United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 115th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 163 WASHINGTON, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2017 No. 150

House of Representatives

The House met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
September 18, 2017.

I hereby appoint the Honorable GEORGE HOLDING to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

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

PRAYER

Reverend Michael Wilker, Lutheran Church of the Reformation, Washington, D.C., offered the following prayer:

Let us pray, using the words of Dag Hammarskjold:

Thou who art over us, Thou who art one of us, Thou who art, also within us.

May all see Thee, in me also. May I prepare the way for Thee. May I thank Thee for all that shall fall to my lot. May I also not forget the needs of others.

Keep me in Thy love, as Thou wouldst that all should be kept in mine. May everything in this, my being, be directed to Thy glory, and may I never despair. For I am under Thy hand, and in Thee is all power and goodness.

Give me a pure heart, that I may see Thee; a humble heart, that I may hear Thee; a heart of love, that I may serve Thee; a heart of faith, that I may abide in Thee.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 2(a) of House Resolution 513, the Journal of the last day's proceedings is approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The SPEAKER pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

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

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, September 14, 2017.

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

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on September 14, 2017, at 3:06 p.m.:

That the Senate agreed to relative to the death of Pietro ''Pete'' Vichi Domenici, former United States Senator for the State of New Mexico S. Res. 254.

With best wishes, I am,
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, September 18, 2017.

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

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on September 18, 2017, at 10:46 a.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 129.
That the Senate passed S. 1393.
That the Senate passed S. 1532.
That the Senate passed S. 1536.

With best wishes, I am,
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

SENATE BILLS REFERRED

Bills of the Senate of the following titles were taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 129. An act to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

S. 1532. An act to disqualify from operating a commercial motor vehicle for life an individual who uses a commercial motor vehicle in committing a felony involving human trafficking; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

S. 1536. An act to designate a human trafficking prevention coordinator and to expand the scope of activities authorized under the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's outreach and education program to include human trafficking prevention activities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

ADJOURNMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 2(b) of House Resolution 513, the House stands adjourned until 11 a.m. on Thursday, September 21, 2017.

Thereupon (at 2 o'clock and 3 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Thursday, September 21, 2017, at 11 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

2550. A letter from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Importation of Bone-In Ovine Meat From Uruguay [Docket No.: APHIS-2015-0050] (RIN: 0579-AE21) received September 12, 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.

2551. A letter from the Acting Administrator, Cotton and Tobacco Program, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's direct final rule — Cotton Board Rules and Regulations: Adjusting Supplemental Assessment on Imports (2017 Amendments) [Doc. No.: AMS-CN-17-0003] received September 13, 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.

2552. A letter from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Importation of Fresh Persimmon With Calyxes From Japan Into the United States [Docket No.: APHIS-2015-0098] (RIN: 0579-AE27) received September 12, 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.

2553. A letter from the Acting Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Specialty Crops Program, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Tart Cherries Grown in the States of Michigan, New York, Pennsylvania, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wisconsin; Modification of Allocation of Assessments [Doc. No.: AMS-SC-16-0104; SC16-930-4 FR] received September 13, 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.

2554. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Personnel and Readiness, Department of Defense, transmitting the Armed Forces Retirement Home Annual Report for Fiscal Years 2014, 2015, and 2016, pursuant to 24 U.S.C. 411(h); Public Law 101-510, Sec. 1511 (as added by Public Law 107-107, Sec. 1403); (115 Stat. 1259); to the Committee on Armed Services.

2555. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General David E. Quantock, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 1370(c)(1); Public Law 96-513, Sec. 112 (as amended by Public Law 104-106, Sec. 502(b)); (110 Stat. 293); to the Committee on Armed Services.

2556. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense, Readiness, Department of Defense, transmitting the annual Reserve Component Equipment Report for fiscal year 2018, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 10543(c); Public Law 104-201, Sec. 1257(a)(1) (as amended by Public Law 112-81, Sec. 1064(11)); (125 Stat. 1587); to the Committee on Armed Services.

2557. A letter from the Under Secretary, Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's Assessment of the Efficiency of the Base Closure and Realignment Property Disposal Process, as requested by House Report 113-446; to the Committee on Armed Services.

2558. A letter from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting the Attorney General's 2016 Annual Report to Congress, pursuant to 15 U.S.C. 1691f; Public Law 90-321, Sec. 707 (as added by Public Law 94-239, Sec. 7); (90 Stat. 255); to the Committee on Financial Services.

2559. A letter from the Assistant to the Board, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting the Board's Major final rule — Restrictions on Qualified Financial Contracts of Systemically Important U.S. Banking Organizations and the U.S. Operations of Systemically Important Foreign Banking Organizations; Revisions to the Definition of Qualifying Master Netting Agreement and Related Definitions [Regulations Q, WW, and YY; Docket No.: R-1538] (RIN: 7100 AE-52) received September 11, 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.

2560. A letter from the Counsel, Legal Division, Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, transmitting the Bureau's final rule — Home Mortgage Disclosure (Regulation C) [Docket Nos.: CFPB-2017-0010; CFPB-2017-0021] (RIN: 3170-AA64; 3170-AA76) received September 13, 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.

2561. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a Declaration of a Public Health Emergency and Waiver and/or Modification of Certain HIPAA, and Medicare, Medicaid, and Children's Health Insurance Program Requirements, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 247d(a); July 1, 1944, ch. 373, title III, Sec. 319(a) (as amended by Public Law 107-188, Sec. 144(a)); (116 Stat. 630); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

2562. A letter from the Deputy Chief, Legal and Policy, Auctions and Spectrum Access Division, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Connect America Fund [WC Docket No.: 10-90]; Universal Service Reform — Mobility Fund [WT Docket No.: 10-208] received September 13, 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.

2563. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Commerce, transmitting a report certifying that the export of the listed item to the People's Republic of China is not detrimental to the U.S. space launch industry, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2778 note; Public Law 105-261, Sec. 1512 (as amended by Public Law 105-277, Sec. 146); (112 Stat. 2174); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

2564. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a semi-annual report detailing telecommunications-related payments made to Cuba pursuant to Department of the Treasury licenses during the period from January 1 through June 30, 2017, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 6004(e)(6); Public Law 102-484, Sec. 1705(e)(6) (as amended by Public Law 104-114, Sec. 102)(g)); (110 Stat. 794); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

2565. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Ukraine that was declared in Executive Order 13660 of March 6, 2014, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1641(c); Public Law 94-412, Sec. 401(c); (90 Stat. 1257) and 50 U.S.C. 1703(c); Public Law 95-223, Sec 204(c); (91 Stat. 1627); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

2566. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to persons undermining democratic processes or institutions in Zimbabwe that was declared in Executive Order 13288 of March 6, 2003, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1641(c); Public Law 94-412, Sec. 401(c); (90 Stat. 1257) and 50 U.S.C. 1703(c); Public Law 95-223, Sec 204(c); (91 Stat. 1627); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

2567. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting a notification that the national emergency declared with respect to persons who commit, threaten to commit, or support terrorism, declared in Executive Order 13224 of September 23, 2001, is to continue in effect beyond September 23, 2017, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1622(d); Public Law 94-412, Sec. 202(d); (90 Stat. 1257) (H. Doc. No. 115—68); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed.

2568. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Wassenaar Arrangement 2016 Plenary Agreements Implementation [Docket No.: 170309249-7249-01] (RIN: 0694-AH35) received September 6, 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.

2569. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, Department of Defense, transmitting Reports for the third quarter of FY 2017, April 1, 2017 — June 30, 2017, developed in accordance with Secs. 36(a) and 26(b) of the Arms Export Control Act, the March 24, 1979, Report by the Committee on Foreign Affairs (H. Rept. 96-70), and the July 31, 1981, Seventh Report by the Committee on Government Operations (H. Rept. 97-214); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

2570. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DDTC 17-062, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

2571. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DDTC 17-035, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

2572. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DDTC 17-052, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

2573. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DDTC 16-124, pursuant to Section 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

2574. A letter from the Inspector General, Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting the fiscal year 2019 budget request for the Office of Inspector General of the Railroad Retirement Board, pursuant to 45 U.S.C. 231f(f); Aug. 29, 1935, ch. 812, Sec. 7(f) (as amended by Public Law 93-445, Sec. 416); (97 Stat. 436); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

2575. A letter from the Regulations Coordinator, Office of Strategic Operations and Regulatory Affairs, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's interim final rule — Adjustment of Civil Monetary Penalties for Inflation; Correcting Amendment [CMS-6076-IFR2] (RIN: 0991-AC0) received September 14, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

2576. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting a legislative

proposal referral to the appropriate committees styled the ''Electronic Visa Update System''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

2577. A letter from the Acting Commissioner, Social Security Administration, transmitting the 2017 Annual Report of the Supplemental Security Income Program, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 1383f(a); Aug. 14, 1935, ch. 531, title XVIII, Sec. 1875 (as amended by Public Law 104-193, Sec. 231); (110 Stat. 2197); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

