the United States with other countries or groups; or

(ii) impose a major financial cost on the Federal Government, citizens of the United States, corporations or other businesses in the United States, or the commerce of the United States.

(2) ACCESS OF MEMBERS TO INFORMATION.—Each member of the select committee shall have equal and unimpeded access to information collected or otherwise obtained by the select committee.

(3) CLASSIFIED INFORMATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—No employee of the select committee or any person engaged by contract or otherwise to perform services for or at the request of the select committee shall be given access to any classified information by the select committee unless the employee or person has—

(i) agreed in writing and under oath to be bound by the rules of the Senate (including the jurisdiction of the Select Committee on Ethics) and of the select committee as to the security of such information during and after the period of the employment or contractual agreement with the select committee; and

(ii) received an appropriate security clearance, as determined by the select committee, in consultation with the Director of National Intelligence.

(B) TYPE OF CLEARANCE.—The type of security clearance to be required in the case of any employee or person described in subparagraph (A) shall, within the determination of the select committee, in consultation with the Director of National Intelligence, be commensurate with the sensitivity of the classified information to which the employee or person will be given access by the select committee.

(4) PROVISION OF INFORMATION BY DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The head of each department and agency shall keep the select committee fully and currently informed with respect to cybersecurity activities and threats, including activities to prevent, protect against, or respond to cybersecurity threats and any significant anticipated activities relating to cybersecurity which are the responsibility of or engaged in by the department or agency.

(B) INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTS.—The head of any department or agency involved in any cybersecurity activities shall furnish any information or document in the possession, custody, or control of the department or agency, or person paid by the department or agency, whenever requested by the select committee with respect to any matter within the jurisdiction of the select committee.

(C) ANNUAL REPORTS TO SELECT COMMITTEE.—The Director of National Intelligence, the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of State, the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Secretary of Commerce shall each submit to the select committee an annual report on cyber threats.

(h) PERSONNEL PROVISIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In addition to other committee staff selected by the select committee, the select committee shall hire or appoint 1 employee for each member of the select committee to serve as the designated representative of the member on the select Committee. The select Committee shall only hire or appoint an employee chosen by a member of the select committee for whom the employee will serve as the designated representative on the select committee.

(2) SUPPLEMENT TO BUDGET.—The select committee shall be afforded a supplement to its budget, to be determined by the Committee on Rules and Administration, to allow for the hire of each employee who fills the position of designated representative to the select committee. The designated representative shall have office space and appropriate office equipment in the select committee spaces. Designated personal representatives shall have the same access to committee staff, information, records, and databases as select committee staff, as determined by the chairperson and vice chairperson.

(3) REQUIREMENTS FOR DESIGNATED EMPLOYEES.—Each designated employee shall meet all the requirements of relevant statutes, Senate rules, and committee security clearance requirements for employment by the select committee.

(4) DIVISION OF FUNDS.—Of the amounts made available to the select committee for personnel—

(A) not more than 60 percent shall be under the control of the chairperson; and

(B) not less than 40 percent shall be under the control of the vice chairperson.

(i) COMMITTEE RULES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The select committee shall adopt rules (not inconsistent with the rules of the Senate and in accordance with rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate) governing the procedure of the select committee, which shall include addressing how often the select committee shall meet, meeting times and location, type of notifications, notices of hearings, duration of the select committee, and records of the select committee after committee activities are complete.

(2) UNANIMOUS VOTE REQUIRED.—The select committee may only adopt rules under paragraph (1) by a unanimous vote of the voting members of the select committee.

SENATE RESOLUTION 24—AUTHORIZING EXPENDITURES BY THE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Mr. ISAKSON submitted the following resolution; from the Committee on Veterans' Affairs; which was referred to the Committee on Rules and Administration:

S. RES. 24

Resolved,

SECTION 1. GENERAL AUTHORITY.

In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, in accordance with its jurisdiction under rule XXV of the Standing Rules of the Senate, including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by paragraphs 1 and 8 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on Veterans' Affairs (in this resolution referred to as the ''committee'') is authorized from March 1, 2017 through February 28, 2019, in its discretion, to—

(1) make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, use on a reimbursable or nonreimbursable basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

SEC. 2. EXPENSES.

(a) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2017.—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2017 through September 30, 2017 under this resolution shall not exceed $1,283,522, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed $2,900 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $1,750 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of the committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(b) EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018 PERIOD.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2017 through September 30, 2018 under this resolution shall not exceed $2,200,323, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed $5,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $3,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of the committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2019.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2018 through February 28, 2019 under this resolution shall not exceed $916,801, of which amount—

(1) not to exceed $2,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $1,250 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of the committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

SEC. 3. REPORTING LEGISLATION.

The committee shall report its findings, together with such recommendations for legislation as it deems advisable, to the Senate at the earliest practicable date, but not later than February 28, 2019.

SEC. 4. EXPENSES AND AGENCY CONTRIBUTIONS.

(a) EXPENSES OF THE COMMITTEE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), expenses of the committee under this resolution shall be paid from the contingent fund of the Senate upon vouchers approved by the chairman of the committee.

(2) VOUCHERS NOT REQUIRED.—Vouchers shall not be required for—

(A) the disbursement of salaries of employees paid at an annual rate;

(B) the payment of telecommunications provided by the Office of the Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper;

(C) the payment of stationery supplies purchased through the Keeper of the Stationery;

(D) payments to the Postmaster of the Senate;

(E) the payment of metered charges on copying equipment provided by the Office of the Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper;

(F) the payment of Senate Recording and Photographic Services; or

(G) the payment of franked and mass mail costs by the Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper.

(b) AGENCY CONTRIBUTIONS.—There are authorized to be paid from the appropriations account for ''Expenses of Inquiries and Investigations'' of the Senate such sums as may

be necessary for agency contributions related to the compensation of employees of the committee—

(1) for the period March 1, 2017 through September 30, 2017;

(2) for the period October 1, 2017 through September 30, 2018; and

(3) for the period October 1, 2018 through February 28, 2019.

SENATE RESOLUTION 25—DESIGNATING JANUARY 27, 2017, AS A NATIONAL DAY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES WHO, DURING THE COLD WAR, WORKED AND LIVED DOWNWIND FROM NUCLEAR TESTING SITES AND WERE ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY THE RADIATION EXPOSURE GENERATED BY THE ABOVE GROUND NUCLEAR WEAPONS TESTING

Mr. CRAPO (for himself, Mr. UDALL, Mr. RISCH, Mr. HEINRICH, and Mr. BENNET) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 25

Whereas, on January 27, 1951, the first of years of nuclear weapons tests was conducted at a site known as the Nevada Proving Ground, located approximately 65 miles northwest of Las Vegas, Nevada;

Whereas the extensive testing at the Nevada Proving Ground occurred just years after the first nuclear weapon test, which was conducted on July 16, 1945, at what is known as the Trinity Atomic Test Site, located approximately 35 miles south of Socorro, New Mexico;

Whereas many people of the United States who, during the Cold War, worked and lived downwind from nuclear testing sites (referred to in this preamble as the ''downwinders'') were adversely affected by the radiation exposure generated by the above ground nuclear weapons testing, and some of the downwinders sickened as a result of the radiation exposure;

Whereas the downwinders paid a high price for the development of a nuclear weapons program for the benefit of the United States; and

Whereas the downwinders deserve to be recognized for the sacrifice they have made for the defense of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates January 27, 2017, as a national day of remembrance for people of the United States who, during the Cold War, worked and lived downwind from nuclear testing sites and were adversely affected by the radiation exposure generated by the above ground nuclear weapons testing; and

(2) encourages the people of the United States to support and participate in appropriate ceremonies, programs, and other activities to commemorate that national day of remembrance.

SENATE RESOLUTION 26—DESIGNATING THE WEEK OF JANUARY 22 THROUGH JANUARY 28, 2017, AS ''NATIONAL SCHOOL CHOICE WEEK''

Mr. SCOTT (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. HATCH, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. WICKER, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. DAINES, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. ENZI, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. LANKFORD, and Mr. TOOMEY) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 26

Whereas providing a diversity of choices in K–12 education empowers parents to select education environments that meet the individual needs and strengths of their children;

Whereas high-quality K–12 education environments of all varieties are available in the United States, including traditional public schools, public charter schools, public magnet schools, private schools, online academies, and home schooling;

Whereas talented teachers and school leaders in each of the education environments prepare children to achieve their dreams;

Whereas more families than ever before in the United States actively choose the best education for their children;

Whereas more public awareness of the issue of parental choice in education can inform additional families of the benefits of proactively choosing challenging, motivating, and effective education environments for their children;

Whereas the process by which parents choose schools for their children is nonpolitical, nonpartisan, and deserves the utmost respect; and

Whereas hundreds of organizations, more than 9,000 schools, and millions of individuals in the United States celebrate the benefits of educational choice during the 7th annual National School Choice Week, held the week of January 22 through January 28, 2017: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the week of January 22 through January 28, 2017, as ''National School Choice Week'';

(2) congratulates students, parents, teachers, and school leaders from K–12 education environments of all varieties for their persistence, achievements, dedication, and contributions to society in the United States;

(3) encourages all parents, during National School Choice Week, to learn more about the education options available to them; and

(4) encourages the people of the United States to hold appropriate programs, events, and activities during National School Choice Week to raise public awareness of the benefits of opportunity in education.

SENATE RESOLUTION 27—HONORING THE LIFE AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF EUGENE A. ''GENE'' CERNAN

Mr. CRUZ (for himself, Mr. NELSON, Mr. PETERS, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. INHOFE, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. THUNE, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. GARDNER) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 27

Whereas Gene Cernan was born on March 14, 1934, in Chicago, Illinois, was raised in the suburban towns of Bellwood and Maywood, and graduated from Proviso Township High School;

Whereas Gene Cernan began his career as a basic flight trainee in the United States Navy;

Whereas Gene Cernan was one of fourteen astronauts selected by NASA in October 1963 to participate in the Gemini and Apollo programs;

Whereas Gene Cernan was the second American to have walked in space having spanned the circumference of the world twice in a little more than 2 and a half hours in 1966 during the Gemini 9 mission;

Whereas Gene Cernan served as the lunar module pilot for Apollo 10 in 1969, which was referred to as the ''dress rehearsal'' for Apollo 11's historic landing on the Moon;

Whereas Gene Cernan was commander of Apollo 17 in 1972, during the last human mission to the Moon;

Whereas Gene Cernan maintains the distinction of being the last man to have left his footprints on the surface of the Moon;

Whereas Gene Cernan was one of the three men to have flown to the Moon on two occasions;

Whereas Gene Cernan logged 566 hours and 15 minutes in space, of which more than 73 hours were spent on the surface of the Moon;

Whereas Gene Cernan and the crew of Apollo 17 set records that still stand today, for longest manned lunar landing flight, longest lunar surface extra vehicular activities, largest lunar sample return, and longest time in lunar orbit;

Whereas Gene Cernan retired from the Navy after 20 years and ended his NASA career in July 1976; and

Whereas on January 16, 2016, Gene Cernan passed away in Houston, Texas, leaving behind a vibrant history of space exploration and advocacy for NASA, a legacy of inspiring young people to ''dream the impossible'', and a documentary that encourages continual human space exploration:

Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate honors the life of Gene Cernan, a Naval aviator, fighter pilot, electrical engineer, and the last astronaut to walk on the Moon.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 6—SUPPORTING THE LOCAL RADIO FREEDOM ACT

Mr. BARRASSO (for himself and Ms. HEITKAMP) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation:

S. CON. RES. 6

Whereas the United States enjoys broadcasting and sound recording industries that are the envy of the world due to the symbiotic relationship that has existed among those industries for many decades;

Whereas for nearly a century, Congress has rejected repeated calls by the recording industry to impose a performance fee on local radio stations for simply playing music on the radio, as such a fee would upset the mutually beneficial relationship between local radio and the recording industry;

Whereas local radio stations provide free publicity and promotion to the recording industry and performers of music in the form of radio air play, interviews with performers, introduction of new performers, concert promotions, and publicity that promotes the sale of music, concert tickets, ring tones, music videos, and associated merchandise;

Whereas committees in the Senate and the House of Representatives have previously reported that ''the sale of many sound recordings and the careers of many performers have benefitted considerably from airplay and other promotional activities provided by both noncommercial and advertiser-supported, free over-the-air broadcasting'';

Whereas local radio broadcasters provide tens of thousands of hours of essential local news and weather information during times of national emergencies and natural disasters, such as on September 11, 2001, and during Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, as well as

public affairs programming, sports, and hundreds of millions of dollars worth of time for public service announcements and local fund raising efforts for worthy charitable causes, all of which are jeopardized if local radio stations are forced to divert revenues to pay for a new performance fee;

Whereas there are many thousands of local radio stations that will suffer severe economic hardship if any new performance fee is imposed, as will many other small businesses that play music, including bars, restaurants, retail establishments, sports and other entertainment venues, shopping centers, and transportation facilities; and

Whereas the hardship that would result from a new performance fee would hurt businesses in the United States and ultimately the consumers in the United States who rely on local radio for news, weather, and entertainment, and such a performance fee is not justified when the current system has produced the most prolific and innovative broadcasting, music, and sound recording industries in the world: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That Congress should not impose any new performance fee, tax, royalty, or other charge—

(1) relating to the public performance of sound recordings on a local radio station for broadcasting sound recordings over the air; or

(2) on any business for the public performance of sound recordings on a local radio station broadcast over the air.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I have ten requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to Rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on January 24, 2017, at 9:30 a.m.

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on January 24, 2017, at 10 a.m.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on January 24, 2017, at 10:15 a.m., in room SR–253 of the Russell Senate Office Building.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

The Committee on Finance is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on January 24, 2017, in room SD–215 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on January 24, 2017, at 12 p.m.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on January 24, 2017, at 2:30 p.m.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on January 24, 2017, at 10 a.m. in room SD–226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on January 24, 2017, at 10:30 a.m. in room 428A of the Russell Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled ''Nomination of Linda E. McMahon to be Administrator of the Small Business Administration.''

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

The Committee on Veterans' Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on January 24, 2017, at 3 p.m. in room SR–418 of the Russell Senate Office Building.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on January 24, 2017, at 2:30 p.m. in room SH–219 of the Senate Hart Office Building.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Christopher Friese, from my staff, be granted floor privileges for the duration of today's proceedings.

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

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Patrick Reilly, a fellow in my office, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of this Congress.

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

NATIONAL SCHOOL CHOICE WEEK

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 26, submitted earlier today.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 26) designating the week of January 22 through January 28, 2017, as ''National School Choice Week.''

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

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

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

The resolution (S. Res. 26) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

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

APPOINTMENTS AUTHORITY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the upcoming adjournment of the Senate, the President of the Senate, the President pro tempore, and the majority and minority leaders be authorized to make appointments to commissions, committees, boards, conferences, or interparliamentary conferences authorized by law, by concurrent action of the two Houses, or by order of the Senate, and that they be printed in the RECORD.

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

ORDERS FOR FRIDAY, JANUARY 27, 2017, AND MONDAY, JANUARY 30, 2017

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m. on Friday, January 27, for a pro forma session only, with no business being conducted; further, that when the Senate adjourns on Friday, January 27, it next convene on Monday, January 30, at 3 p.m.; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business until 5 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each; further, that at 5 p.m. on Monday, January 30, the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of Calendar No. 2, Rex W. Tillerson to be Secretary of State, and that there be 30 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form; finally, that notwithstanding the provisions of rule XXII, the cloture vote on the Tillerson nomination occur at 5:30 p.m. on Monday.

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

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senators SCHATZ and SULLIVAN.

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

The Senator from Hawaii.

MEDICAID

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, more than 50 years ago, when Medicaid was

created, Congress made a smart decision. Lawmakers designed a program so that if health care costs rise, if the economy starts to struggle, Medicaid would be there for the American people, no matter what.

A couple of days ago, the counselor to the President said that, as part of the replacement plan for the Affordable Care Act, Medicaid will be converted to block grants. Let's be clear about what this means.

People like grants, and they like Medicaid. Maybe they are not sure about whether they like block grants. Whether intentional or not, this kind of technocratic, bureaucratic language can trick people. It sounds fine. Maybe it is even the smart thing to do.

Let me be totally explicit about what block granting Medicaid actually means. It means cutting Medicaid. It means less money for Medicaid. It means less health care for people. It is a euphemism. It is not quite a lie, but it is a way of describing something so that you don't know exactly what it is. They are calling it a block grant because they don't want to say that they are cutting Medicaid.

These cuts are going to hurt millions of people. They will hurt working families who rely on Medicaid to pay for nursing home care for their families. We have to be pretty out of touch to not know anyone who at some point in their life will rely on nursing home subsidies from Medicaid. It is happening in my extended family right now.

It is important to remember that Medicaid certainly helps children. Medicaid certainly helps people who are economically disadvantaged. It helps poor people. But it also helps middle-class families, because at the end of a family member's life, who can pay for nursing home care out-of-pocket? You may have saved all of your life, but, for instance, in Hawaii a nursing home costs around $10,000 a month. So it is a rare family who can pay $10,000 a month for a grandmother or a great-grandmother or a father or a mother. Nobody can do that. This is going to harm middle-class families.

It is also going to hurt women in particular. Women need Medicaid for maternal health services and for family planning. These cuts are going to hurt seniors and people with disabilities. These people have nowhere else to turn. That is the point of Medicaid. Medicaid is their only option.

Now, I have heard some people say: Well, this is going to expand local control. That is preposterous. The truth is that block granting Medicaid, which is the same thing as cutting Medicaid and giving a fixed amount to the States, gives States less control, not more control. They force States to choose between seniors and kids, between people with disabilities and women, or between health care and education.

Look, it does not matter whom you voted for. American voters—left, right, and center—have this sense that what we do in Washington is that we run for office saying one thing and then we get in office and we do exactly the opposite. Frankly, the Congress has earned that reputation. This is another instance where a party has promised to not cut Medicaid, but here we are—week 1, day 5—debating cuts on this important program.

This is a deal breaker for me and many of my colleagues, and it will be a disaster for millions of Americans.

I call on everyone on both sides of the aisle to stand up for seniors, to stand up for women, to stand up for children, and to fight any cuts to Medicaid.

I yield the floor.

APPOINTMENTS

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. RUBIO) The Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, pursuant to the provisions of 20 U.S.C., sections 42 and 43, reappoints the Senator from Arkansas, Mr. BOOZMAN as a member of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution.

The Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, pursuant to the order of the Senate of January 24, 1901, appoints the Senator from Nebraska, Mr. SASSE, to read Washington's Farewell Address on Monday, February 27, 2017.

The Senator from Alaska.

TRIBUTE TO EILEEN DUBOWSKI

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, Alaska is a beautiful State—the mountains, the seas, the glaciers, the wildlife. Most in this room and many watching on TV have seen my State on TV shows, on reality shows. Almost everybody talks about at least someday coming to visit. We love tourists, like the Presiding Officer does. So please come. You will have a great experience, guaranteed.

But what makes my State particularly special is the people—kind people, tough people, generous of heart, and, yes, people with a lot of opinions. My State is filled with people who are strong-willed and strong-hearted, creating caring communities in some of the harshest environments in the world.

As part of an initiative that I am doing to highlight some of these great Alaskan citizens, I would like to recognize this afternoon Eileen Dubowski as the Alaskan of the Week. She is someone of a strong mind and a strong heart, and she has helped to make her community and our State a better place.

Eileen lives with her husband in a cabin in Salcha, AK, near the Fairbanks area. This year, this area of my State has experienced some brutally dangerously cold temperatures. Recently, it was 59 degrees below zero near Salcha. That is cold, 59 below zero. Yet, in my State, people work in such weather, they give to their communities, they reach out and watch over their neighbors.

Eileen has been both a special education and regular education teacher for almost 40 years. She is currently at University Park Elementary School. To better communicate with her students, she went to night school to learn American Sign Language. She is active in her church and particularly active in Interior Alaska high school wrestling helping dozens and dozens of students. She has been so involved over the past 40 years in this important activity that she was recently elected into the State of Alaska Wrestlers Hall of Fame. An article in the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner quotes her as saying: ''Wrestling can take any sized kid and they can be successful.''

Congratulations, Eileen, for helping dozens and dozens of kids of all sizes in Alaska and making them successful.

She stated: ''When you help each other it makes living up here easier,'' in the colds of Alaska. The same could be said about anyplace in America.

So thanks, Eileen, for helping make life easier, for your service, and for being this week's Alaskan of the Week.

CABINET NOMINATIONS

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I wish to talk a little bit this afternoon about the way my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are, unfortunately—and with no reason—delaying and delaying the confirmation of heads of critically important agencies, Cabinet Secretaries, for our country.

Now, we have differences of opinion in this body. That is often a good thing. We debate, we share ideas, we agree, we disagree, we give the voters the very best we have, and then we let them make their own decisions, which they do at the ballot box.

On election day, the American people chose President Trump and Vice President PENCE. The American people did so knowing they would appoint a new Cabinet and be focused on the issues they ran on, but the American people did not vote for delay and they did not vote for obstruction. They voted for action and they voted for a smooth transition, which is what this body has traditionally done.

It has been a longstanding tradition of the U.S. Senate, working hard, to confirm Cabinet nominees of a newly elected President in a timely fashion, particularly when it comes to the President's national security team.

For example, in 2009, upon the election of President Obama, 7 of his Cabinet members were sworn into office on the first day, 5 more were confirmed by the end of the first week—14 Cabinet officials inside of a week.

Where are we right now? Two Cabinet officials and one CIA Director. That is not what the American people expect. That is not the tradition in the Senate. My colleagues on the other side of the aisle have a responsibility to the American people to put a government in place and to treat the confirmation process with the same courtesy and seriousness the Senate gave to President

Obama's Cabinet-level nominees, and that is not happening right now. This is serious business, particularly on national security issues.

I am hopeful my colleagues on the other side of the aisle can start getting serious and show this administration the same courtesy that Republicans showed President Obama's administration when he came into office.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL FRIDAY, JANUARY 27, 2017, AT 10 A.M.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. on Friday, January 27.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:44 p.m., adjourned until Friday, January 27, 2017, at 10 a.m.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate January 24, 2017:

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

NIKKI R. HALEY, OF SOUTH CAROLINA, TO BE THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, WITH THE RANK AND STATUS OF AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY, AND THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL OF THE UNITED NATIONS.

UNITED NATIONS

NIKKI R. HALEY, OF SOUTH CAROLINA, TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE SESSIONS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS DURING HER TENURE OF SERVICE AS REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING BLAKE VANDEVER

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Blake Vandever. Blake is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 81, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Blake has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Blake has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Blake has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Blake Vandever for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

COMMENDING UZBEKISTAN ON 25 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to include in the RECORD an opinion piece written by our former colleague, the gentleman from American Samoa, Mr. Eni F.H. Faleomavaega, who was the first Asian-Pacific American in U.S. history to serve as Chairman of the U.S. House of Representatives' Foreign Affairs' Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific, and the Global Environment, which had broad jurisdiction for U.S. policy affecting the region, including Central Asia. Mr. Faleomavaega also founded the Congressional Caucus on Central Asia, and his work continues to influence the region today.

2016 marked the 25th anniversary of Uzbekistan's independence from the Soviet Union. For some 15 years, it has been my privilege to work closely with the government of Uzbekistan in various capacities—as a Member of the U.S. House of Representatives' Committee on Foreign Affairs; as Chairman of the Foreign Affairs' Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific, and the Global Environment; as Ranking Member; and as founder of the Congressional Caucus on Central Asia.

I am proud of Uzbekistan for the great progress it has made on its march to democracy, and I especially commend Uzbekistan on its recent presidential election as well as Mr. Shavkat Mirziyoyev on his victory. In an act that demonstrated Uzbekistan's commitment to a transparent process, Uzbekistan invited about 300 international observers, including a full-scale election observation team from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), to monitor the election, which was held on December 4, 2016 upon the passing of the late President Islam Karimov who served as Uzbekistan's president since independence. While every government, including the United States, has room for improvement, I am pleased that Uzbekistan's first election upon the passing of President Karimov was carried out peacefully and in accordance with Uzbekistan's constitution.

Following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States until now, Uzbekistan and the United States have built a broad-based relationship. During U.S.-led operations in Afghanistan, Uzbekistan provided the use of a military base to serve as a hub for combat and humanitarian missions and, later, permitted the U.S. to move equipment and supplies through Uzbekistan to Afghanistan in support of U.S. troops. In the past 25 years, our relationship has also grown in other ways, including economically, politically, and strategically.

In fact, Uzbekistan and the United States belong to a number of the same international organizations including the United Nations and the OSCE, as well as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Uzbekistan is an observer to the World Trade Organization (WTO) and has attracted investment from Caterpillar, Coca-Cola, Lockheed Martin, Boeing, and so on.

From firsthand experience, I know Uzbekistan's accomplishments have been fast-paced, and I have recognized those accomplishments in the Congressional Record for historical purposes. As Uzbekistan continues to excel, I am reminded of these words from the late President Karimov who said that the people of Uzbekistan are ''a creative people who deeply realize their identity, take pride of the fact that they live on sacred land and are the descendants of great ancestors, capable to subdue any peaks.''

Uzbekistan is a land more than 2,500 years old. Its history is rich and deep, spanning far beyond its brief encounter with the Soviet Union. Its leaders—then and now—have sought for security and stability at home and abroad. And so, I wish President Mirziyoyev well as he assumes his duties. I have every reason to believe he will succeed for and on behalf of the people of Uzbekistan who have put their hope in him, especially the youth and women, who showed up at the polls to support his candidacy.

I thank my dear friends including Foreign Minister Abdulaziz Kamilov who previously served as Uzbekistan's Ambassador to the United States, and Senator Sodiq Safoyev who once served as Foreign Minister as well as former Ambassador to the United States and currently as Chairman of the Foreign Political Affairs Committee of the Senate of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan. I commend them for their hard work in developing stronger U.S.-Uzbekistan relations, and for dedicating their lives in service to their country.

I also commend Uzbekistan's Ambassador to the United States, H.E. Bakhtiyar Gulyamov, and Uzbekistan's former Ambassador to the United States, H.E. Ilhom Nematov, as well as the many other leaders in Uzbekistan who have contributed to building an independent nation.