2578. A letter from the Labor Member and Management Member, Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting the 2017 report of the United States Railroad Retirement Board, pursuant to 45 U.S.C. 231f(b)(6); August 29, 1935, ch. 812, Sec. 7(b)(6) (as amended by Public Law 97-35, Sec. 1122); (95 Stat. 638); jointly to the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure and Ways and Means.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 3668. A bill to provide for the preservation of sportsmen's heritage and enhance recreation opportunities on Federal land, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 115–314, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

DISCHARGE OF COMMITTEE

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII, Committees on Agriculture, the Judiciary, Energy and Commerce, Transportation and Infrastructure, and Ways and Means discharged from further consideration. H.R. 3668 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

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. ROGERS of Kentucky:

H.R. 3802. A bill to reform the Appalachian Regional Commission, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. AMODEI:

H.R. 3803. A bill to amend the Reclamation Safety of Dams Act of 1978 to provide for certain cost allocations for the Boca Reservoir Dam, Truckee River Storage Project, California, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. BLUMENAUER:

H.R. 3804. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Homeland Security to make grants to encourage community safety by incorporating disaster mitigation and emergency preparedness into comprehensive land use planning and urban development, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, 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:

H.R. 3805. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to carry out a land exchange involving lands within the boundaries of the Cape Cod National Seashore, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. LANGEVIN (for himself and Mr. TED LIEU of California):

H.R. 3806. A bill to establish a national data breach notification standard, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, 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 Ms. VELÁZQUEZ:

H.R. 3807. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for activities to increase the awareness and knowledge of health care providers and women with respect to ovarian and cervical cancer, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. LoBIONDO (for himself, Mr. KEATING, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. POLIQUIN, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. HIMES, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, and Mr. PETERS):

H. Res. 529. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the J-1 visa programs, specifically the Summer Work Travel, Au Pair, Camp Counselor, and Intern and Trainee programs, are vital to the economy and national interests of the United States and the Congress should continue to monitor the administration of these programs in their current form; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

MEMORIALS

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

122. The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the General Assembly of the State of New Jersey, relative to Assembly Resolution No. 195, urging Congress to pass the ''Surface Transportation and Maritime Security Act''; which was referred to the Committee on Homeland Security.

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. ROGERS of Kentucky:

H.R. 3802.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. AMODEI:

H.R. 3803.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically Clause 1, Clause 3, and Clause 18.

By Mr. BLUMENAUER:

H.R. 3804.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

By Mr. KEATING:

H.R. 3805.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. LANGEVIN:

H.R. 3806.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

clause 3 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution.

By Ms. VELÁZQUEZ:

H.R. 3807.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

The Congress shall have Power . . . To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 36: Mr. SMITH of Texas and Mr. HARPER.

H.R. 140: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.

H.R. 210: Mr. SESSIONS.

H.R. 299: Mr. NORMAN.

H.R. 466: Mrs. WAGNER.

H.R. 490: Mr. GIANFORTE.

H.R. 644: Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. GRAVES of Georgia, and Mr. JOYCE of Ohio.

H.R. 669: Mr. NADLER.

H.R. 671: Mr. CARBAJAL.

H.R. 719: Mr. NORMAN.

H.R. 754: Ms. BORDALLO.

H.R. 785: Mr. MESSER, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, and Mr. GRAVES of Georgia.

H.R. 911: Mr. KIHUEN, Mr. TONKO, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Mr. RUSH, and Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI.

H.R. 918: Mr. DEFAZIO.

H.R. 1017: Mr. KIND, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Mr. KUSTOFF of Tennessee, Mr. VISCLOSKY, Mr. LEWIS of Minnesota, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. KATKO, Mr. TONKO, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. COOK, Mr. VALADAO, and Mr. BLUM.

H.R. 1143: Mr. COURTNEY.

H.R. 1144: Ms. JUDY CHU of California.

H.R. 1150: Mr. GUTHRIE.

H.R. 1164: Mr. YOHO, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mrs. HANDEL, Mr. BANKS of Indiana, and Ms. STEFANIK.

H.R. 1267: Mr. JEFFRIES and Mr. DEUTCH.

H.R. 1270: Mr. CRIST.

H.R. 1276: Mr. HECK.

H.R. 1357: Mr. POLIS and Mr. HUFFMAN.

H.R. 1459: Mr. PITTENGER.

H.R. 1487: Mr. RUSH.

H.R. 1599: Ms. JENKINS of Kansas.

H.R. 1660: Mr. TED LIEU of California.

H.R. 1676: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia and Mr. KIND.

H.R. 1698: Mr. GOODLATTE.

H.R. 1753: Mr. CARBAJAL.

H.R. 1762: Mr. BACON.

H.R. 1832: Mr. SCHIFF.

H.R. 1889: Mr. CÁRDENAS.

H.R. 1943: Mr. DUFFY.

H.R. 1957: Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mr. PANETTA, Mr. ESPAILLAT, and Mr. SWALWELL of California.

H.R. 1970: Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER.

H.R. 2092: Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. DESJARLAIS, and Mr. SMITH of Texas.

H.R. 2147: Ms. NORTON and Mr. CARBAJAL.

H.R. 2149: Ms. JENKINS of Kansas.

H.R. 2201: Mr. PITTENGER.

H.R. 2228: Mr. BARLETTA.

H.R. 2267: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, and Mr. NORCROSS.

H.R. 2340: Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 2405: Mr. MESSER, Mr. OLSON, and Mr. PEARCE.

H.R. 2452: Mr. PANETTA.

H.R. 2465: Mr. CURBELO of Florida.

H.R. 2482: Mr. CARBAJAL, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. COOPER, Mr. CUELLAR, Mrs. DEMINGS, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New

Mexico, Mr. PETERSON, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. RUIZ, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. SCHRADER, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, and Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER.

H.R. 2652: Mr. DEFAZIO.

H.R. 2740: Mr. SHERMAN.

H.R. 2790: Miss RICE of New York.

H.R. 2926: Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI and Mr. UPTON.

H.R. 2936: Mr. GIANFORTE and Mr. SMITH of Missouri.

H.R. 2954: Mr. HILL.

H.R. 3006: Mr. LOEBSACK.

H.R. 3031: Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 3071: Mr. WELCH.

H.R. 3139: Mr. LAMBORN.

H.R. 3175: Mr. GUTIÉRREZ.

H.R. 3176: Mr. GAETZ.

H.R. 3197: Mr. GOMEZ.

H.R. 3222: Ms. LEE.

H.R. 3304: Ms. NORTON.

H.R. 3314: Ms. CASTOR of Florida.

H.R. 3316: Mr. SWALWELL of California.

H.R. 3324: Mr. HOLDING.

H.R. 3329: Mr. GAETZ, Mr. ZELDIN, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mr. CARBAJAL, and Mr. COFFMAN.

H.R. 3371: Mr. MCCLINTOCK.

H.R. 3380: Mr. RASKIN.

H.R. 3394: Mr. SMITH of Washington.

H.R. 3452: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas and Mr. BABIN.

H.R. 3459: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.

H.R. 3497: Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. CURBELO of Florida, and Mr. WESTERMAN.

H.R. 3566: Ms. SINEMA.

H.R. 3632: Mr. KATKO, Mr. LANCE, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. TURNER, Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER, Mr. JOYCE of Ohio, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Mr. BARR, Mr. HUNTER, and Mr. ZELDIN.

H.R. 3634: Ms. ESTY of Connecticut.

H.R. 3734: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Ms. JACKSON LEE, and Ms. BROWNLEY of California.

H.R. 3749: Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 3758: Mr. CURBELO of Florida.

H.R. 3766: Mr. DELANEY.

H.R. 3775: Mr. PITTENGER.

H.R. 3776: Mr. CHABOT and Mr. CONNOLLY.

H.R. 3782: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.

H.R. 3788: Mr. GOTTHEIMER.

H.J. Res. 53: Ms. ESTY of Connecticut.

H.J. Res. 117: Ms. NORTON.

H. Con. Res. 61: Mr. HARPER.

H. Con. Res. 73: Mr. NEWHOUSE.

H. Res. 129: Mr. COOK and Mr. SUOZZI.

H. Res. 219: Ms. MENG.

H. Res. 319: Mrs. HARTZLER.

H. Res. 458: Mr. ROKITA.

H. Res. 466: Mr. HOLLINGSWORTH.

H. Res. 490: Mr. COURTNEY and Mr. KING of New York.

H. Res. 496: Ms. TSONGAS.

H. Res. 507: Ms. TITUS.

United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 115th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 163 WASHINGTON, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2017 *No. 150*

Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable TODD YOUNG, a Senator from the State of Indiana.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Holy and Gracious God, let Your light shine out of darkness into our hearts.

Today, fill our lawmakers with the knowledge of Your purposes, providing them with the insights to accomplish Your will. Inspire them to humble themselves under Your mighty hand so that You may exalt them in due time. Lord, keep them mindful of the great responsibility You have placed upon them, and may they trust Your power to do through them more than they can ask or imagine. Watch over and guard them and their loved ones in their going out and coming in.