I join with the people of Uzbekistan in celebrating 25 years of independence, and it is my sincere hope that Uzbekistan, like all freedom-loving nations, will hold these truths to be self-evident—''that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.''

EPS IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2017

SPEECH OF

HON. BRENDA L. LAWRENCE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 23, 2017

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the EPS Improvement Act of 2017. Michigan is a success story for clean energy job growth. For many years, the press reported on Detroit's urban decline and the lights literally going out. While this may have been true in the past, Detroit has been making a comeback.

After generations of urban flight, the population of Detroit is rising. Along with that growth has come revitalization. All across town, the lights are coming back on. The LED project cost $185 million and was paid for by the city and the state. The Public Lighting Authority of Detroit, also received support from the Obama Administration with Department of Energy advising local officials on how to brighten up the city.

Investments by the Obama Administration in energy-efficient lighting has reduced costs across the industry, making LEDS feasible for a city like Detroit. Only three years ago, nearly half of the 88,000 streetlights in the city were out of commission.

This major infrastructure project in my city of Detroit, created not only smart urban design to an aging city, but it brought jobs. City officials told me that since 2014, using Federal Department of Transportation funding, Detroit has added buses, hired dozens of drivers and increased ridership by approximately 100,000 a week. Like the streetlights that are now on across the city, buses restore the fabric of the streets and re-establish a semblance of normalcy.

Mr. Speaker, infrastructure projects like the LED project in Detroit and the transportation funding for buses are what we need to get America back to work. These funded projects have a ripple effect on the community and not only rejuvenate it but put people back to work.

I support H.R. 518 and more projects that support clean energy growth.

RECOGNIZING THE 10TH ANNUAL ''HEALTH FOR HUMANITY YOGATHON''

HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh's tenth

annual ''Health for Humanity Yogathon'' or ''Surya Namaskar Yajna.'' Surya Namaskar integrates simple yoga postures in 10-steps that, along with teaching easy breathing techniques, can provide immense health benefits to both the body and the mind.

Each year, Hindus worldwide celebrate January 14th as Makar Sankranti—a day that marks the change of season as the sun enters the sign of Capricorn or Makar. To mark this occasion, Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh has organized the ''Yoga for Health, Health for Humanity'' Yogathon from January 14, 2017–January 29, 2017. The 16-day event will raise awareness about yoga and its advantages in achieving a healthy body, mind, and spirit.

Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh is a voluntary, non-profit, social and cultural organization, which aims at preserving and passing on the Hindu heritage and cultural values to the next generation of Hindus and raise awareness around the world.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the 10th annual Health for Humanity Yogathon.

HONORING CHIEF WILLIAM G. FRAHER

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call to your attention the outstanding achievements of Chief William G. Fraher as he prepares for his retirement today as Chief of Police from the Paterson Police Department.

Chief William Fraher is an Alumnus of Rutgers University, where he received his Bachelor's Degree in Political Science and Government. Chief Fraher then went on to receive his Master's Degree from Rutgers University in Public Policy Analysis. He is also a member of Pi Sigma Alpha, the National Police Honor Society.

Chief Fraher was appointed to the Paterson Police Department in January of 1975. He has served my hometown of Paterson for over 42 years.

It came with no surprise that on February 1, 2012 William G. Fraher was appointed Acting Chief of Police for the City of Paterson, where he has lead the men and women of the Paterson Police Department in the third largest city in the State of New Jersey. Chief Fraher makes it a point to work with the Police Director, Administration and community activists to make the City of Paterson more safe and secure.

Under Chief Fraher, the Paterson Police Department became the largest accredited municipal agency. His dedication to the job and the city has resulted in numerous accomplishments, including being a founding partner in the development of CORESTAT, a law enforcement partnership within the Passaic River corridor, which includes police departments from Bergen County, Hudson County, Passaic County, Essex County, and the NJ State Police. His presentations at the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) have encompassed numerous affiliations with the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences (ACJS), American Society of Criminology (ACS), and the Integrated Justice Information Systems Institute (IJIS). Currently, Chief Fraher is an adjunct professor at John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York City.

Today, I take pride in recognizing and commemorating the achievements of an extraordinary individual. Chief William G. Fraher is a man of exceptional character and is truly deserving of this esteemed acknowledgement. Chief Fraher is very well respected by all law enforcement officials throughout the tri-state area and beyond. I am forever grateful for the service, dedication, and the security Chief Fraher has provided to my hometown of Paterson.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join our colleagues, family and friends, all those whose lives he has touched, and me, in recognizing the work of Chief William G. Fraher's years of service, dedication, and excellence to the City of Paterson.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUIS V. GUTIÉRREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent in the House chamber for roll call votes 60 and 61 on Monday, January 23, 2017. Had I been present, I would have voted ''Yea'' on roll call votes 60 and 61.

HONORING GARETT OLSON

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Garett Olson. Garett is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 81, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Garett has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Garett has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Garett contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Garett sorted the clothing inventory and the restored the drop-off shed at the Better Living Center in Macon, Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Garett Olson for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

MITCH MORRISSEY

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Mitch Morrissey as he completes his tenure as the Denver District Attorney. I would also like to thank Mitch's wife, Maggie, for lending her husband to the Denver community for so many years. During his time in office, Mitch made it his mission to protect the public, advocate for victims of crime, and respect the rights of the accused. He worked tirelessly to promote stronger relations between law enforcement and the Denver community.

For 11 years, Mitch has been the chief prosecutor for the Second Judicial District. Prior to his election, he worked in the Denver District Attorney's office for 20 years, 10 of which he served as the Chief Deputy D.A. In his role as D.A., Mitch was responsible for thousands of felony and misdemeanor prosecutions each year, supervising over 70 attorneys and 120 staff members, all while prioritizing victims' needs. Mitch led an invaluable team of Victim Advocates with a particular focus on those in under-served areas and communities. He is nationally known for his expertise in DNA technology, applying it in criminal prosecutions and working to ensure DNA science is admissible in our courtrooms. In addition, Mitch's relationship with and support for Colorado's law enforcement community has been exceptional. Thanks to his hard work, Mitch is also the recipient of numerous awards, including ''Prosecutor of the Year,'' by the Colorado District Attorneys Council and the ''Patriot Award,'' by the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve.

Mitch is also a true son of Colorado. He is a Denver native, a graduate of the University of Denver College of Law, the University of Colorado at Boulder, and Mullen High School.

I congratulate Mitch for his achievements. I applaud his dedication, leadership, and commitment to justice for Colorado's citizens. I am proud of the work he has accomplished and wish him all the success and happiness in the years to come.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DAVID G. REICHERT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, due to an illness I was unable to vote on the following: Roll call No. 60 Roll call No. 61

Had I been present, I would have voted yes.

CONGRATULATIONS TO GOVERNOR SONNY PERDUE

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, recently, President Donald Trump selected former Georgia Governor Sonny Perdue to be Secretary of Agriculture.

President Trump correctly announced that, ''From growing up on a farm to being governor of a big agriculture state, he has spent his whole life understanding and solving the challenges our farmers face, and he is going to deliver big results for all Americans who earn their living off the land.''

I am confident that Governor Perdue will be a positive advocate for the agricultural community. The dynamic agriculture industry of

the district I represent is appreciated for its vital significance and extraordinary employment opportunities, and creating jobs.

Congratulations to Governor Perdue, his wife Mary Ruff, and their entire family on this tremendous honor. I look forward to working with his successor in this new position in the tradition of Governor Perdue's success as Governor of South Carolina's sister state.

In conclusion, God Bless Our Troops and may we never forget September 11th in the Global War on Terrorism.

ACKNOWLEDGING THE 75TH BIRTHDAY OF CHARLES A. WEISS

HON. PETER T. KING

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise today to acknowledge the 75th birthday of Charles A. Weiss, my friend and roommate from the University of Notre Dame Law School. Charlie Weiss is a true legal giant who continues to be an extremely active litigator with the renowned Brian Cave law firm. A proud lifelong resident of Missouri, Charlie graduated Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Missouri before attending Notre Dame Law School where he was an editor of the Law Review and received his Juris Doctor degree in 1968.

During his distinguished legal career, Charlie has practiced in state and federal courts throughout the country, including 39 different federal district courts, 8 federal courts of appeals and the United States Supreme Court dealing with significant cases which include class actions, intellectual property, securities, antitrust and constitutional law. Charlie has also been active in local, state and federal bar associations serving in such key positions as President of the Bar Association of Metropolitan St. Louis, President of the Missouri Bar Association and a member of the House of Delegates and the Board of Governors of the American Bar Association, plus being on numerous ABA standing committees. Charlie has done much for the Notre Dame Law School, serving as President of the Notre Dame Club of St. Louis and President of the Notre Dame Law Association. In 2013, Charlie was the recipient of the Law School's Rev. Michael D. McCafferty C.S.C. Award.

Charlie's commitment to justice is demonstrated by his extensive pro bono work on behalf of indigent clients, most notably leading a team of lawyers to win the release in 2009 of an innocent man who had spent 17 years in prison for a murder he did not commit.

Charlie and his wife Susan are outstanding people who are proud parents and grandparents. As a friend and fellow Notre Dame graduate, I know that I speak for the countless people whose lives have been enriched by our association with Charlie Weiss in wishing him a very Healthy and Happy 75th Birthday and many more after that. Go Irish.

IN HONOR OF THE 80TH BIRTHDAY OF JACK MCCONNELL

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I ask for the House's attention today to recognize the birthday of Jack McConnell. He will turn 80 on February 7th.

Jack was born on February 7, 1937, to John Richard and Mary Heath McConnell in Lee County, Alabama.

Jack graduated from Beauregard High School in 1956. He later attended Columbus Technical College in Columbus, Georgia.

He used his technical skills as a mechanic and machinist at Perfect Plastics, Ampex Corporation and Uniroyal-Goodrich. He retired from Uniroyal-Goodrich in 1992 after twenty one years of service. After retirement he pursued his life-long dream of becoming a cattle farmer.

He is a lifelong member of Hopewell United Methodist Church and currently serves as chairman of the Board of Trustees, a position he has held for many years.

He was elected and served on the Lee County School Board for 6 years. He is currently serving on the Board of Directors of the Lee County Cattlemen's Association and the ALFA Farmer's Federation Board of Directors.

Jack and his wife Carolyn reside in the Beauregard Community. They have six children, Jason McConnell, Judi McConnell, Jennifer Sanavitis, Norman Rudd, Rob Rudd and Angie Rudd and they have eleven grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing the life and achievements of Jack McConnell and wishing him a happy 80th birthday.

HONORING CLARKE BLODGETT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Clarke Blodgett. Clarke is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 81, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Clarke has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Clarke has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Clarke has mastered the bugle, led his troop as the Senior Patrol Leader, and earned the rank of Warrior in the Tribe of Mic-O-Say. Clarke also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Clarke built, installed and organized shelves inside a shed at Sacred Heart Church in Bevier, Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Clarke Blodgett for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING THE SS ''EXODUS 1947''

HON. JOHN P. SARBANES

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the extraordinary events surrounding the SS *Exodus 1947*, to which a historic memorial will be dedicated in the Port of Haifa in Israel this coming July.

The SS *Exodus 1947*, originally known as the *President Warfield*, was a passenger ship operating on the "Old Bay Line" between Baltimore, MD and Norfolk, VA. The ship served in that role for nearly 15 years before being repurposed during World War II, when it served both the Royal Navy and the United States Navy. Following the war, the ship returned to the U.S. and was placed in the Naval Reserve Fleet in Virginia, where it was to be sold for scrap.

Before the ship could be scrapped it was sold to the Haganah, the precursor to the Israel Defense Forces. The Haganah intended to use it, amongst 9 other ships, to evacuate displaced Jews from Europe to what was then Palestine, at the time under British Control. Before undertaking this mission the ship was towed to Baltimore, where it was refitted and crewed, primarily by volunteer Jewish-American ex-soldiers.

Once in Europe, the ship originally designed for 400 passengers was loaded with 4,454 Holocaust survivors and departed from the French Port of Sète. The ship was intercepted in international waters by a task force of eight British Naval vessels and was boarded by Royal Marines. While the unarmed crew and passengers fought back with whatever could be turned into weapons, they were eventually overwhelmed and taken back to France and then to displaced persons camps in Germany on British prison ships.

The events on the *Exodus* garnered international media attention and are considered by historians to have played a role in the passage of United Nations Resolution 181, which established the State of Israel. The mayor of Haifa in 1950 dubbed the *Exodus* the "Ship that Launched a Nation."

Memorials and historical markers for the *Exodus* have been placed in the Baltimore Harbor, as well as France and Germany. I am proud of the small role that Baltimore played in these historic events and also commend the work of my constituent, Dr. Barry S. Lever, with the Jewish American Society for Historic Preservation to dedicate a memorial to the *Exodus* in Israel, and I congratulate them on their successful efforts.

SAN BERNARDINO SHERIFF'S CAPTAIN SAM LUCIA RECEIVES PROMOTION

HON. PAUL COOK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. COOK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the outstanding public service of outgoing Victorville Sheriff's Station Captain Sam Lucia, who has spent 13 of his 27 years in law enforcement servicing the people of Victorville,

California. His departure from the Victorville station is due to his promotion to lead the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department Employee Resources Division.