Lord, thank You for the loving care and tender mercies that You provide us each day.

We pray in Your loving 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 legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, September 18, 2017.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable TODD YOUNG, a Senator from the State of Indiana, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ORRIN G. HATCH,
President pro tempore.

Mr. YOUNG thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr President, our Nation faces many national security threats across the globe.

The threats and challenges posed by Iran, China, Russia, North Korea, ISIL, al-Qaeda, and its affiliates represent a diverse range of conventional and asymmetric capabilities that threaten our national security and that of our allies.

We also know that the challenges we face have been compounded by everything from sequestration to the last administration's self-defeating foreign policy, with the Obama administration's focus on reducing the size of our conventional force only adding to the burden of our forward-deployed units.

We have to be smart if we are going to address these challenges effectively and do right by our men and women in uniform appropriately.

We have to provide our servicemembers with the resources and training they need. That is obvious.

We have to continue the hard work of rebuilding our military and restoring combat readiness. That is ongoing.

We have to modernize the Pentagon and root out waste within the military bureaucracy. That is important for strengthening accountability.

We also have to prepare for the threats of both today and tomorrow by promoting defense innovation, enhancing cyber security, and—especially when you consider all the recent belligerence from North Korea—strengthening missile defense.

For these reasons and many others, like authorizing a well-deserved raise for our servicemembers, it is imperative that we join together today in passing the defense authorization legislation before us.

Mr. President, I thank the Armed Services Committee for its good work on this year's National Defense Authorization Act. The members of that committee, from both parties, came together to support this year's NDAA and send it to the Senate floor. It is yet another testament to the leadership of Senator MCCAIN, the committee's top Republican, and Senator REED, his Democratic counterpart.

So thank you, Chairman MCCAIN, thank you, Ranking Member REED, and thank you, everyone else, who worked so hard on this legislation.

Now let's pass it.

CONFIRMATION OF RUSSELL COLEMAN

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, on an entirely different matter, last week, the Senate confirmed a talented and experienced nominee with an impressive career in law enforcement to be the U.S. attorney for the Western District of Kentucky. Russell Coleman is the right person for the job.

After graduating from my alma mater, the University of Kentucky College of Law, Russell entered public service. His wide-ranging experiences at the Department of Justice, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Senate, and in private practice make him particularly qualified for this new role.

As the chief Federal law enforcement officer for the Western District of Kentucky, Russell will use his skills to serve the people of Kentucky and the United States very well. Having served as a special agent with the FBI, Russell understands the particular challenges facing law enforcement. In that role, he regularly collaborated with Federal, State, and local law enforcement officials on a vast array of issues, and he is well respected in the law enforcement community.

For instance, Kentucky continues to struggle with the opioid addiction epidemic that is tearing families and communities apart. Russell stands ready to collaborate with stakeholders and community leaders to combat it. He has earned the support of the Kentucky Narcotics Officers' Association, which looks forward to his leadership on drug enforcement issues.

Russell also worked in my office as legal counsel, helping me serve the people of Kentucky. With good humor and an unmatched determination, he advocated for the issues that were important to my constituents.

The president of the Kentucky Fraternal Order of Police wrote to me in support of Russell's nomination: ''Russell was forever thoughtful, courteous, and a true friend to our membership.''

Now Russell has the opportunity to serve once again.

I congratulate him and look forward to his service to the Commonwealth and to the country.

TRIBUTE TO NANCY KERVIN

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, on one final matter, I would like to take a brief moment to recognize a talented member of the Senate community who will be retiring this month after 20 years of service to this body and to the Nation.

Nancy Kervin is a reference librarian in the Senate Library, and for years, whenever my office needed assistance with a seemingly impossible research question, she was always ready to lend a helping hand. I could not let her depart without giving her the recognition that she so richly deserves.

Nancy came to the Senate following a wide-ranging career in publishing and in research, and through her work here, Nancy has made a lasting mark.

To members of my staff and to numerous others around the Senate, Nancy has been the first person to call when facing a difficult research question. Nancy's signature combination of intellectual rigor and unyielding perseverance has enabled her to skillfully complete countless research projects on numerous subjects throughout her time in the Senate, and, of course, she is widely known for her kindness and her good humor.

My office has worked closely with Nancy on a number of different projects over the years, but there is one project—a project of particular personal importance to me—that I would like to mention today.

A number of years ago, I began a series of lectures at Kentucky colleges and universities focusing on the lives and legacies of prominent U.S. Senators from the Commonwealth. Since the project's inception, my staff has regularly looked to Nancy for help. She has been an indispensable resource for each historical speech in Kentucky that I have delivered. Her work in gathering sources and putting the information in its proper context has helped me to pay tribute to many distinguished Kentuckians. Therefore, it is fitting that she holds the highest honor that my State can bestow upon a civilian, that of a Kentucky colonel.

After her years of dedicated service, Nancy deserves a relaxing retirement. Along with her husband, Stephen—another stalwart member of the Senate family who will be retiring from the Senate Historical Office—Nancy plans to spend time traveling and working in her garden. She will be sorely missed here.

On behalf of the entire Senate family, I congratulate Nancy and Stephen on their successful careers in promoting the history and the legacy of this Chamber and those who have served in it. I wish them both happy retirements.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LEE. 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.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 2810, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2810) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

Pending:

McCain/Reed modified amendment No. 1003, in the nature of a substitute.

McConnell (for MCCAIN) amendment No. 545 (to amendment No. 1003), of a perfecting nature.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Utah.

NOMINATION OF MAKAN DELRAHIM

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I rise to speak in support of the nomination of Makan Delrahim as the Assistant Attorney General for the Antitrust Division of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Mr. Delrahim is someone I have known for over 15 years. He is eminently qualified, and I have no doubt that he will make an outstanding Assistant Attorney General.

Mr. Delrahim has a long and distinguished career within the antitrust world. His service in this area includes service as senior staffer for the Senate Judiciary Committee of the Antitrust Modernization Commission and previously at the U.S. Department of Justice.

I could go on and on regarding Mr. Delrahim's accomplishments, regarding his character and his aptitude as a lawyer, generally, and as an antitrust lawyer, in particular. But instead of taking my word for it, allow me to read just a little bit of the wide-ranging support Mr. Delrahim's nomination has from both sides of the aisle. People within the Senate and outside the Senate on both sides of the aisle have been supportive of this nomination.

A bipartisan group of former Assistant Attorneys General for the Antitrust Division at the Department of Justice—including AAGs for Antitrust under President Obama, President Clinton, and President Carter—submitted a letter expressing strong support for Mr. Delrahim's nomination. They explained that ''Mr. Delrahim has the experience, intelligence, judgment, and leadership skills necessary to serve as an excellent Assistant Attorney General.''

Similarly, a bipartisan group of former Commissioners of the Antitrust Modernization Commission, a group of well-respected, seasoned anti-trust officials, submitted a letter supporting Mr. Delrahim's nomination. The letter said that Delrahim will ''serve with high distinction and be an outstanding Assistant Attorney General for antitrust.'' The authors of this letter also ''strongly urge[d] the Committee to look favorably upon his nomination, with the hope that the Senate can confirm him as soon as possible.''

Because Mr. Delrahim is so well respected, his nomination is one that has enjoyed broad bipartisan support, including broad bipartisan support within the Senate Judiciary Committee, on which I serve. He was voted out of the committee by a vote of 19 to 1. That is not all that common these days. Ranking Member FEINSTEIN went out of her way to explain that Mr. Delrahim ''will fully and fairly enforce our antitrust laws.''

Despite this strong bipartisan support, Mr. Delrahim's nomination has languished on the floor. In fact, the wait to confirm Makan Delrahim is the longest for someone appointed to this

position in 40 years. Not since the Carter administration has a new administration been forced to wait this long to fill the vacancy at the Antitrust Division. President Carter's wait was largely due to the fact that he took more than twice as long to nominate an Assistant Attorney General for the Antitrust Division than did President Trump.

Apparently, some Democrats are still so eager to resist that they are unwilling to allow us to confirm a nominee who many of them support. This is unacceptable. Democrats understand that antitrust is essential to ensuring that consumers receive the benefits of a competitive economy: lower prices, more innovation, and more choice. You see, when you have competition, good things happen. When you have competition, it inevitably brings down prices, and it inevitably results in higher quality.

In fact, last month some Democrats reiterated the importance of a strong antitrust enforcement to our economy, and they did so by releasing their Better Deal plan. The Democrats' plan describes the effects that anticompetitive mergers can have, such as harming consumers, customers, and suppliers.

Senator KLOBUCHAR, along with several Democratic colleagues, followed up on this plan by proposing legislation to enact some of these policies into law. Although I don't agree with all of their proposed solutions, I do agree with my colleagues from across the aisle that antitrust enforcement should be a priority.