On behalf of the U.S. House of Representatives, I would like to thank Captain Sam Lucia for his tireless work and dedication to the residents of the high desert. It has been a pleasure to work with him over the years, but I know he will continue to excel in his new role with the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CHERI BUSTOS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, on January 23, 2017, a series of votes were held. I was not present because bad weather caused my flight to be cancelled, and I arrived too late to vote. Had I been present for these roll call votes, I would have voted Yes on Roll Call 60, and Yes on Roll Call 61.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RAUL RUIZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, due to weather conditions my flight was cancelled and I was unable to be present for votes on the House Floor on January 23, 2017.

Had I been present, I would have voted Yes on H.R. 423, the Anti-Spoofing Act of 2017, which will make it illegal to send false caller ID information to any individual in the United States via Voice-over-Internet (VoIP) calls or text messages. This prevents criminals from defrauding individuals via text or VoIP call services; and Yes on H.R. 582, the Kari's Law Act, which will require all multiline telephone systems to be able to dial 911 without having to dial any additional digits or area codes. This can save lives by ensuring that every phone can access an emergency dispatcher by simply dialing 911, regardless if another digit is typically required for outside calls.

PEACEFUL REGIME CHANGE IN IRAN IS A MUST FOR PEACE

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, in a little over two weeks, we will mark the 38th anniversary of the Iranian revolution. The 1979 revolution in Iran was supposed to herald a better future for the Iranian people. Instead, the revolution ushered in an age of repression, tyranny, and persecution.

For 38 years, the Iranian people have been living under one of the most brutal regimes in the world. This regime is a maniacal theocracy that wields an iron grip over its people.

The regime has been described by Human Rights Watch consistently as a ''regional leader in executions.'' In 2015 alone, Iran executed approximately one thousand people with virtually no due process.

Iranian authorities announced in August 2016 that they had executed 20 prisoners found guilty of ''enmity against God'' which carries the death penalty.

Other crimes that can get you killed in Iran are ''attempts against the security of the state,'' ''outrage against high ranking officials,'' and insulting the Supreme Leader.

The Iranian regime routinely jails journalists, human rights defenders, and anyone who speaks out against the deplorable practices of the regime.

Once in jail, prisoners can expect to be tortured and abused. The State Department's Human Rights report claims that Iranian prisoners are commonly subjected to threats of rape, sexual humiliation, threats of execution, electroshocks, and severe beatings.

This is a sick tyrannical government that imposes its will on its people through brute force. The Iranian people have suffered immensely since 1979.

Unfortunately, since its founding the regime has also sought to ''export the revolution,'' code for wreaking havoc abroad.

Iran's awful human rights record rivals only its long record of sponsoring terrorism throughout the world.

Iran remains the world's number one state sponsor of terrorism. In fact, Iran has only increased its support to terrorist groups in the past two years.

The regime uses its Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps to implement its foreign policy goals and create instability throughout the Middle East. The IRGC cultivates and supports terrorists abroad in service of Tehran.

It provides financial assistance, weapons, and training to groups like Hezbollah in Lebanon, Palestinian terrorists Hamas and Islamic Jihad, Shia militants in Bahrain, and terrorist militias in Iraq.

Its support for these groups has helped Tehran's ally in Syria Bashar al Assad butcher over half a million of his own citizens.

But it doesn't just end there. Iran has a tacit agreement with al-Qaeda, allowing the terrorist group to move money, arms, and fighters through Iran since at least 2009.

On February 11 the clerics in Tehran will celebrate 38 years of oppressing the people of Iran.

On that day we should remember the many victims of this evil regime, both in Iran and across the world.

The Iranian people deserve better.

They deserve a democratic government whose priority is not to keep themselves in power no matter the cost but to improve the lives of the Iranian people.

And that's just the way it is.

HONORING DAVID BUTLER

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize David Butler. David is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 1376, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

David has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years David has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, David has led his troop as the Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, became a Brotherhood member of the Order of the Arrow, and earned the rank of Tom-Tom Beater in the tribe of Mic-O-Say. David has also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. David built five wooden storage boxes to hold the seat cushions for the swings at Immacolata Manor, a home for adults with developmental disabilities in Liberty, Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending David Butler for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

INTRODUCTION OF DEADLY FORCE TRANSPARENCY ACT

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, the fact that after the Michael Brown shooting in Ferguson, the Eric Garner killing in Staten Island, and so many other, similar tragic events around the country, we still don't have reliable statistics about when, where and against whom law enforcement uses deadly force is shameful.

Even FBI Director James Comey has said it is, ''ridiculous that [he] can't tell you how many people were shot by the police last week, last month, last year.''

If we are serious about addressing excessive force, we need to know the full scope of the problem. For example, how often is deadly force used? Are minorities disproportionately the victims? Could other, non-lethal measures have been taken?

That is why today I am introducing the National Statistics on Deadly Force Transparency Act. It would require collection of this type of information. Although a provision of the 1994 Crime Bill requires the Attorney General to collect statistics on the use of excessive force, there is no enforcement mechanism and the federal government has been unable to gather data from many local police departments. Since excessive force can be difficult to define, this bill would be limited to just instances where deadly force is used.

Specifically, this legislation would require any law enforcement agency receiving federal funds to provide data to the Department of Justice on when each instance of deadly force occurred, including the race and gender of both the victim and the officer involved. It would also require an explanation as to why law enforcement felt deadly force was justified and any non-lethal efforts that were taken before deadly force was used.

The Department of Justice would make this data publicly available but would not disclose any personally identifying information.

This is information the public should already have. The fact that we don't is absurd. I urge my colleagues to fix this problem and pass the Deadly Force Transparency Act without delay.

IN APPRECIATION OF JOHN TENSEN'S SERVICE TO IDAHO AND CITY OF BOISE

HON. MICHAEL K. SIMPSON

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank John Tensen for his service to the State of Idaho and specifically the City of Boise. The opportunity to work with John has been an absolute pleasure for me personally, and for my staff.

John started working for the City of Boise in 1986 and has served in several capacities ranging from Civil Engineer to Interim Public Works Director. For the last 14 years, John served as City Engineer which allowed him to directly oversee projects that we benefit from every day.

One initiative I was fortunate enough to work with John on, was the geothermal heat project which expanded to Boise State University in 2012. With John's expertise and the collaboration between Boise State, the Department of Energy, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development, 600,000 square feet of building space on campus is now heated with clean and affordable geothermal energy. It was an honor to work alongside John to make this possible.

Another project where John played a central role, was the recently completed Dixie Drain Project. In Idaho, water is life and even the smallest water issue can be fraught with complexities. That is why the Dixie Drain Project is considered a success, not only here in Idaho, but as an example the entire nation can look to when addressing water quality issues. Thanks to John's innovative engineering, the city was able to come up with a sound solution to divert the water from the drains into settling ponds to remove phosphorus which would enter back into the river system. While the project was far more intricate than this simple explanation, the underlying point is the same—John saved the city and ratepayers countless dollars with exceptional results. This is the ultimate example of federal, state, and local partnership and would not be possible without John.

There are many more projects that highlight John's incredible work. We all know these sites including the Boise Whitewater Park where technicians shape the perfect wave during the summer and the brand new Esther Simplot Park that is truly a gem for the city. However, what is equally impressive to his legacy here in Boise is what he plans to do after.

This fall, John will follow his family to Belize where his son-in-law's foundation, Restoration Smile, will provide dental and oral surgeries to patients that need it most. However, John will make the journey so the local communities can draw on his expertise in the areas of water quality and sewer systems. John certainly has earned a quiet retirement, yet his ambition compels his desire to continue serving and for that, we are all grateful.

My staff and I consider it an honor to have worked with John Tensen. His institutional knowledge and creative engineering are a legacy to the City of Boise and we are touched by his work. I wish him and his family the best in retirement and I hope he finds time to watch his beloved Oregon State Beavers alongside his family of Julie, Kristyn, Cole, Brad, Oliver and Max.

I am proud to honor John's service and look forward to staying in touch with him and his family.

TRIBUTE TO THE DIRECTOR OF THE ALDEN B. DOWN MUSEUM OF SCIENCE AND ART BRUCE WINSLOW

HON. JOHN R. MOOLENAAR

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. MOOLENAAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Bruce Winslow, the Director of the Alden B. Dow Museum of Science and Art, upon his retirement.

Bruce was born and raised in Midland and has kept his heart in his hometown. After graduating from CMU he went on to attend the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York, where he honed his skills as an artist. After graduating in 1988, he found employment at the Midland Art Council, which later became the Alden B. Dow Museum of Science and Art.

When starting his career he was the Coordinator of Public Relations for nine years, became the Curatorial Director and quickly after that the Director of the Museum. Since he took the helm in 1997, Bruce has taken the museum in many rewarding directions that have brought interest back into museum from unconventional museum goers. He has helped many see how science and art play a vital role in everyone lives. Now, during his final days as director, the museum is holding a new exhibit just for him, ''35 Years: The Bruce Winslow Retrospective.'' It is to celebrate his life in the arts, his family and his career.

Bruce has been especially helpful to Michigan's Fourth District, ensuring its participation in the Annual Congressional Art Competition for many years. During that time, not only has Bruce built an exhibit to showcase the artists' work from throughout the district, but he has also served as an integral member of the Art Competition Committee as a judge, helping select the piece to be displayed in the United States Capitol building. He also has given of his time and talents to help coordinate a special ceremony to honor all of the participants.

On behalf of the Fourth Congressional District of Michigan, I am honored today to recognize Bruce Winslow for his lifetime of work in the arts and for his commitment to the people of Midland.

JACK STANTON

HON. LUKE MESSER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a dear friend, Jack Stanton, who passed away last Friday in Anderson, Indiana.

Jack was born in Mishawaka, Indiana on November 3, 1935. He served in the U.S. Army, the U.S. Navy, and dedicated fifty-five years of his life to the Indianapolis Life Insurance Company. He was known by his colleagues as a hard worker, dependable teammate, and humble leader.

On a personal note, Jack Stanton was my friend. He was always quick with a smile and an encouraging word. And he was one of my most trusted advisors on issues impacting the insurance industry. I will miss him.

He will be mourned most by those who knew him best, and he will be missed by all. Jack is survived by his wife of fifty-five years, Hattie Mae Stanton, his daughters Deborah Kay Coats and Wendy Lou Haines, his three grandsons Joseph David Haines, Daniel Jackson Haines, and Jessie Coats, his twin sister Janet Byer, his son-in-law R. Dean Coates, and many nieces and nephews to whom I give my deepest sympathies. Mrs. Stanton, your husband was a great man who had a profound impact on countless Hoosiers, and his life should be an inspiration to us all.

HONORING WILLIAM TRUITT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize William Truitt. William is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 81, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

William has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years William has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, William has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending William Truitt for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

KARI'S LAW ACT OF 2017

SPEECH OF

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 23, 2017

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 582, Kari's Law Act of 2017.

H.R. 582 addresses a very serious problem. The bill requires Multi-Line Telephone Systems to provide direct dialing to 9–1–1. The bill is named after Kari Hunt who was tragically murdered by her estranged husband in a hotel room while her daughter tried to dial 9–1–1 but could not get help because the Multi-Line Telephone System required a prefix to be dialed first.

When we dial 9–1–1 from a hotel or office—when seconds matter—we shouldn't have to dial ''9'' or some other prefix to get help. I strongly support the overall goals of this bill which is identical to legislation passed by the full House in the 114th Congress by voice vote.

I also think location accuracy for Multi-Line Telephone Systems is just as important. First

responders have to know exactly where an individual is calling from, especially if the caller is unable to communicate to the dispatcher, or the caller simply doesn't know where they are. If first responders have to spend time searching buildings or going door to door, the time it takes to do this can be the difference between life and death.

During the subcommittee and full committee markups of this legislation in the last Congress, I offered an amendment to require a location accuracy proceeding at the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) within 180 days of enactment of the bill. Unfortunately, my Republican colleagues did not agree to accept my amendment and instead proposed language requiring the FCC to conduct a Notice of Inquiry (NOI) to solicit public comment on requiring location accuracy for Multi-Line Telephone Systems. I did not accept this proposal because I thought and still do, that an NOI does not move the ball forward. That view is shared by the FCC and the public safety community.

The FCC has studied location accuracy technology for Multi-Line Telephone Systems since 1994, and as recently as 2012, Congress directed the FCC to issue a Public Notice Seeking Comment on the feasibility of Multi-Line Telephone Systems to provide the precise location of a 9–1–1 caller. This was included in Section 6504(b) of the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 and was modeled on legislation I introduced with my colleague and fellow bipartisan Co-Chair of the NextGen 9–1–1 Caucus, Representative SHIMKUS, known as the Next Generation 911 Advancement Act of 2012.

Despite the extensive history surrounding location accuracy, the FCC has failed to take action to require this essential technology in Multi-Line Telephone Systems. Not doing so places lives at stake in my view.

Last Congress, I introduced H.R. 5236, the Requesting Emergency Services and Providing Origination Notification Systems Everywhere (RESPONSE) Act, which would require the Federal Communications Commission to complete a proceeding requiring all Multi-Line Telephone Systems to provide first responders with the precise location of a 9–1–1 caller. I intend to reintroduce the RESPONSE Act in this new Congress and I'm hopeful my colleagues will work with me to pass this important bill and build on the work of H.R. 582.