The best way to ensure that antitrust laws are being properly prioritized is to make sure our antitrust agencies are fully staffed and have leaders in place—leaders who have the requisite expertise and ability; leaders who have broad bipartisan support from sitting Senators, practitioners, and former agency leaders who know the position and the exacting demands required by the position; leaders who fit the description of Makan Delrahim.

Given his broad support, his impeccable qualifications, and the importance of this position, there is no good reason to delay this confirmation—quite to the contrary. This is a position that is neither Republican nor Democratic. It is a position that is neither liberal nor conservative. This position is there to advance bipartisan issues that affect every American. And Makan Delrahim in this position at a critical time in our Nation's history, at a critical time for antitrust law—it is especially important that we have him in place.

Antitrust law is an area in which the United States has excelled above and beyond what its peer nations have been able to achieve. We developed this area of the law, and we did so with an eye toward protecting consumers and competition itself rather than protecting individual competitors. We have to lead, and the best way we can start is by confirming Makan Delrahim. So I call upon the Senate to confirm Makan Delrahim as Assistant Attorney General for the Antitrust Division of the U.S. Department of Justice.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Florida.

HURRICANE IRMA RECOVERY

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I wish to speak about the Defense bill, but before I do, I want to give the Senate a report.

Senator RUBIO and I have been together quite a bit this past week, as Florida has not only encountered a hurricane, but this was quite unusual in that it basically affected almost all of the State of Florida.

Florida is a big State. If you went from Key West to Pensacola, it is as far as going from Pensacola all the way to Chicago. That is how big our State is. With almost 21 million people, it is the third largest State, with 75 percent of that a population along the coast. Of course, we know what happens when hurricanes start threatening those coasts.

This was an unusual one because it was first going to hit the east coast of Florida. That was the track. The National Hurricane Center has gotten quite good in their ability to project the path and the velocity of the winds. But once it took an unexpected turn, hitting the north coast of Cuba as a category 5, its velocity and forward motion were reduced, and it then took a more westerly path, making landfall in the Middle and Lower Keys of Florida, where the winds were category 3, approaching category 4. Residents were not even let back in to see their homes until Sunday morning.

As of now, although FEMA is present in the Lower Keys—Key West—and in the Upper Keys—Key Largo—individual assistance and disaster teams were still trying to get into the areas that had the biggest impact, the areas around Big Pine Key and Marathon. It is a painfully slow process. FEMA is having to deal with the problems in Texas and now the enormity of the storm affecting almost all of Florida. FEMA is stretched. But FEMA is supposed to bring emergency assistance to people, organizations, and local governments in the aftermath of a natural disaster. That will be a work in progress as we go on.

There are places where Senator RUBIO and I have gotten personally involved in asking FEMA to come in, areas in Lee County and Collier County. Areas where FEMA had not visited, they now have come in—Lee County, east of Fort Myers, and Lehigh Acres.

The little farming community of Immokalee was exceptionally torn up. There is a great story there. The university president opened up the fieldhouse so that a lot of the poor people in Immokalee had a place to go if they didn't have another shelter. Indeed, they took in some 400 people. Elderly people in an apartment complex whose caregivers had left were picked up by the sheriff and taken to the university, and the students cared for them for 4 nights. This is a great example of Floridians helping Floridians, which we have seen throughout.

This Senator has been all over the State, much of it with my colleague, demonstrating that the two Senators, in a bipartisan way, actually get along and were there to try to help the people.

First, right after the storm in the Florida Keys, we saw damage in Key West and Boca Chica. But that was the back side of the storm. The eye of the storm had gone farther to the east, so the damage was in the northeastern quadrant since the most severe winds were in the Big Pine Key and the Marathon area. The military, the Coast Guard, FEMA, and the engineers came in immediately after the storm. Floridians helping Floridians. Americans helping Americans.

Then Senator RUBIO and I went to the Jacksonville area. Quite unusual was that all the extra rainfall had flowed into the St. Johns River Basin. The river had swollen, and all of that water was trying to get its normal outlet into the Atlantic Ocean at Jacksonville. But lo and behold, the winds covering up the entire peninsula moving northward, now the eye over land between Tampa and Orlando and that northeastern quadrant of those winds coming from east going west—what did it do at Jacksonville? It pushed back all of the water that needed to get out into the Atlantic. That, combined with the incoming high tide—what you had was phenomenal flooding, an overflowing of the banks of the St. Johns River in many places in the Upper St. Johns, at considerable loss of property and considerable distress to the citizens. A good part of downtown Jacksonville was flooded.

The next day, Senator RUBIO and I ended up in a citrus grove in Lake Wales, FL. Fifty percent of the fruit in this citrus grove was on the ground. Farther south, 75 percent of the citrus crop was on the ground. They can't salvage that. That is a huge percentage of the loss. So it made Senator RUBIO and me all the more determined that we are going to try to pass an amendment to the Tax Code that would give the citrus growers of Florida—not only because of this loss but also because of every grove now infected by a bacteria called citrus greening that will kill the tree in 5 years—that would give the citrus industry a chance to start over by plowing under the grove of those diseased citrus trees and replanting new stock that has new promise to outlast the bacteria—at least for a number of years more than the 5 years that will kill the tree—until we can find the cure, and we are working on that. But do that in the IRS Code by allowing them to expense in the first year the plowing under and replanting in order to save the citrus industry.

Senator RUBIO and I were in that grove and saw all of that lost crop. That was going to be a promising crop

for the first time in 10 years of declines of the citrus crop because of the bacteria. This was going to be a good year, but we saw half of that crop on the ground in that grove, lost, gone. Citrus crop insurance is not going to really help them—only if it is a much greater loss.

From there, the two of us went on to a poor part of Florida, east of Lake Okeechobee, called Belle Glade. A lot of the residences were torn up by the winds.

This was a hurricane whose winds affected virtually all of the peninsula of Florida and even reached over into the panhandle as far as Tallahassee and even other parts west.

In Belle Glade, we served a meal. Charities had come together to bring food to hungry people because they had no power and they had no refrigeration. It had been several days since the hurricane, and therefore they had no food.

From there, we went to another very poor part of Florida, Immokalee, FL, which I described earlier, which had been torn up considerably.

Whether it was what I just described or whether it was feeding poor people in Apopka, FL, who at that point had been without power for 5 days, and they had no food because there was no refrigeration, or whether it was going down to Lehigh Acres, where the Florida National Guard had organized the distribution of MREs, which are meals ready to eat, and gallons of fresh water because so many of those homes out in Lehigh Acres, east of Fort Myers, were on water wells, and without electricity, there were no pumps to give them water—there are so many things that we often take for granted. If power is taken away, you suffer not only because of the 90 degree-plus heat and humidity but also because you can't even get any water because you are on a water well.

It was a privilege to be there with the Florida National Guard, handing out food, handing out water, and talking to those local residents who are living paycheck to paycheck—and now they have no paycheck. Where is the FEMA assistant to help them? Because there is no power, they can't go online to apply for individual assistance. In fact, they can't pick up the phone because of the intermittent cell service. Even if they could get a cell signal, they couldn't get through to the FEMA number. That is why we wanted the FEMA representatives to come in, and fortunately, just yesterday, they finally did come in.

It has been quite a couple of weeks—first, anticipating the storm coming in and getting all of the emergency operation centers ready. Fortunately, people obeyed the evacuation orders. It was estimated that out of the population of almost 100,000 in the Keys, there were only 10,000 left. That was a huge evacuation. Those folks did not get in to find out what was left of their homes until yesterday. You can imagine, a week after the storm had hit—the weekend before the Keys—all of that water was in there, setting in with the heat and the humidity, the mold and the mildew. You can imagine the mess, the cleanup.

All the while, FEMA has to worry about Texas, now Florida, and maybe another hurricane that is going to come up. It looks as though it is going to turn out to sea but is still going to have some of the wind effects along the northeast Atlantic Coast.

Floridians helping Floridians—and then there was a great, great tragedy that occurred 4 days after the hurricane. Why there is not a requirement that every nursing home or assisted living facility, an ALF, have a generator not only for power, for lights, but have a generator capacity that will run air conditioning units—I think this is going to be the subject of great debate that I hope will change that requirement in the State of Florida because eight people died. Eight people died in a nursing home right across the street from a major hospital in Hollywood, FL—eight frail elderly, from ages 70 to 99—eight needless deaths as a result. A criminal investigation is underway.

All the phone calls that had been made that were not answered, both to the government as well as to the power company, as reported by the press, specifically a Miami television station—we don't know all the facts; they will come out in the criminal investigation. But it is inexcusable that eight frail, elderly people would die from heat exhaustion by being left so that their condition deteriorated over the course of 3 or 4 days.

What is wrong with a regulatory scheme that does not have a backup generator that would kick in when, in fact, the hospital right across the street had one? What was the disconnect there? Why did it take days and days until 911 was called? We will find out in this great tragedy.

I can tell you, the Miami Herald had done a series, over the last couple of years, of three investigative pieces, which pointed out that these ALFs and these nursing homes had not been properly managed or regulated by the State of Florida. That is to be determined.

Hurricane Irma is just another reminder that we are going to confront huge natural occurrences and maybe, just maybe, people will realize there is something to the fact that the Earth is getting hotter. Because of that, two-thirds of the Earth is covered by oceans, with the oceans absorbing 90 percent of that heat. What happens to water when it is heated? It expands. Thus, the sea levels are rising.

Mr. President, as we turn to this Defense bill, this is an issue of national security. As Secretary of Defense Mattis has said, ''Climate change is impacting stability in areas of the world where our troops are operating today.''

Maybe we should pay attention to issues like those I have just described in Florida or maybe in Texas. Or what about tornadoes causing damage to military depots in Georgia? Or what about the severe heat canceling military training and hail storms damaging aircraft in Texas? What about the coastal erosion, not only in Florida but also threatening early-warning radar in Alaska? What about the wildfires causing ranges to be closed and the flooding that we saw in not only Texas but also the flooding damaging military logistics rail in Louisiana and affecting warehouses containing hazardous materials in Virginia?

That is why, in this version of the Defense bill that we will pass today, there is a provision that this Senator had something to do with, which calls for the Defense Department to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the threats to the training and readiness of our Armed Forces and the military infrastructure caused by climate-related events.

It is critical that we recognize the threat so we will ensure that our forces and installations are resilient enough to withstand and quickly recover from all of these natural disasters that we have been talking about. Not only must we ensure that our military infrastructure is resilient, we must also ensure that it provides our warfighters with the space they need to train and the technology they need to stay ahead of our adversaries.

I have opined on this subject over and over in speeches to the Senate. I have opined over and over about the Gulf Test and Training Range that the Air Force needs to make huge investments in for the precise measurements of all of our sophisticated weapons and our systems.

I thank Chairman MCCAIN and Ranking Member REED for their good work on the bill. It begins to address some of the training and readiness shortfalls in our military. I look forward to continuing to discuss this.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

THANKING THE SENIOR SENATOR FROM FLORIDA

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, let me once again thank my friend and colleague from Florida. There is no one—no one—who has defended his State more diligently, more assiduously, more effectively than the senior Senator from the State of Florida. I know there are close to 20 million people in Florida who are grateful, as are all of us.

Thank you.

Mr. President, we will vote today on the final passage of NDAA. I am pleased with the bipartisan manner in which the Senate has worked on this important legislation. Senators MCCAIN and REED managed the bill with great skill. I commend them for their bipartisan work on this important legislation.

HEALTHCARE

Mr. President, I am going to use the rest of my time to address something that is not so bipartisan. It is terribly partisan, and that is the issue of healthcare. I hope the American people listen closely.

After a few months of lying dormant, TrumpCare is back, and it is meaner than ever. TrumpCare now lives under the name of Cassidy-Graham. Guess what. It is another bill that would drastically cut back on healthcare funding for Americans who need it most.

My colleagues, my fellow Americans, this is a red-alert moment for the entire country. Our healthcare system again is threatened by a hastily constructed piece of legislation, put together in a back room by only one party—no CBO score, no committee process, not a single hearing. Everyone is totally in the dark about the effects of this bill, yet there is an effort to rush it forward.

This Frankenstein monster of a bill that would harm so many Americans keeps coming back and back, and somehow each time it has managed to get worse.

Here is what we know the new TrumpCare bill would do. It would roll back protections for Americans with preexisting conditions. It would allow States to impose burdensome requirements as a condition on Medicaid coverage. It would defund Planned Parenthood, stripping millions of women of their right to access affordable healthcare. Most crucially, the new TrumpCare would plunge a dagger deep into the heart of Medicaid, immediately ending Medicaid expansion and establishing a per capita cap on Medicaid spending. That jeopardizes coverage for 11 million Americans and puts at great risk the coverage and affordability of insurance for the 12 million who buy insurance on the marketplaces.

It would take the money used for Medicaid expansion and subsidies and block-grant it to the States, imposing a massive cut on funding that helps so many Americans well into the middle class.

The term ''block grants'' may sound harmless, but in practice they are anything but. Right now, our healthcare system reimburses States for the costs of what their citizens actually need and use. Block grants are a fixed amount of money given to each State, forcing people who need healthcare to fight among each other as to who gets those dollars. People with parents in nursing homes will fight with those on opioid treatment, who will fight with those who have kids with preexisting conditions, who will fight with those who simply need to go see a doctor. They will all be pitted against one another in a heartless scheme, a heartless scheme that will hurt so many.

Block grants are a not-so-clever way of disguising a massive, massive cut to healthcare—cutting back care, raising premiums, hurting millions and millions of average Americans.

That is the case with this new TrumpCare. The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities took a look at the new TrumpCare and found that the block grants in the bill would deprive States of hundreds of millions and sometimes billions of dollars. I am going to mention a few States here. My colleagues should know the effect of the bill. They don't.

CBO has told us—I will talk more about this later—that they cannot give us a full score but simply notes whether it meets the budget reconciliation numbers. They say it will cut a billion dollars. That is all it will say. We will not know how many citizens are hurt, but the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, whose numbers are very reliable, has done a calculation. I would ask my colleagues to pay attention. I just picked out some States. There are more. Arizona would lose $1.6 billion in Federal funding. Alaska would lose $255 million in Federal funding. Maine would lose $115 million in Federal funding. West Virginia would lose $554 million in Federal funding. Colorado would lose $823 million in Federal funding. Ohio, the State most racked by the opioid epidemic, would lose over $2.5 billion in healthcare funding. Iowa would lose $525 million in Federal funding. These are devastating numbers. My colleagues, if you don't believe the accuracy of these numbers, then have the courage and decency to wait for a CBO score. To pass this legislation before CBO measures out the effect on your State would be legislative malpractice of the highest order. These numbers, we believe, are accurate. They come from a group that has had years of expertise and accurately predicted healthcare effects. There will be devastating cuts to so many in so many States.

If you don't believe these numbers, then show us what yours are. Wait for CBO, an impartial arbiter, and see what they have to say. The numbers are devastating. They represent millions of Americans, especially middle-income and low-income, who will receive poorer healthcare, face higher costs, or both. Whom do they represent? You are an American family—a nice, middle-class family making a good income. You have a parent in a nursing home. It is likely to be paid for by Medicaid. That parent is at risk if this Graham-Cassidy bill passes. You have a young son or daughter afflicted by opioids. The treatment they receive would often be at risk if this bill passes. You give birth to a child with a preexisting condition who desperately needs help. We met so many of these families, every one of us. That child's life, in many cases, would be at risk if this bill passes. This is the poorest way of legislating I have seen in all my years here. To try to rush this bill through with no hearings, no CBO score, no knowledge of how it actually affects your constituents—how can we do that?

Already, some Republican Governors have spoken out against this legislation. Governor Kasich, Governor Baker, and 16 patient and provider groups have come out against this TrumpCare, including the American Cancer Society and the American Heart Association. The ratings agency Fitch says Graham-Cassidy would be even ''more disruptive'' than all the other ACA bills. The American people have rejected TrumpCare repeatedly. Its numbers in the polls are below 20 percent. Hardcore supporters of Donald Trump do not want us to pass this bill. Virtually only one in five Americans wants us to pass this bill—hardly anybody—and we are going to go do it for a political scalp? No, we can't.

I know there are some on the other side of the aisle who say they can work it out so each State wouldn't be hurt as badly as under the current draft of the bill—these bad numbers—that they can tweak the formula for one State or another that would make the cuts less devastating. First, they are never going to come up with that kind of money. I heard one Governor was told by a Senator: Don't worry about the big cuts to your State. We will make it up with disproportionate share payments—uncompensated care. It is impossible. The amount of money in the DSH Program is so much less than the amount of these cuts that we couldn't even come close. That is what is being thrown around here. There are lots of different surmises: Maybe we will do this, maybe we will do that. We are playing with people's lives. That is so wrong. States will end up facing a harsh cut—most of the States in the Union—many States represented by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle who voted for the previous bills.

We shouldn't do it on substance, but we also shouldn't do it on the basis of regular order. To have such a major bill that affects so many people be rushed at the last minute in the dark of night—no discussion, no analysis, no real knowledge of how it affects each of our States—is legislative malpractice of the highest order.

If the Founding Fathers were looking at this Chamber now and watching, they would be turning over in their graves. An America founded on debate and discussion and sunlight is veering off all of that in a really nasty way. There is no regular order here. There are no bipartisan public hearings on the Graham-Cassidy bill. The HELP and Finance Committees are not debating the legislation. It is the same back-room, one-party sham of a legislative process that ultimately brought the previous bill down. A contrived, eleventh-hour hearing on block grants in the Homeland Security Committee—a committee that has very little jurisdiction over healthcare matters—does not even come close to suggesting regular order.