Although H.R. 582 does not address the critical issue of location accuracy, it is nonetheless a step in the right direction that will save lives and make progress. For these reasons I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 582.

RECOGNIZING MS. SUE BRACK AS THE 2016–2017 WALTON COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR

HON. MATT GAETZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Ms. Sue Brack as the 2016–2017 Walton County Educational Support Professional of the Year. For almost three decades, Ms. Brack has served the Walton County School District with exceptional enthusiasm and an unwavering commitment to excellence.

In Northwest Florida, we are blessed with exceptional educational professionals and schools, as evidenced by the fact that Walton County School District is among the top performing school districts in the state.

Ms. Brack's contribution has been integral to the success of this district, working diligently to meet the requirement of high expectations, paramount to the mission of the District. As an incredibly knowledgeable Bookkeeper, Ms. Brack has admirably managed a multitude of budgets and projects for the District. Her colleagues have expressed their extreme gratitude for her many years of service. Ms. Brack's innumerable skills and historical knowledge make her an invaluable and greatly appreciated resource.

Ms. Brack has also generously shared her expertise by serving as a mentor to new school bookkeepers. The guidance that she has provided throughout so many schools has been a significant contribution to the success of countless staff members and students. For all of these reasons and more, I am truly proud to have Ms. Brack as a constituent in Florida's First Congressional District.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am privileged to recognize Ms. Sue Brack for her accomplishments and her continued commitment to excellence at the Walton County School District. I thank her for her service and wish her all the best for continued success.

HONORING BISHOP FRANK OTHA WHITE

HON. KATHLEEN M. RICE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Miss RICE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in honor of Bishop Frank Otha White, who passed away on Friday after serving for many years as the Senior Pastor of Zion Cathedral Church of God in Christ in Freeport, NY.

Born in 1940 in Oakley, South Carolina, Bishop White moved with his family to Long Island as a child, and went on to become a pillar of the Freeport community. In 1971, while serving as Assistant Pastor, Bishop White was the driving force behind the construction of the Zion Cathedral Church, a beautiful place of worship that still graces the Freeport skyline and will long stand as a visible testament to Bishop White's leadership, faith, and commitment to the Church.

I knew and worked with Bishop White both in my current position, and when I served as the Nassau County District Attorney. He was, first and foremost, a man of God, a man who dedicated his life to bringing people together and helping them to find in themselves the same enduring faith that motivated his work. And he was a leader not only in the Church, but in the community. He was deeply committed to the pursuit of justice, and to helping those who are most in need and so often overlooked by our society—the homeless, the poor, the sick, the elderly. He was a powerful advocate for children and for education. He saw tremendous value in every human life, he recognized that every human being had something unique to contribute to the community, and he worked to make others see the same.

I feel blessed to have had the opportunity to know Bishop White and tremendously grateful for all that he did to strengthen the community in Freeport and beyond. I offer my prayers and deepest condolences to Bishop White's family and loved ones and to the entire Zion Cathedral congregation as they mourn his loss and celebrate his life. I pray that he will rest in peace, and that his memory will continue to inspire us all to act with love and commit ourselves to the pursuit of justice in our communities every single day of our lives.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, due to a medical emergency involving a member of my family, on January 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th, 2017, I was unable to return to Washington, DC in time to cast my vote for roll call votes 24 through 54. Had I been present, my votes would have been the following:

Aye on roll call votes: 24, 25, 28 through 30, 34, 37 through 44, 46 through 50, 53.

Nay on roll call votes: 26, 27, 31 through 33, 35, 36, 45, 51, 52, 54.

HONORING JIM MUNSON

HON. DANIEL M. DONOVAN, JR.

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Jim Munson, the former head coach of Tottenville High School's football team.

Throughout his 24 seasons as head coach, Coach Munson demonstrated nothing but unconditional dedication to his team and his players. His devotion to the game is just one of the many reasons that the Tottenville Pirates were so successful. Under his leadership, the Pirates won the Public Schools Athletic League City Championship in 1997 and 2003. Moreover, Jim retired with a stellar 178–88–3 overall record.

Among his many achievements, Coach Munson coached two future NFL players: three-time Super Bowl champion Joe Andruzzi, an offensive lineman for the New England Patriots, and Adewale Ogunleye, an All-Pro defensive end who played in Super Bowl XLI for the Chicago Bears. But one of Coach Munson's proudest moments was coaching his son James, who now plays for Navy as a safety, from 2011 through 2014. I am sure that Jim will spend a lot of time in retirement cheering on James from the sidelines. Luckily, the Pirates won't lose Jim entirely, as he will remain at the school as assistant principal and athletic director.

Mr. Speaker, Jim Munson has served his team, school and community for dozens of years. I thank him for everything he has done for Tottenville High School and wish him nothing but the best in his retirement.

HONORING JAMESON KING

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Jameson King. Jameson is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 81, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Jameson has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Jameson has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Jameson contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Jameson led a team of scouts in building a new sign for the historic Macon Presbyterian Church in Macon, Missouri, refurbishing the old sign and landscaping the north side of the building.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Jameson King for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

IN HONOR OF LAMP MAGNET HIGH SCHOOL: A NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL

HON. MARTHA ROBY

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mrs. ROBY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Loveless Academic Magnet Program (LAMP) High School in Montgomery, Alabama upon its being named a National Blue Ribbon School in November of the year 2016.

LAMP Magnet High School is more than deserving of this recognition. The school is currently ranked as the best high school in the State of Alabama and the 34th best high school in the country according to U.S. News and World Report.

The school consistently maintains a 95 percent graduation rate though it is currently ranked by The Washington Post as one of the most challenging high schools in America.

LAMP is also to be commended for the strong emphasis it places on extracurricular activities, community involvement and service, and parent engagement.

The City of Montgomery is fortunate to have the exceptional educational opportunities that LAMP Magnet High School offers. The school truly makes Montgomery and the State of Alabama proud.

Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to congratulate Loveless Academic Magnet High School on being named a National Blue Ribbon School and celebrate this outstanding accomplishment with its students, faculty, staff, alumni, and all who cherish this remarkable school.

IN HONOR OF NAVY FEDERAL CREDIT UNION'S GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY

HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to share some very good news. Navy Federal Credit Union, the largest credit union in the world, has decided to significantly expand its activities in the 10th Congressional District. After a groundbreaking ceremony on Tuesday, January 24th, the corporation will begin erecting a new office building and parking garage that will allow for the addition of 1,400 new employees, nearly doubling the size of its operations center in Frederick County which is in the western part of my District.

On behalf of my constituents in the Shenandoah Valley, I wish to express gratitude to the leadership of the corporation for the confidence it has placed in the hard-working people of the Shenandoah Valley and the county government whose policies have created an environment that is conducive to business growth.

Navy Federal Credit Union, whose corporate headquarters is in Vienna, Virginia, has been recognized as one of Fortune Magazine's 100 Best Companies to Work for in 2016. The company was founded in 1933 based on a ''culture of service'' and the 15,000 current employees take great pride in serving our nation's heroes, the current and retired men and women of our military and their families. In visiting the Winchester/Frederick County Operations Center, I was pleased to see the beautiful photos of our men and women in uniform and their families that adorn its hallways. I was also impressed by the many ways that the company provides for its employees, including a recreation center and shower facilities, a medical clinic staffed by a full-time Physician's Assistant and Nurse, and visiting professors from Lord Fairfax Community College who help further the employees' educational goals.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me in congratulating and thanking Navy Federal Credit Union for excellent service to our national heroes and for hiring an increasing number of fellow Americans to provide this important service.

RECOGNIZING MS. KATHLEEN REDFERN AS THE 2016–2017 WALTON COUNTY TEACHER OF THE YEAR

HON. MATT GAETZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Ms. Kathleen Redfern as the 2016–2017 Walton County Teacher of the Year. For several years, Ms. Redfern has served the Walton County School District with exceptional passion and an unwavering commitment to serving others.

In Northwest Florida, we are fortunate to have some of the best teachers in the Nation. It is recognized that the teaching profession is one of the most difficult yet rewarding professions in existence. Ms. Redfern has exceptionally performed her teaching duties, while also striving to be an active and supportive member of her community.

Ms. Redfern is revered by her Principal and colleagues for her incredible kindness and positive attitude. She thoughtfully engages her students by employing interesting and exciting methods of focusing on their interests.

Her support and outreach extends far beyond the walls of her Kindergarten class through her sponsorship and involvement with the K-Kids Club, a Kiwanis Club program. Ms. Redfern has displayed remarkable leadership and dedicated teamwork through her outreach projects in her community. I commend her for her steadfast willingness to serve those that matter most, the students and youth of our Nation.

For all of her admirable contributions, I am truly proud to have Ms. Redfern as a constituent in Florida's First Congressional District.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am privileged to recognize Ms. Kathleen Redfern for her accomplishments and her commitment to excellence in the Walton County School District. I thank her for her service and wish her all the best for continued success.

MAKING OUR INFRASTRUCTURE SECOND TO NONE

HON. SUZAN K. DelBENE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to represent some of our nation's leading innovators in Congress, who are pioneering unprecedented improvements in manufacturing and infrastructure from Washington's First Congressional District. The exciting work being conducted by forward-thinking companies like Modumetal, a woman-owned business in Washington state, has the potential to lower the long-term costs of rehabilitating our roads and bridges while also making them safer and longer-lasting.

Christina Lomasney, co-founder of Modumetal, published an open letter to President Trump on January 6, 2017, highlighting the importance of performance-based standards as he begins to work with Congress on investments in our infrastructure. I am pleased to share her letter with my colleagues, as we look to develop infrastructure solutions that will allow us to get the best return on our investments.

President-elect Trump, on election night, you promised cheering supporters, ''We're going to rebuild our infrastructure, which will become, by the way, second to none.''

As we move from the script of campaigning to the act of execution, you may find a more challenging landscape than your statement belies. That's not because you won't endeavor to achieve nor that Congress won't collaborate with you to fund. But the challenge of bringing the United States back to a ''top 10'' infrastructure position in the world, much less number one, is one that many have tried and failed and that could, in present reality, undermine the solvency of our Nation.

In the span of the decade that precedes your Administration, we have fallen from 1st

place in Global Competitiveness, according to the World Economic Forum, to between 3rd and 7th place. This has been attributed in great part to the decades-long decline in the viability and competitiveness of our national infrastructure. (We've not even been in the top 10 of transportation infrastructures for several years).

More to the point, to keep up with expected infrastructure decline, the American Society of Civil Engineers estimates we'll need to spend $3.6 trillion just in the next five years. This estimate doesn't get us to 1st place, this just keeps us from failing further!

Why has this issue of infrastructure become such a burden to competitiveness and our deficit? For one thing, if we continue rehabilitating our infrastructure as we have, our Nation will be stuck installing and repairing infrastructure using outdated technology from the 1930s.

Today, through the Departments of Transportation at state and federal levels, the regulatory frameworks for materials of construction define requirements that, in most cases, were set several decades to almost a century ago. For a case in point, hot-dipped galvanizing, one of the most commonly used corrosion resistant coatings technologies in the world, was specified in 1928. This specification (ASTM A123) is still actively required by most state and federal DOTs around the country. Epoxy-coated rebar, considered a ''new'' and now widely specified technology, was finally specified for use in the 1970s, and that only after over 20 years of field trials and testing.

As these regulations are defined as a snapshot in time—focusing on how the materials are manufactured instead of how they should perform—new technologies that offer better performance and cost advantages can't currently qualify for major infrastructure programs. And, since it takes about 17 years to take a new technology through the regulatory specification cycle, most innovative technologies fail to ever reach beyond the test phase, much less to ever achieve full scale deployment.

Using these last-century manufacturing techniques means we have to use more metal and spend more, when more durable and safer innovation would work. It means that now and for the foreseeable future, infrastructure requires more frequent replacement or the possibility of major failure when degradation and corrosion set in.

Why is it so important we employ the best-available metals technology? Because corrosion is a quiet infrastructure killer. Corrosion degrades—sometimes catastrophically. When you read about bridge collapses and unsafe structures, think corrosion. Corrosion is a budget-buster—using lower quality metals which corrode quickly creates a ruinous cycle of more maintenance and faster required replacement of our infrastructure. The National Association of Corrosion Engineers pegs the direct cost of corrosion in the U.S. at over 4 percent of the Gross Domestic Product of our Nation.

Innovative companies across our Nation have answered the call to improve America's infrastructure by reinventing the metals industry. As an example, our nanolaminated metals—using a different manufacturing technique than traditional metals—corrode significantly less, are stronger and lighter, and can require less energy and materials to produce. At Modumetal, we have demonstrated structures that resist corrosion thirty times longer for the same basic cost as the currently-specified materials. This means our bridges could last hundreds of years instead of decades. The net result: safer, longer-lasting infrastructure for less money.

Mr. President-Elect, you have the opportunity now to work with Congress to approve legislation that incentives industries to use innovative materials of construction, based on safer performance-based specifications. Such legislation could provide an incentive tax credit for technologies that extend the life and performance of our infrastructure, thus encouraging competition and adoption of best-performing, lowest-cost, state-of-the-art corrosion mitigation technologies for our Nation's infrastructure and industrial applications.

You don't have to accept the status quo, and I hope that our Government will work together to seek and take on the challenge of innovating, to achieve a national infrastructure that is second to none, at a price that will be sustainable for generations.

HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, Friday we commemorate Holocaust Remembrance Day. A day that was established by the Israeli Parliament in 1951, to coincide with the anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising.

This is a time to mourn the millions of victims of the Holocaust. And it serves as an annual reminder to Americans, and indeed to all humanity, that we must never forget the evil that mankind has visited upon itself.

History must serve as a template to right the wrongs that humankind has committed. Famously said, those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it.

This week we must reflect on grave consequences of which vilifying individuals based on race, religion, ideology or sexual orientation could yield.

I encourage all those in Western New York and across the country to join in memorializing the victims of the Holocaust, in hope that a tragedy of this scale is never committed again.

HONORING REECE DWIGGINS

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Reece Dwiggins. Reece is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 81, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Reece has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Reece has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Reece earned the rank of Firebuilder in the Tribe of Mic-O-Say. Reece also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Reece sorted, filed and cataloged all of the choir, organ and piano music for his home church, Macon First Christian Church in Macon, Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Reece Dwiggins for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

INTRODUCTION OF THE TRANSITION-TO-SUCCESS MENTORING ACT

HON. ANDRÉ CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I am introducing the Transition-To-Success Mentoring Act to help local education agencies prepare at-risk students for the transition from middle school to high school.

During middle school, studies show that many students struggle to balance priorities between school, peer groups and their lives at home. Research also indicates that school-based mentoring is an innovative supplement to the traditional learning that takes place in the classroom. Mentoring provides underserved and at-risk students with much needed attention and support to help keep them engaged in school. For these reasons, I am proposing the creation of the Transition-To-Success Mentoring Program. With this bill, students participating in the program will develop and execute a plan for academic progress with the assistance of a school faculty member or volunteer from the community.

RECOGNIZING ROSE BLACKWELL

HON. TOM REED

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Rose Blackwell on her retirement and to recognize her outstanding career as City Clerk of Corning, New York.

Mrs. Blackwell was appointed City Clerk by Corning Mayor Daniel Killigrew in 1984 and worked in that capacity for over 30 years. She served through numerous changes in city government and clerked under eight city mayors. It was during my own time as Mayor of Corning that I came to recognize Mrs. Blackwell for her dedication and caring service to the people of our community.

Mrs. Blackwell completed training at Syracuse University, Maxwell School in 1993 and received the designation of Certified Municipal Clerk from the International Institute of Municipal Clerks in 1994. In 1996, she was appointed Registrar of Vital Statistics for Corning, New York, a responsibility she maintained alongside her duties as City Clerk to the end of her career.

I ask my colleagues to join me in commending Rose Blackwell for the dedication with which she served the citizens of her community and wishing her all the best in her well-earned retirement.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DONALD M. PAYNE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I was not present for the following Roll Call votes. Had I been present, I would have voted "YEA" on Roll Call No. 60 (H.R. 423 Anti-Spoofing Act) and "YEA" on Roll Call No. 61 (H.R. 582—Karis Law Act).

TRIBUTE TO DR. RAYMOND GORDON KLOCKOW

HON. TODD ROKITA

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. ROKITA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a great Hoosier and my dear friend, Dr. Raymond Gordon Klockow who passed away January 13, 2017. Not only was he a constituent in my district, but he was also a good friend to our family and to our office. Most recently, he served as our county coordinator in Jasper County.

Gordon was born in South Bend, Indiana and graduated from South Bend Central High School in 1965. He then attended Purdue University and received a Bachelor of Science in 1970, graduated from the Loyola University School of Dentistry in 1974 with a Doctor of Dental Surgery, and completed his General Practice Residency at Berkshire Medical Center in 1975. That same year he moved to Rensselaer, Indiana and began practicing dentistry at the Clinic of Family Medicine.

Gordon took a lot of pride in his work. He practiced general dentistry in Rensselaer at the Clinic of Family Medicine from 1975–1983, Hillcrest Family Dental Center, P.C. from 1983–2011, and Sheets Medical Practice from 2014–2015. It was at his dental office where I first met Gordon. It seemed we talked for hours about my family's profession, dentistry. And of course we talked politics in that first meeting, and every conversation since. But talk from him of politics and American Exceptionalism in every conversation is not surprising to all who knew Gordon. He put a lot of care and dedication to the smiles of so many Hoosiers during the course of his career. Gordon himself was rarely ever seen without a smile on his face and it was infectious to those around him.

One of the many things I admired about Gordon was his servant's heart. He served as the Jasper County Coroner, a Jasper County Deputy Coroner, and a Newton County Deputy Coroner. He was board certified in Pain Management, Forensic Medicine, Forensic Dentistry, and as a Forensic Examiner. Gordon was also currently a managing partner of Ritz Cinema in Rensselaer where he took great pride in the service he provided for the community.

Some of my most vivid memories of Gordon were at the town hall meetings we have in our district. I frequently asked him to help us with the meetings, sometimes as a host and other times as a participant in the reading of the Constitution. He was the perfect leader, in body and temperament, to do so. Gordon was the type of individual who always asked what he could do to help and would go above and beyond for anyone who needed him.

Gordon leaves Nancy, his beloved wife for over 27 years, three children, and seven grandchildren to carry on his legacy of service to fellow Hoosiers. Anyone who knew him well knows what a great loss his passing is for the community. Mr. Speaker, we lost a good one last week. He will be missed. Rest in peace Gordon, you will not be forgotten.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, had I been present for the vote on the passage of H.R. 423, the Anti-Spoofing Act (Roll Call No. 60), I would have voted "aye." This bill would expand prohibitions on "spoofing," the changing of a cell phone's identification in order to mislead the recipient of a call or a text message. Fraudulent calls and texts are on the rise, and Congress should update the tools that law enforcement can use to address and prevent lawbreakers.

Had I been present for the vote on the passage of H.R. 582, the Kari's Law Act (Roll Call No. 61), I would have voted "aye." This bill would require multiline telephone systems to allow direct emergency 911 calls without first dialing out of the system.

HONORING HODGSON RUSS, LLP AS IT CELEBRATES ITS 200TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, today I stand before you to recognize and honor Hodgson Russ, LLP as the firm celebrates its 200th Anniversary.

Hodgson Russ is not only Buffalo's oldest law firm, but the city's oldest continuously operating business, with roots dating back to 1817. The firm has played a pivotal role in the City of Buffalo's history and has been instrumental in the growth and expansion of the region.

One of the first independent law firms in the nation, it was founded in 1817 by Mr. Hodgson Russ. Today, the firm employs 208 attorneys and more than 275 staff members who continue to follow the same philosophies upon which Mr. Russ originally founded the firm.

The firm extends into industries such as health care, construction, life sciences, railroads, steel, banking, milling and manufacturing. It practices in areas that extend from business transactions and compliance to environment and energy, immigration, tax and real estate to name but a few. Since the firm's inception, Hodgson Russ provides representation to its clients with the utmost respect and integrity.

Notably, Hodgson Russ has a long and substantial record shaping early Buffalo, producing notable attorneys that played key roles both locally as well as on a national stage.

The founder of Hodgson Russ's earliest predecessor firm, Mr. Asa Rice, played a key role in the completion of the western terminus of the historic Erie Canal project in 1825.

In 1832, partners Joseph Clary and Millard Fillmore drafted the first Buffalo city charter, playing a pivotal role in the city's municipal incorporation. A few years later, it was partner Nathan Hall who led the effort to create the Buffalo public school system, the first tuition-free, tax-supported public school system in the State of New York.

The Hodgson Russ legal family more than made its contribution in and around elective public office as well. In 1849, Millard Fillmore was sworn in as the 12th Vice President of the United States, and sixteen months later, upon the death of President Zachary Taylor, was inaugurated the 13th President of the United States. A few years later, Grover Cleveland joined the firm as a clerk and in 1859 was admitted to practice, after which he would, during the period 1870–1892, be successively elected Sheriff of Erie County, Mayor of Buffalo, Governor of New York and twice as President of the United States. The firm's role in the history books continues in 1901 when Hodgson Russ partner John Milburn played an instrumental role in bringing the Pan-American Exposition to Buffalo. A sad postscript: President William McKinley—wounded by an assassin's bullet at the Exposition—succumbs to his injuries at Mr. Milburn's home on Delaware Avenue, on the site where Canisius High School now stands.

While the firm honors its illustrious past, it remains focused on the future, providing emerging businesses and new industries with business-focused legal advice that contributes to the growth of our overall economy. The firm is also known for providing charitable contributions through their financial support of more than 250 organizations, as well as its work providing pro-bono legal services throughout local communities.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for allowing me a few moments to recognize and honor the Hodgson Russ Law Firm. I would also ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating Hodgson Russ, as they celebrate their Bicentennial with an event planned for Thursday, January 25, 2017 at their offices at the historic Guaranty Building, a National Historic Landmark designed by renowned architect Louis Sullivan. Hodgson Russ has produced leaders in Congress and the Court System, in the NYS Senate and Supreme Court. This local Buffalo firm produced a president of the World Bank and not one, but two Presidents of the United States. It is my distinct honor to join current president Rick Kennedy and the many partners, associates, clerks, and other members of the Hodgson Russ legal family as they celebrate this momentous occasion.

SOLIDARITY WITH AMERICANS PARTICIPATING IN WOMEN'S MARCHES

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in solidarity with the millions of Americans who participated in Women's Marches around the country on Saturday.

I attended the march in DC, and it was heartening to see such incredible enthusiasm.

According to Metro, the system has not seen crowds that large since Barack Obama's first inauguration.

But not even 72 hours after more than 500,000 mothers, daughters, husbands, and fathers descended onto our nation's capital in collective opposition to President Trump's appalling misogyny, the House majority has decided to double down on its anti-woman, anti-health care assault.

The only bill to be considered under a rule on the floor this short work week, H.R. 7, is yet another attempt by the majority to restrict a woman's right to choose and put Congress between a woman and her doctor.

As it cloaks itself in a complete state of denial about the message America sent them on Saturday, the House majority is taking its cue from President Trump.

The House majority and the White House seem bound and determined to ignore the powerful message sent by a protest march that no doubt shook the Eisenhower china.

COMMENDING KAZAKHSTAN ON 25 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to include in the RECORD an opinion piece written by our former colleague, the gentleman from American Samoa, Mr. Eni F.H. Faleomavaega, who was the first Asian-Pacific American in U.S. history to serve as Chairman of the U.S. House of Representatives' Foreign Affairs' Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific, and the Global Environment, which had broad jurisdiction for U.S. policy affecting the region, including Central Asia. Mr. Faleomavaega also founded the Congressional Caucus on Central Asia, and his work continues to influence the region today.

In 1991, Kazakhstan gained its independence from the Soviet Union. For some 15 years, I have been honored to work closely with the government of Kazakhstan in various capacities—as a Member of the U.S. House of Representatives' Committee on Foreign Affairs; as Chairman of the Foreign Affairs' Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific, and the Global Environment; as Ranking Member; and as founder of the Congressional Caucus on Central Asia.

I am proud of Kazakshtan for the great progress it has made since independence, and I especially commend President Nursultan Nazarbayev for his leadership on nuclear non-proliferation. Upon inheriting the world's fourth largest nuclear arsenal and the world's second largest test site from the Soviet Union after its collapse, President Nazarbayev voluntarily chose to dismantle and disarm with the help of U.S. assistance.

His act was both heroic and principled. For this, I have repeatedly called upon the Nobel Peace Prize Committee to recognize the deeds of President Nazarbayev as well as former Senators Sam Nunn and Richard Lugar, who co-authored the Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) program, which has contributed to world peace, in untold ways.

While I have no illusions about whether or not we can bring about a nuclear-weapons free world, I do have some thoughts because, like Kazakhs, Pacific Islanders share a similar history. From 1946 to 1958, the United States used the Republic of the Marshall Islands—a Micronesian nation of atolls and islands in the middle of the Pacific Ocean—as its Cold War nuclear testing ground, detonating 66 nuclear weapons including the first hydrogen bomb, or Bravo shot, which was 1,000 times more powerful than the bomb dropped on Hiroshima. Acknowledged as the greatest nuclear explosion ever detonated, the Bravo test vaporized 6 islands and created a mushroom cloud 25 miles in diameter.

The U.S. nuclear testing program in the Marshall Islands also set a precedent for France to use the islands of the Pacific for its own testing program after getting kicked out of Algeria where it conducted 17 nuclear tests from 1960–1966. To this day, radioactive material is still seeping out of the Sahara desert as a result of French nuclear testing.

Having been defeated in Algeria and emboldened by U.S. nuclear testing in the Pacific, France detonated approximately 218 nuclear devices in Moruroa and Fangataufa atolls in French Polynesia. Consequently, these islands also seep radioactive materials and are no longer inhabitable.

This is why I share President Nazarbayev's vision, especially as Kazakhstan has just celebrated its 25 years of independence. My position regarding this matter is no different than the position the United States took during a joint meeting between President Obama and President Nazarbayev on April 11, 2010 when President Obama noted that ''the U.S. appreciates the leadership of President Nazrbayev and the contribution of Kazakhstan to nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation.''

My position is also no different than the stance taken by former President George H.W. Bush, who welcomed President Nazarbayev to the White House and his son, President George W. Bush, who also welcomed President Nazarbayev to the White House and declared our commitment ''to strengthen the long-term, strategic partnership and cooperation between our nations.''