In conclusion, I think many of us on both sides of the aisle thought there was a ray of light in the last few

weeks. The partisanship that had governed this place for the last 8 months seemed to be breaking. I had good meetings in the White House—hopes of working together. Senators ALEXANDER and MURRAY began talking about how we move forward. I was joyful that maybe the partisanship could end and we could work together. The majority leader and I are getting along very well. This bill, if done this way and passed, would dash those hopes.

There is a way out. Senators ALEXANDER and MURRAY have had hearings. They have had discussions. They are negotiating at this moment. What they will come up with will have some things I don't like and some things people on the other side of the aisle don't like. That is the legislative process. It is not to rush a bill through in the dark of night without even knowledge of how it affects people. CBO has said they cannot measure how many people would lose coverage and how they would be affected until a few weeks because this is a block grant. It takes a long time to weigh it.

So after 2 weeks of thinking bipartisanship—that flickering candle might gain some new light—this is the last thing we need. Let's not go back to the divisive, destructive healthcare process that paralyzed the Senate for much of this year. Let the leader and I encourage our Members to talk to one another and come up with bipartisan solutions—not just on this bill but on bills to come. Let's pursue the bipartisan path courageously used by Senators ALEXANDER and MURRAY.

In conclusion, I would ask every American who hears these words, who longs for us to work together, to call your Senators and Congressmen and let them know. Tell them this bill is even worse than the previous bills. Tell them it hurts average families dramatically. Tell them there is a better way. The same level of activism that we saw on the previous bills must be garnered now or this will just slide through in the dark of night, with effects that are desperate, devastating, and unknown. Democrats in the Senate, we have no choice. Our constituencies, our consciousness impels us. We will oppose the Graham-Cassidy bill in every way we can, using every tool at our disposal, and we ask the American people to speak out, once again, and make their voices heard. The hour is late, and the need is desperate.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam President, I first thank the Democratic leader for his efforts to work and reach out to the Republican leader, Senator MCCONNELL, as we move forward to try to take some sensible steps to improve our healthcare system, not try to blow up the entire healthcare system.

Just last month, the overwhelming majority of the American people sighed a great sigh of relief when this Senate voted down the earlier TrumpCare proposal that would have destroyed the Affordable Care Act and which would have had a devastating impact on the entire American healthcare system.

We all recall, at that point in time, Senator MCCAIN gave a powerful and impassioned speech on this floor about the importance of the Senate going through the regular order, about working in a transparent way, in a bipartisan way, to improve and strengthen our healthcare system—not another cynical, partisan effort to ram through a piece of legislation that impacts hundreds of millions of our fellow Americans. For a time, it seemed we were making headway on that front. Senator LAMAR ALEXANDER and Senator PATTY MURRAY and the HELP Committee are working together, holding hearings, bringing people from all points of view in front of that committee to testify about how we can improve and strengthen our current system.

Now, instead of heading down that bipartisan path, we are seeing another last-ditch effort to destroy the Affordable Care Act and, in the process, wreak incredible damage to our entire healthcare system. The latest incarnation of TrumpCare is the Graham-Cassidy legislation. Make no mistake, in many ways, this is far worse than the earlier proposals we have seen.

It would end the Medicaid expansion program, which in my State of Maryland actually has provided more affordable care to more Marylanders than the exchanges that were established under the Affordable Care Act. It will dramatically cut the funds under the Medicaid Program through a block grant proposal that gives very little, given the huge responsibilities that the State has.

It will give a green light to States throughout the country to eliminate the really important patient protections, protections against discrimination based on preexisting conditions like diabetes or asthma or whatever it may be, and it will give a blank check to those who want to eliminate the important essential benefit provisions that provide important coverage guarantees for women's health and so many other important areas like mental health and substance abuse.

Doctors in this country take a very simple oath, the Hippocratic oath, which says: First, do no harm.

This piece of legislation—this latest incarnation of TrumpCare—will do devastating harm to our healthcare system, and you don't have to take my word for it. As more and more groups learn about this piece of legislation—and they are just looking at the details—they are beginning to phone into our offices and to send us emails and texts. I can assure you that Members will see the same outpouring of opposition to this bill that they saw to the earlier ones.

Already we have seen strong statements of opposition from the American Cancer Society, the American Diabetes Association, the American Heart Association, the American Lung Association, and the list goes on and on, and it just started.

It is important for us to remember that these are not Republican groups. They are not Democratic groups. They have no partisan affiliation at all. Their only interest is to protect patients in this country, and we should have the same interest in protecting the health of our constituents.

It is not just the patient advocacy groups that are already strongly opposed to this. Those who provide healthcare in our system to our loved ones—to our parents, to our children—are coming out strongly opposed to this already.

Here is what the Children's Hospital Association has to say about the Graham-Cassidy provision:

> Their legislation would slash funding for Medicaid, the nation's largest health care program for children, by one-third, reducing access and coverage for more than 30 million children in the program. Furthermore, the legislation weakens important consumer safeguards, and as a result, millions of children in working families would no longer be assured that their private insurance covers the most basic of services without annual and lifetime limits. . . .

And they go on. That is the Children's Hospital Association. Those are the hospitals that every day are caring for kids throughout this country, and they are not alone in already opposing this legislation.

The American Academy of Family Physicians, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American College of Physicians, the American Nurses Association—in short, all of those organizations representing all those people out there who are providing healthcare to our fellow Americans, to our constituents—are opposed to this bill.

AARP, which, of course, represents millions—in fact, tens of millions—of older Americans is strongly opposed to this bill because, once again, it opens the door toward age discrimination in the amount of the premiums that are charged. Older Americans and elderly Americans will see their premiums go through the roof under this proposal, and that is why AARP is also strongly opposed.

So just when we thought we were at a point where we were going to focus on a bipartisan basis on improving our healthcare system, which has a whole lot of room for improvement, just when we began to see bipartisan hearings and legislation possibly emerge from the HELP Committee, we now see this last-ditch effort on the floor of the Senate to do what other bills had tried to do but in an even worse fashion.

We are hearing already from Americans—not with political hats on, not with Republican hats on or Democratic hats on or Independent hats on, not with political hats on at all, just people who care about the healthcare of the people of this country—and they are resoundingly opposed to this. So let's not try and ram something

through here in the next 2 weeks to try to meet an artificial clock that has been set by the rules of the Senate. There has been ample time to debate this, and we have debated the earlier versions. Let's not allow this final sneak attack on the American healthcare system to get through this body. It would be a very sad day for the Senate.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. YOUNG. Madam President, I rise today to discuss the National Defense Authorization Act. I want to begin by thanking Senators MCCAIN and REED, the chairman and ranking member of the Senate Armed Services Committee. I commend their continued bipartisan leadership and collaboration on behalf of our servicemembers and our national security.

As someone who served in the U.S. Marine Corps and also served on the House Armed Services Committee, I understand the importance of Congress's fulfilling its constitutional duties to our men and women in uniform.

This legislation is important for our country. It is also important to my neighbors. That includes Hoosiers serving on Active Duty, in the Reserves, and in the Indiana National Guard, as well as their families. It also helps Hoosiers working at Naval Surface Warfare Center Crane, Crane Army Ammunition Activity, and Defense Finance and Accounting Service in Indianapolis to perform their important work, which is essential to our servicemembers.

Now, for the last 55 years, Congress has passed the NDAA. Given the threats our country confronts, it is important that we once again pass this legislation and provide our troops with the training, weapons, and support they need to accomplish their missions and return home safely. But that is not enough.

Congress must pass Defense authorization and appropriations bills before the end of the fiscal year, stop the habitual use of continuing resolutions for the Department of Defense, and end defense sequestration once and for all. I stand ready to work with Senators of both parties to achieve these objectives.

I am committed to doing my part, and that is why I voted to end debate on this legislation last week and why I will support further advancing the bill today, despite the fact that we weren't able to debate and vote on amendments here on the floor.

Today, I will only note that I have introduced a couple of bipartisan amendments related to Saudi Arabia's actions in Yemen. These are amendment Nos. 585 and 1081. I believe this issue deserves consideration by the full Senate, and I look forward to speaking at length on this issue again in coming days.

I share the frustration of Chairman MCCAIN and Ranking Member REED regarding the lack of floor debate and substantive votes, and I hope the Senate can do better next year. I think each Senator, the Americans we represent, and the troops who protect us are right to expect better. Now, with that said, I applaud Chairman MCCAIN and Ranking Member REED for working to include over 100 noncontroversial amendments in this bill.

I am proud of the fact that the Defense bill we are going to vote on—and, hopefully, pass—this evening includes three amendments important to Hoosiers that I introduced and for which I worked with the committee to include. I would like to quickly mention two of them and then spend a little more time on the third.

The first provision is amendment No. 793. This provision would press the Department of Defense to implement Government Accountability Office recommendations or explain why they aren't doing so.

Now, let me explain why this is so important. Our Nation confronts challenges and threats of extraordinary scope. Yet the resources we have are limited. That means we need to ensure that the Department of Defense is operating as efficiently and as effectively as possible with the money the taxpayers provide. That is what our national security demands and what U.S. taxpayers are right to expect.

So when a respected organization such as the GAO, our Federal Government's auditor, conducts independent and rigorous analysis and identifies key areas for improvement within DOD, Congress and the Pentagon should take it seriously.

Here is the problem. As of this morning, there were 1,008 open GAO recommendations, including 75 priority recommendations that DOD alone has failed to address fully. Now, some of these priority recommendations relate to missile defense, ship maintenance, military readiness, servicemember healthcare, and financial management, and some of these open recommendations go back to 2009 and even earlier.

There may be a few of these recommendations in which DOD has a persuasive justification for not implementing GAO's recommendation, but I believe the burden of proof should be on DOD to either implement GAO's recommendations without delay or justify to Congress why they believe the recommendation should not be adopted. That is essentially what my provision would do.

I look forward to working with the leaders and staff of the Armed Services Committees to ensure that this important provision is included in the final legislation.

I would also like to highlight a second amendment, amendment No. 882, that I introduced and worked to include in the bill that we will soon vote to adopt. This provisions would require the Navy to conduct and provide to Congress a comprehensive review of U.S. maritime intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, and targeting capability, also known as ISRT.

In light of growing Chinese and Russian maritime capabilities, this report would require the Navy, among other things, to identify specific capability gaps and specific areas of risk when it comes to ISRT, as well as offer solutions and resources that are needed to address those capability gaps and areas of risk. The review will help to ensure that the United States retains the naval supremacy necessary to keep vital shipping lanes open, deter aggression, and defend our national security interests.

Now, lastly, I would like to highlight amendment No. 821. I introduced it and worked with the committee to include this in the bill, and I want to thank Senator DONNELLY for cosponsoring my amendment.

On January 27, the President issued a memorandum that emphasized the need for a ''modern, robust, flexible, resilient, ready, and appropriately tailored nuclear deterrent.'' This memorandum reiterated the longstanding and bipartisan consensus that deterring a nuclear attack on our country and on our allies depends on our ability to maintain a strong, nuclear deterrent.

Our nuclear deterrent includes three legs, also referred to as the nuclear triad, consisting of submarine-launched ballistic missiles, land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles, and long-range bomber aircraft. Now, each of these legs offers an important and complementary capability making clear to any potential aggressor that a nuclear attack on the United States would be suicidal and, thereby, deterring such an attack in the first place. Perhaps that is why Secretary of Defense Mattis, referring to the deterrence of potential aggressors, said just last week: ''If I wanted to send the most compelling message, I have been persuaded that the triad . . . is the right way to go.''

Now, the challenge is that, in just the next two decades, essentially all of our Nation's nuclear delivery systems and all of our nuclear weapons will need to be refurbished or replaced.

According to a February 17 study by the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, that could cost a total of $400 billion over the next decade. That is an enormous cost during a period when our Department of Defense has many other modernization bills coming due. Consequently, we must identify opportunities to minimize costs while not sacrificing capability.

So consistent with that fact, on January 31, Secretary Mattis issued a memorandum calling for an ''ambitious reform agenda, which will include a horizontal integration across DOD components to improve efficiency and take advantage of economies of scale.''

Consistent with that memorandum and the memorandum of the President, my amendment would require the Office of the Secretary of Defense, working with our Navy and Air Force, to

submit a report to Congress on the potential to achieve more value; that is, enhanced nuclear deterrence at a lower cost by integrating elements of acquisition programs related to modernization and sustainment of the nuclear triad.

If we can improve efficiency and program management, cost, and schedule by increasing integration, colocation, and commonality between the strategic deterrent programs of the Navy and the Air Force and their associated systems, technologies, and engineering processes, then we should do so.

Back home in Indiana, the skilled workers at Naval Surface Warfare Center Crane have supported the Navy Strategic Systems Program for more than 60 years. Crane is the largest DOD supplier to the Strategic Systems Program. Crane provides the Navy's only organic high-reliability, radiation-hardening capability. Crane also serves as a leader in trusted microelectronics. What is less well known is that Crane provides important support to the Air Force's ICBM Ground Based Strategic Deterrent Program. More importantly, there is good reason to believe that Crane can dramatically increase its level of support to the Air Force's strategic programs.

That is the kind of joint collaboration between the Air Force and the Navy my amendment envisions. By breaking down stovepipe barriers between our military services, by eliminating unnecessary duplication, and by looking for commonsense opportunities for joint cooperation, we can keep our country safe and save money in the process. That is not only a win for Crane, it is a win for the Navy, it is a win for the Air Force, it is a win for taxpayers, and it is a win for the safety and security of every American.

That is why I look forward to working with the leadership and staff of the Armed Services Committee to include this amendment in the final bill.

I thank Chairman MCCAIN and Ranking Member REED for their work and tireless leadership on the Senate Armed Services Committee and for your work to bring the National Defense Authorization Act to this point.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. COTTON. Madam President, I want to clarify something about what is going to happen this afternoon. Whenever a Democratic Senator says they are worried about the state of our military, that they are horrified about the kind of cuts we are making, and they can't sleep at night because of what we are doing to our troops in the field, don't believe them. They don't mean it. They are not serious. It is all for show because they had a perfect opportunity to stop all of these terrible cuts—and not just for the troops, for their own State, for their constituents, even for their little parochial projects. What did they do? They turned it down. They said no.

Well, actually I take that back. They didn't say no. They couldn't even bring themselves to say no. They didn't have the courage to say no. They did something much worse. They said nothing because we are not even going to vote on the amendment I wanted to offer, which would have repealed the sequester spending cuts for defense and nondefense—defense and nondefense spending.

Now, the Members of this body know I am no fan of frivolous, pork-barrel spending. A lot of the projects that my Democratic colleagues sponsored could easily fall in that category, and we should rein that sort of thing in at a time when we are $20 trillion in debt, but I understand the only way we were going to get something done about the radical spending cuts to our military was to forge a bipartisan compromise.

After all, it is not like the sequester spending cuts really did that much to control spending. Did spending go down in 2011, 2012, 2013? Yes, it went from $3.6 trillion to $3.5 trillion, to $3.4 trillion, but the sequester wasn't even in effect for those first 2 years. Spending went down because Republicans won control of the House in 2010. At the end of 2013, however, Congress raised the budget caps and pushed off the sequester for those 2 years ahead. So, by 2015, Federal spending was back to $3.6 trillion, and it has been growing ever since. Time and time again, Congress has proven itself utterly incapable of sticking to the caps under the Budget Control Act of 2011.

Instead of actually saving money, all the sequester does is create an endless series of crises for Congress to escape just in the nick of time. Take this year. We all know what is going to happen. We just passed a 3-month continuing resolution earlier this month. We are going to reach a 2-year budget agreement in October or November that doesn't control spending. We are going to have an omnibus in December, written in secret in our leaders' offices, and then we are going to have another omnibus spending bill, written in secret in our leaders' offices, next December, and we will repeat that cycle over again in 2019 and 2020. How do I know that? Because that is exactly what happened in 2013 and 2015. We will never make the cuts the Budget Control Act called for. We will just pass giant budgets that nobody has read in the last minute in an attempt to avoid the crisis of our own making.

My amendment was the last best chance in years to stop this bust-and-boom cycle of budgeting. But what did the Democrats do? They threw it away. They took a perfectly good, bipartisan opportunity to repeal these automatic spending cuts, and they threw it away.

You have to ask yourself what goes through Senators' heads when they make such a cynical political calculus. Do they not understand the implications of what they are doing? Do they not see the appalling lack of readiness that is so apparent to everyone else?

Did they not see what happened to the USS *John McCain*? Did they not see what happened to the USS *Fitzgerald*? Did they not see all those caskets carrying the dead bodies of America's young coming home to families in grief? Do they not see them or do they see them and just not care?

What do they think when they hear respected men like Secretary Jim Mattis say: ''No enemy in the field has done more to harm the readiness of our military than sequestration''?

What did they think when Secretary Mattis said, after 4 short years of retirement, when he returned to the Department of Defense, ''I have been shocked by what I've seen about our readiness to fight''?

Is it just background noise? Does it not register with Democratic Senators? In fact, what must they think when they have been saying the exact same thing for years?

The junior Senator from Connecticut said: ''The so-called sequester is another example of governing at its worst.''

The junior Senator from New Jersey said: ''It is blunt, brutal, and blind.''

He gets bonus points for alliteration.

The senior Senator from Virginia: ''Sequestration is stupidity on steroids.''

I could make that claim about a lot of things that have been said in this Chamber.

The senior Senator from Washington: ''We need to replace sequestration as quickly as possible''; although, apparently, not if it requires a vote on the Cotton amendment.

The junior Senator from Minnesota: ''There are a lot of people suffering needlessly because of the sequester.''

That is not a joke, even coming from him. I guess all of these cries of anguish are falling on deaf ears.