I thank Kazakhstan for all it has done to re-shape the world, post Cold-War, and I stand with President Nazarbayev as he champions nuclear disarmament among possessor states and prevents proliferation to new states.

In broader terms, I also commend Kazakhstan's Ambassador to the United States, H.E. Kairat Umarov for all he has done to strengthen the U.S.-Kazakhstan relationship. I have known him for nearly 15 years and I know firsthand of his tireless efforts to promote goodwill between Kazakhstan and the United States. His great work for and on behalf of our nations is deserving of inclusion in the Congressional Record for historical purposes, as his contributions are unparalleled.

I also commend Mr. Roman Vassilenko who now serves as Deputy Foreign Minister and previously served as Chairman for the Committee for International Information of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan, and also as Counselor for the Embassy of Kazakhstan to the United States. Like Ambassador Umarov, I have known Deputy Foreign Minister Vassilenko for nearly 15 years. I have watched his career soar as he has put his talents to use for the Republic of Kazakhstan. His impact in communicating Kazakhstan's policies to its citizens and communicating its foreign policy to international audiences and governments through digital diplomacy has been nothing short of revolutionary.

I also note the work of Mr. Aibek Nurbalin who I also met some 15 years ago when he worked as the Congressional Liaison for the Embassy of Kazakhstan to the United States, and later as Deputy Chief of Staff to the Secretary of State for the Republic of Kazakhstan. Mr. Nurbalin left no stone unturned in promoting the cause of Kazakhstan and in making certain that President Nazarbayev's policies and agenda were known and supported, especially in the U.S. Congress.

I have known many diplomats during the course of my service as a Member of Congress. Never have I known diplomats who worked harder on behalf of the Republic of Kazakhstan than Ambassador Umarov, Deputy Foreign Minister Vassilenko, former Deputy Chief of Staff Aibek Nurbalin, Secretary of State Kanat Saudabayev, and current Foreign Minister Erlan Idrissov. It was often said that Roman and Aibek were the left leg and the right leg of my dear friend, Kanat Saudabayev, when he served as Kazakhtan's Ambassador to the United States. If they were the legs, Ambassador Umarov was his heart. And, current Foreign Minister Idrissov is to be fully commended for taking the U.S.-Kazakh relationship to the next level, and beyond. His service, like the service of Ambassador Umarov and Secretary Saudabayev, is also unmatched.

On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of Kazakhstan's independence, I would be remiss if I did not publicly honor these outstanding diplomats for all they have done to help build an independent nation worthy of its place in the world community. I also cannot let this historic occasion pass by without once more commending President Nazarbayev for leading the way for a nuclear free world. As a Pacific Islander, it is my sincere hope that the world will follow his lead as we work together for this cause, which is good.

HONORING QUINN HALL

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Quinn Hall. Quinn is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 1376, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Quinn has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Quinn has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Quinn has led his troop as the Patrol Leader, became a Brotherhood member of the Order of the Arrow, and earned the rank of Warrior in the tribe of Mic-O–Say. Quinn has also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Quinn constructed an octoball arena for his youth group at Liberty United Methodist Church in Liberty, Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Quinn Hall for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, days after hundreds of thousands of women marched in my hometown of Portland, Oregon and cities across the world, Congressional Republicans once again are seeking to limit women's access to safe reproductive health care. H.R. 7 is a sweeping ban on abortion coverage and another callous attempt to insert Congress into the most personal of conversations between a woman and her physician, and had I been present, I would have voted ''no'' on final passage of H.R. 7 (Roll Call No. 65).

This legislation comes on the same week we mark the 44th anniversary of the landmark Supreme Court decision, Roe v. Wade and the same week Donald Trump reinstated the global gag rule, or 'Mexico City policy,' which bans all foreign non-profits that receive U.S. aid from offering abortion-related services. H.R. 7 and the Mexico City policy are flawed and ineffective policies that will harm health and economic security of women around the world.

I have repeatedly voted against attempts to limit a woman's right to a safe and legal abortion. Once again, these actions by Congressional Republicans and the Trump-Pence Administration make it clear that the GOP does not care about the rights and autonomy of women anywhere, not just in the United States.

As we clearly saw this past weekend, Republicans have no mandate to take away women's basic rights. Women everywhere will continue to fight these harmful policies, and I will continue to be one of their strongest allies in this fight.

Had I been present for the Motion on Ordering the Previous Question, Roll Call Vote No. 62 I would have voted ''no.''

Had I been present, I would have voted ''no'' on H. Res. 55 (Roll Call Vote No. 63).

Had I been present, I would have voted ''aye'' on the Democratic Motion to Recommit (Roll Call Vote No. 64).

THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST EARTHQUAKE PREPAREDNESS ACT

HON. PETER A. DeFAZIO

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Pacific Northwest Earthquake Preparedness Act, a comprehensive bill to address the earthquake risk facing the Pacific Northwest.

The Pacific Northwest is at extraordinary risk of a magnitude 9.0 earthquake on the Cascadia Subduction Zone (CSZ) followed by a tsunami. The question is no longer if, but when, this event will occur.

The CSZ stretches from northern California up into British Columbia. Historically, the Cascadia Subduction Zone slips every 300 years or so causing major earthquakes. The last quake was in 1700 and evidence suggests it was a magnitude 8.7 to a 9.2. Thursday is the 317th anniversary of the last major Cascadia earthquake.

Experts agree that Oregon is due for another major earthquake. Some forecasts suggest there is a ten percent chance of a magnitude 8 to 9 quake on the CSZ in the next thirty years, while others predict a thirty-five to forty percent chance of a major quake on the south end of the CSZ in the next fifty years.

The Cascadia Subduction Zone is a minor image of the subduction zone off the coast of Japan that caused the magnitude 9.0 earthquake and triggered the devastating tsunami in 2011. That event caused an estimated $300 billion in damages and killed over 15,000 people.

We can expect similar, if not more, damage in the Pacific Northwest and beyond. The United States Geological Service estimates that over 22,000 people live in Oregon's tsunami inundation zone and even more enter the zone daily for employment purposes. The State of Oregon predicts thousands of deaths and injuries plus approximately $32 billion in infrastructure and economic damages in Oregon alone. Hundreds of thousands of survivors will be displaced, some possibly for years.

The next big Cascadia quake will likely cause massive damage. Critical lifelines, such as power, natural gas, and petroleum lines, roads and bridges, water and sewer systems, buildings, and communication systems over large parts of California, Oregon and Washington will likely be damaged, complicating response and recovery efforts. It may take years to fully restore utility services. State and local economies will be decimated.

It is important to note that this is not just a Pacific Northwest issue, this is a National issue. Yes the impact of an earthquake and tsunami in the CSZ will be felt the most in Oregon and Washington, but there will be Nation-wide effects. Seismic shaking is expected to be felt as far as Sacramento, California. Most infrastructure in the United States as a whole has not been constructed to withstand seismic shaking of the magnitude that scientists predict has a high likelihood of occurring.

The national economy will be impacted by this event. Fortune 500 companies, such as Microsoft, Amazon, and Nike, are headquartered in Oregon and Washington. International ports used to export U.S. goods and to import foreign goods could be closed for months or longer. In fact, the ports of Portland, Oregon, and Seattle and Tacoma, Washington accounted for a combined 75 million tons of goods in 2012. Major highways and other thoroughfares used for interstate commerce will be damaged and rendered unusable.

This a not a question of if an earthquake will happen, only a matter of when. We need to start taking this threat seriously and begin to prepare for the event. There is a saying that ''earthquakes don't kill people, buildings do.'' This means we need to start investing in the Nation's infrastructure to ensure it can withstand seismic activity and minimize potential damage and economic disruption.

My bill proposes to address the earthquake risk in several ways. First, the bill proposes to save lives, reduce injuries, and minimize infrastructure damage by requiring FEMA to prepare a plan to fund the purchase and installation of an earthquake early warning system for the Cascadia Subduction Zone. It also clarifies that FEMA may use hazard mitigation funds to improve the earthquake early warning system.

An early warning system can send alerts to trigger automatic shutdowns of trains, manufacturing lines, and close bridges. An earthquake early warning system worked during the 2011 Japan earthquake and it can work here.

An earthquake early warning system is only the first step though. The bill also directs the President to establish an Earthquake and Tsunami Task Force to develop a comprehensive strategy and recommendations on how the Nation should prepare and plan for, mitigate against, respond to, recover from, and more successfully adapt to an earthquake and tsunami in the CSZ. This will ensure that Federal, State, local, and tribal governments as well as individuals begin preparing now for a smarter response and recovery.

If we want to save lives and mitigate the damage, we cannot afford to wait. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill and taking the threat of a catastrophic earthquake seriously.

Daily Digest

HIGHLIGHTS

Senate confirmed the nomination of Nikki R. Haley, of South Carolina, to be the Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations.

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S407–S458

Measures Introduced: Forty-one bills and eleven resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 195–235, S.J. Res. 7–8, S. Res. 20–27, and S. Con. Res. 6. **Pages S444–46**

Measures Reported:

S. Res. 20, authorizing expenditures by the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

S. Res. 21, authorizing expenditures by the Committee on the Judiciary.

S. Res. 22, authorizing expenditures by the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

S. Res. 24, authorizing expenditures by the Committee on Veterans' Affairs. **Pages S443–44**

Measures Passed:

National School Choice Week: Senate agreed to S. Res. 26, designating the week of January 22 through January 28, 2017, as "National School Choice Week". **Page S456**

Appointments:

Reading Washington's Farewell Address: The Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, pursuant to the order of the Senate of January 24, 1901, appointed Senator Sasse to read Washington's Farewell Address on Monday, February 27, 2017. **Page S457**

Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution: The Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, pursuant to the provisions of 20 U.S.C., sections 42 and 43, re-appointed Senator Boozman as a member of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution. **Page S457**

Authorizing Leadership to Make Appointments—Agreement: A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that notwithstanding the upcoming adjournment of the Senate, the President of the Senate, the President pro tempore, and the majority and minority Leaders be authorized to make appointments to commissions, committees, boards, conferences, or interparliamentary conferences authorized by law, by concurrent action of the two Houses, or by order of the Senate. **Page S456**

Pro Forma Session—Agreement: A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that Senate adjourn until 10 a.m., on Friday, January 27, 2017, for a pro forma session only, with no business being conducted; and that when Senate adjourns on Friday, January 27, 2017, it next convene at 3 p.m., on Monday, January 30, 2017. **Page S456**

Tillerson Nomination—Cloture: Senate began consideration of the nomination of Rex W. Tillerson, of Texas, to be Secretary of State, after agreeing to the motion to proceed to consideration of the nomination. **Page S430**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the nomination, and, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, and pursuant to the unanimous-consent agreement of Tuesday, January 24, 2017, a vote on cloture will occur at 5:30 p.m., on Monday, January 30, 2017. **Page S456**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that at 5 p.m., on Monday, January 30, 2017, Senate resume consideration of the nomination, and that there be 30 minutes of debate, equally divided in the usual form; and that notwithstanding the provisions of rule XXII, the vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination occur at 5:30 p.m. **Page S456**

Chao Nomination—Agreement: A unanimous-consent-time agreement was reached providing that notwithstanding rule XXII, at 12 noon, on Tuesday, January 31, 2017, Senate begin consideration of the nomination of Elaine L. Chao, of Kentucky, to be Secretary of Transportation; that there be 20 minutes

of debate on the nomination, equally divided in the usual form, and that following the use or yielding back of time, Senate vote on confirmation of the nomination, with no intervening action or debate; and that no further motions be in order. **Page S430**

Nominations Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nominations:

By 96 yeas to 4 nays (Vote No. EX. 33), Nikki R. Haley, of South Carolina, to be the Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations, with the rank and status of Ambassador, and the Representative of the United States of America in the Security Council of the United Nations, and to be Representative of the United States of America to the Sessions of the General Assembly of the United Nations during her tenure of service as Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations. **Pages S426–30, S458**

Messages from the House: **Page S440**

Measures Referred: **Page S440**

Executive Communications: **Pages S440–43**

Executive Reports of Committees: **Page S444**

Additional Cosponsors: **Page S446**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S447–56**

Additional Statements: **Pages S438–40**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Page S456**

Privileges of the Floor: **Page S456**

Record Votes: One record vote was taken today. (Total—33) **Page S430**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 10:45 a.m. and adjourned at 6:44 p.m., until 10 a.m. on Friday, January 27, 2017. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S458.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Appropriations: Committee announced the following subcommittee assignments:

Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies: Senators Hoeven (Chair), Cochran, McConnell, Collins, Blunt, Moran, Rubio, Merkley, Feinstein, Tester, Udall, Leahy, and Baldwin.

Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies: Senators Shelby (Chair), Alexander, Murkowski, Collins, Graham, Boozman, Capito, Lankford, Kennedy, Shaheen, Leahy, Feinstein, Reed, Coons, Schatz, Manchin, and Van Hollen.

Subcommittee on Department of Defense: Senators Cochran (Chair), McConnell, Shelby, Alexander, Collins, Murkowski, Graham, Blunt, Daines, Moran, Durbin, Leahy, Feinstein, Murray, Reed, Tester, Udall, Schatz, and Baldwin.

Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development: Senators Alexander (Chair), Cochran, McConnell, Shelby, Collins, Murkowski, Graham, Hoeven, Kennedy, Feinstein, Murray, Tester, Durbin, Udall, Shaheen, Merkley, and Coons.

Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government: Senators Capito (Chair), Moran, Boozman, Lankford, Daines, Coons, Durbin, Manchin, and Van Hollen.

Subcommittee on Department of Homeland Security: Senators Boozman (Chair), Cochran, Shelby, Murkowski, Hoeven, Lankford, Kennedy, Tester, Shaheen, Leahy, Murray, Baldwin, and Manchin.

Subcommittee on Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies: Senators Murkowski (Chair), Cochran, Alexander, Blunt, Hoeven, McConnell, Daines, Capito, Udall, Feinstein, Leahy, Reed, Tester, Merkley, and Van Hollen.

Subcommittee on Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies: Senators Blunt (Chair), Cochran, Shelby, Alexander, Graham, Moran, Capito, Lankford, Kennedy, Rubio, Murray, Durbin, Reed, Shaheen, Merkley, Schatz, Baldwin, Murphy, and Manchin.

Subcommittee on Legislative Branch: Senators Lankford (Chair), Kennedy, Rubio, Murphy, and Van Hollen.

Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies: Senators Moran (Chair), McConnell, Murkowski, Hoeven, Collins, Boozman, Capito, Rubio, Schatz, Tester, Murray, Reed, Udall, Baldwin, and Murphy.

Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs: Senators Graham (Chair), McConnell, Blunt, Boozman, Moran, Lankford, Daines, Rubio, Leahy, Durbin, Shaheen, Coons, Merkley, Murphy, and Van Hollen.

Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies: Senators Collins (Chair), Shelby, Alexander, Blunt, Boozman, Capito, Daines, Graham, Hoeven, Reed, Murray, Durbin, Feinstein, Coons, Schatz, Murphy, and Manchin.

Senators Cochran and Leahy are ex officio members of each subcommittee.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE BUDGET

Committee on Armed Services: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the defense budget for fiscal year 2018 and onwards, after receiving testimony from

Dakota L. Wood, The Heritage Foundation; Thomas G. Mahnken, Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments; and Lawrence J. Korb, Center for American Progress.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

An original resolution (S. Res. 22) authorizing expenditures by the Committee; and adopted its rules of procedure for the 115th Congress; and

The nomination of Benjamin S. Carson, Sr., of Florida, to be Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

Also, Committee announced the following subcommittee assignments:

Subcommittee on Housing, Transportation, and Community Development: Senators Scott (Chair), Shelby, Heller, Rounds, Tillis, Kennedy, Menendez, Reed, Heitkamp, Schatz, and Van Hollen.

Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Protection: Senators Toomey (Chair), Shelby, Corker, Heller, Scott, Sasse, Cotton, Perdue, Kennedy, Warren, Reed, Tester, Warner, Donnelly, Schatz, Van Hollen, and Cortez Masto.

Subcommittee on Securities, Insurance, and Investment: Senators Heller (Chair), Shelby, Corker, Toomey, Scott, Sasse, Rounds, Tillis, Warner, Reed, Menendez, Tester, Warren, Van Hollen, and Cortez Masto.

Subcommittee on National Security and International Trade and Finance: Senators Sasse (Chair), Corker, Cotton, Rounds, Perdue, Donnelly, Warner, Heitkamp, and Schatz.

Subcommittee on Economic Policy: Senators Cotton (Chair), Toomey, Perdue, Tillis, Kennedy, Heitkamp, Menendez, Warren, and Donnelly.

Senators Crapo and Brown are ex-officio members of each subcommittee.

NOMINATION

Committee on the Budget: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nomination of Mick Mulvaney, of South Carolina, to be Director of the Office of Management and Budget, after the nominee, who was introduced by Senators Graham and Cotton, testified and answered questions in his own behalf.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

S. 19, to provide opportunities for broadband investment, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 81, to establish an advisory office within the Bureau of Consumer Protection of the Federal Trade Commission to prevent fraud targeting seniors;

S. 88, to ensure appropriate spectrum planning and interagency coordination to support the Internet of Things;

S. 89, to amend title 46, United States Code, to exempt old vessels that only operate within inland waterways from the fire-retardant materials requirement if the owners of such vessels make annual structural alterations to at least 10 percent of the areas of the vessels that are not constructed of fire-retardant materials;

S. 96, to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to ensure the integrity of voice communications and to prevent unjust or unreasonable discrimination among areas of the United States in the delivery of such communications;

S. 102, to direct the Federal Communications Commission to commence proceedings related to the resiliency of critical communications networks during times of emergency, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 110, to require the Secretary of Commerce, acting through the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, to establish a constituent-driven program to provide a digital information platform capable of efficiently integrating coastal data with decision-support tools, training, and best practices and to support collection of priority coastal geospatial data to inform and improve local, State, regional, and Federal capacities to manage the coastal region;

S. 123, to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to require multi-line telephone systems to have a default configuration that permits users to directly initiate a call to 9–1–1 without dialing any additional digit, code, prefix, or post-fix;

S. 129, to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act;

S. 134, to expand the prohibition on misleading or inaccurate caller identification information, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 141, to improve understanding and forecasting of space weather events, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 168, to amend and enhance certain maritime programs of the Department of Transportation;

S. 171, to reauthorize and amend the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Act of 2002, to reauthorize the Hydrographic Services Improvement Act of 1998, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 174, to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to consolidate the reporting obligations of the Federal Communications Commission in order to

improve congressional oversight and reduce reporting burdens;

H.R. 255, to authorize the National Science Foundation to support entrepreneurial programs for women;

H.R. 321, to inspire women to enter the aerospace field, including science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, through mentorship and outreach;

An original resolution (S. Res. 20) authorizing expenditures by the Committee; and adopted its rules of procedure for the 115th Congress; and

The nominations of Elaine L. Chao, of Kentucky, to be Secretary of Transportation, and Wilbur L. Ross, Jr., of Florida, to be Secretary of Commerce.

NOMINATION

Committee on Finance: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nomination of Thomas Price, of Georgia, to be Secretary of Health and Human Services, after the nominee, who was introduced by Senator Isakson, testified and answered questions in his own behalf.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee ordered favorably reported the nomination of Nikki R. Haley, of South Carolina, to be the Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations, with the rank and status of Ambassador, and the Representative of the United States of America in the Security Council of the United Nations, and to be Representative of the United States of America to the Sessions of the General Assembly of the United Nations during her tenure of service as Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations.

NOMINATION

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nomination of Mick Mulvaney, of South Carolina, to be Director of the Office of Management and Budget, after the nominee, who was introduced by Senators Graham and Cotton, testified and answered questions in his own behalf.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on the Judiciary: Committee ordered favorably reported an original resolution (S. Res. 21) authorizing expenditures by the Committee for the 115th Congress.

Also, Committee announced the following subcommittee assignments:

Subcommittee on Antitrust, Competition Policy and Consumer Rights: Senators Lee (Chair), Grassley, Hatch, Graham, Tillis, Klobuchar, Leahy, Franken, and Blumenthal.

Subcommittee on Crime and Terrorism: Senators Graham (Chair), Cornyn, Cruz, Sasse, Kennedy, Whitehouse, Durbin, Klobuchar, and Coons.

Subcommittee on Border Security and Immigration: Senators Cornyn (Chair), Tillis, Kennedy, Grassley, Cruz, Flake, Crapo, Lee, Durbin, Feinstein, Leahy, Klobuchar, Franken, Blumenthal, and Hirono.

Subcommittee on Oversight, Agency Action, Federal Rights and Federal Courts: Senators Sasse (Chair), Grassley, Crapo, Kennedy, Hatch, Lee, Flake, Tillis, Coons, Leahy, Whitehouse, Klobuchar, Franken, Blumenthal, and Hirono.

Subcommittee on Privacy, Technology and the Law: Senators Flake (Chair), Hatch, Lee, Tillis, Crapo, Kennedy, Franken, Leahy, Whitehouse, Coons, and Hirono.

Subcommittee on the Constitution: Senators Cruz (Chair), Cornyn, Crapo, Sasse, Graham, Blumenthal, Durbin, Franken, and Coons.

NOMINATION

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nomination of Linda E. McMahon, of Connecticut, to be Administrator of the Small Business Administration, after the nominee, who was introduced by Senators Blumenthal and Murphy, testified and answered questions in her own behalf.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Committee ordered favorably reported an original resolution (S. Res. 24) authorizing expenditures by the Committee, and adopted its rules of procedure for the 115th Congress.

INTELLIGENCE

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee held closed hearings on intelligence matters, receiving testimony from officials of the intelligence community.

Committee recessed subject to the call.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 85 public bills, H.R. 20, 617–701; and 14 resolutions, H.J. Res. 31–33; H. Con. Res. 12–14; and H. Res. 56–63, were introduced. **Pages H681–689**

Additional Cosponsors: **Page H690**

Reports Filed: There were no reports filed today.

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Bost to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H611**

Recess: The House recessed at 10:40 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon. **Page H615**

Member Resignation: Read a letter from Representative Becerra, wherein he resigned as Representative for the Thirty-Fourth Congressional District of California, effective Tuesday, January 24, 2017. **Pages H615–616**

Whole Number of the House: The Chair announced to the House that, in light of the resignation of the gentleman from California, Mr. Becerra, the whole number of the House is 433. **Page H616**

Committee Resignation: Read a letter from Representative Sánchez wherein she resigned from the Committee on Ethics. **Page H633**

Committee Elections: The House agreed to H. Res. 56, electing Members to a certain standing committee of the House of Representatives. **Page H633**

Suspensions: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures:

Department of Energy Research and Innovation Act: H.R. 589, amended, to establish Department of Energy policy for science and energy research and development programs, and reform National Laboratory management and technology transfer programs; **Pages H646–56**

Digital Global Access Policy Act of 2017: H.R. 600, to promote Internet access in developing countries and update foreign policy toward the Internet; and **Pages H657–60**

Reinforcing Education Accountability in Development Act: H.R. 601, to enhance the transparency and accelerate the impact of assistance provided under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to promote quality basic education in developing countries, to better enable such countries to achieve universal access to quality basic education and improved learning outcomes, and to eliminate duplication and waste. **Pages H662–66**

No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion and Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act of 2017: The House passed H.R. 7, to prohibit taxpayer funded abortions, by a recorded vote of 238 ayes to 183 noes, Roll No. 65. **Pages H633–46, H660–61**

Rejected the Schakowsky motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on Energy and Commerce with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with an amendment, by a yea-and-nay vote of 187 yeas to 235 nays, Roll No. 64. **Pages H646, H660–61**

H. Res. 55, the rule providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 7) was agreed to by a recorded vote of 236 ayes to 183 noes, Roll No. 63, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 233 yeas to 187 nays, Roll No. 62. **Pages H620–33**

Committee Elections: The House agreed to H. Res. 59, electing Members to certain standing committees of the House of Representatives. **Pages H661–62**

Meeting Hour: Agreed by unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 2 p.m. on Friday, January 27th and further, when the House adjourns on that day, it adjourn to meet at 12 noon on Monday, January 30th for Morning Hour debate. **Page H662**

Quorum Calls—Votes: Two yea-and-nay votes and two recorded votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H632–33, H633, H660–61, and H661. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 7:13 p.m.

Committee Meetings

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING; THE FAILURES OF OBAMACARE: HARMFUL EFFECTS AND BROKEN PROMISES

Committee on the Budget: Full Committee held an organizational meeting for the 115th Congress and a hearing entitled "The Failures of Obamacare: Harmful Effects and Broken Promises". The committee adopted its rules and oversight plan. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

Committee on Education and the Workforce: Full Committee held an organizational meeting for the 115th Congress. The committee adopted its rules and oversight plan.

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Full Committee held an organizational meeting for the 115th Congress. The committee adopted its rules, subcommittee jurisdictions and memberships, and oversight plan.

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Full Committee held an organizational meeting for the 115th Congress. The committee adopted its rules and oversight plan and approved its staff list.

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

Committee on the Judiciary: Full Committee held an organizational meeting for the 115th Congress. The committee adopted its rules and ratified its subcommittee assignments.

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Full Committee held an organizational meeting for the 115th Congress. The committee adopted its rules and approved its subcommittee assignments.

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING; EFFECTIVENESS OF THE INDIVIDUAL MANDATE UNDER THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

Committee on Ways and Means: Subcommittee on Oversight held an organizational meeting for the 115th Congress and a hearing on examining the effectiveness of the individual mandate under the Affordable Care Act. The subcommittee successfully organized. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

ONGOING INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES

Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Ongoing Intelligence Activities''. This hearing was closed.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

NEW PUBLIC LAWS

(For last listing of Public Laws, see DAILY DIGEST, *p. D31)*

H.R. 39, to amend title 5, United States Code, to codify the Presidential Innovation Fellows Program. Signed on January 20, 2017. (Public Law 115–1)

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR FRIDAY, JANUARY 27, 2017

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

No meetings/hearings scheduled.

House

No hearings are scheduled.

Next Meeting of the **SENATE**

10 a.m., Friday, January 27

Senate Chamber

Program for Friday: Senate will meet in a pro forma session.

Next Meeting of the **HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

2 p.m., Friday, January 27

House Chamber

Program for Friday: House will meet in Pro Forma session at 2 p.m.

Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

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