The senior Senator from New Hampshire: ''The blind cuts of sequestration are not the right approach,'' but by all means, let's keep them in place rather than vote on the Cotton amendment.

The senior Senator from Connecticut: ''The safety and strength of our Nation also requires that Congress eliminate the rightly maligned sequestration straightjacket for all Federal programs''—maligned, yet not repealed.

My favorite is by the senior Senator from Rhode Island, the senior Democrat on the Armed Services Committee: ''Instead of dodging fiscal responsibility, Republicans need to help end sequestration and get back to a normal budget process.''

Republicans gave you a perfect example with which to do that, sir, and you turned it down.

That is what this amendment would have done, but now we will not have a single dime more for the military. We will not give a dime more to FEMA or to the National Weather Service or to NOAA or to NASA or what have you. We will not give one penny more to all of those domestic priorities that the

Democrats claim to care about. It turns out that they must not care that much about them or maybe I am being too harsh. Maybe they do like them a lot. They like using them to gin up political support because, when the time came for them to actually put their money where their mouths were, they walked away.

The Democrats will tell you that they oppose this amendment because it will not repeal the automatic sequester of mandatory spending. Don't give me that. That is nonsense. That is pure pretext. The automatic sequester consists of a small, almost trivial number of cuts, and it would not have affected one penny—not one penny—of Social Security or Medicare or veterans' benefits.

Here is what is most important. Every single Democratic Senator has voted to extend that mandatory sequester into the foreseeable future. So, far from thinking it is a problem, they have voted to extend its life.

Hey, how about I strike a new deal? Here is my offer. I will support your hiding behind procedural niceties, hiding in your cloakroom, and not voting on my amendment, if you will agree to do one thing—to go home, in person, to your military bases that are in your home States and explain to the men and women of our Armed Forces, face-to-face, why you could not bring yourselves not just to repeal these spending cuts but not even to be tough enough to take a vote one way or the other.

The Democratic leader can go to New York and tell the men and women of the 10th Mountain Division at Fort Drum.

The Democratic whip can go to the Naval Station Great Lakes.

The senior Senator from Rhode Island—the senior Democrat on the Armed Services Committee—can go to the Naval War College.

The senior Senator from Missouri can go to the 131st Bomb Wing.

The junior Senator from New York can go to the soldiers at Fort Drum as well.

The senior Senator from New Hampshire can go to the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard.

The junior Senator from Hawaii can go to the dozen different military bases in Hawaii, while the senior Senator from Florida can go to 20 different military installations in his State.

The senior Senator from Connecticut can go to the Groton submarine base.

The senior Senator from Indiana can go to AM General in South Bend, whose manufacturing he always touts for political purposes.

The junior Senator from Virginia can go to Norfolk or the Pentagon or Fort Myer or to any one of the numerous bases in Virginia.

The junior Senator from Maine can go to Bath Iron Works.

The junior Senator from New Mexico can go to the Kirtland and Cannon Air Force Bases.

The junior Senator from Michigan can go to General Dynamics, outside Detroit.

Also, the senior Senator from Massachusetts could shake hands with all 115,563 of the people in her State whose jobs are directly tied to defending our Nation.

Every one of those Democrats who sits on the Armed Services Committee and has claimed to want to stop these automatic spending cuts can go home and tell the men and women in uniform in his State that he had a chance to vote on it and that he was too cowardly to even put his name on the rolls.

He can look at all of these Americans in the eye and say: Sorry, just politics—hope you understand.

That is all this is. It is politics of the lowest kind. In maneuvering, posturing, and posing, they are caving to the demands of the Democratic leader simply because he wants more leverage for more pork-barrel spending when we had a budget deal that was negotiated in secret in December. He twisted their arms, and they screamed like little kids. They are putting politics ahead of our troops. They are holding our troops hostage to politics solely because their leader wants them to.

If they were not, they would allow a vote on this amendment. They would vote aye. They would vote aye eagerly, and they would vote aye enthusiastically, but they cannot even do that. They cannot even put their names down as a yes or a no on something that they have all said that they have supported for years.

They just hide behind procedure. They hide in their cloakroom. They hide from the voters. They hide in the back corridors and hallways of this building. They hide to save their own skin. They hide because they are ashamed, and they sure as hell should be ashamed.

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, as chairman of the Senate Armed Services Subcommittee on Readiness, I would like to make a statement for the record regarding an item of special interest inserted into the committee report on the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018 related to the Department of Defense's use of its intellectual property rights of certain medical products.

The committee report includes language that purports to direct the Department of Defense to exercise its rights under the Bayh-Dole Act ''to authorize third parties to use inventions that benefited from DOD funding whenever the price of a drug, vaccine, or other medical technology is higher in the United States'' as compared to prices in foreign countries. I am concerned that the report language is inconsistent with the original intent of Bayh-Dole and could hinder critical medical developments.

Americans, including our men and women in uniform, must have access to affordable healthcare, including prescription drugs and medical technologies. However, I fear the committee report directive in question will slow future innovation, lead to a more complex and burdensome regulatory scheme, and make it less likely that our military personnel will be able to access cutting-edge medicines in the future, while doing nothing meaningful to address healthcare costs. The DOD relies on its partnerships with industry to develop vaccines, drugs, and diagnostics that target unique threats faced by our warfighters during operations in theater. As such, the biopharmaceutical industry plays a critical role in enhancing our military and civilian defenses against biological, chemical, radiological, and nuclear threats.

Federal agencies, such as the DOD, already face significant challenges in attracting top drug and vaccine developers as partners to develop lifesaving medical countermeasures necessary to protect the warfighter. These challenges include low procurement quantities, high regulatory risk, complex Federal contracting regulations, and inconsistency in funding, among others. The added risk of diluting or compromising intellectual property protections as a means of price control will not only fail to meet its objective, but will serve as an additional deterrent to private sector development of critical medical capabilities offered by DOD.

Furthermore, companies who partner with the Federal Government rely heavily on the strength and scope of their intellectual property to generate investment to take their technologies to commercialization. The report language invokes the Bayh-Dole Act, the purpose of which is to encourage the prompt commercialization of federally funded patents. Prior to Bayh-Dole, collaborations between private industry and public entities were rare. The act has fostered a delicate balance of collaborations between Federal agencies, public research institutions, and private industry that have resulted in the commercialization of inventions for use by all Americans, especially in the area of medical countermeasures for our servicemen and women.

In the drug development context, Federal funding under the Bayh-Dole Act has facilitated the discovery of 153 marketed drugs and vaccines over the last 30 years. The act included the creation of so-called march-in rights to allow agencies to compel additional licensing if good-faith efforts toward development are not being made. Agencies can also march-in if a licensee cannot produce enough products to meet a national emergency. It is these provisions to which the report language refers and I believe inappropriately expands the statute's reach to include Federal price controls and increases the scope of the government's authority.

Nothing in the Bayh-Dole Act, whether in march-in rights or otherwise, provides a Federal agency the authority to influence the price of a commercialized invention. Regulating the price of commercialized intellectual property was never intended by Congress when passing the Bayh-Dole Act,

as evident by the Senate and House reports. Congress contemplated the use of march-in rights only ''when the invention is not being used.'' Further, Senators Bayh and Dole have subsequently explained that the absence of any reference to reasonable pricing in the statute was intentional. As Senator Bayh—the author of and driving force behind the Bayh-Dole Act—has said: Any attempt to use the Bayh-Dole Act to support price controls is a ''flagrant misrepresent[ation]'' of Congress's purpose in enacting the statute. Consistent with this position, a Federal agency has never invoked the Bayh-Dole Act to interfere with the price of a commercialized invention. I am aware of petitions to both the NIH and the DOD requesting march-in rights be exercised on the basis of pricing, and in all of those cases, the petitions were rejected in accordance with the law.

The committee report language seeks to authorize something that the statute itself does not. I believe the item of special interest does not accurately reflect the current intent of Congress with respect to the Bayh-Dole Act, and I encourage the DOD to continue to rely on the existing interpretation of Bayh-Dole law when addressing these matters.

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I want to thank Senator MCCAIN and Senator REED for their leadership in producing the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2018. Both veterans, they have a particular understanding of the sacrifices that members of our Armed Services make every day.

Every year, this authorization bill is drafted to reflect our commitment to the men and women serving in uniform, to authorize resources needed to maintain our national security, and to demonstrate the values and principles on which our country was founded. While I believe this bill reflects many sound defense policies, I regrettably cannot support its passage.

Yet again, this Defense authorization bill continues to include the shameful and counterproductive measures that block us from ending the terrorist recruitment tool that is the Guantanamo Bay detention mission, but the core reason for my opposition to this bill is the reckless price tag its implementation carries. This bill authorizes $700 billion in Defense spending, far above the caps currently established by the Budget Control Act and far more than the increase requested by the President in his budget proposal. If we met this authorization with real dollars, sequestration would take effect for Defense spending. Secretary Mattis has testified about the perils of sequestration. His message was clear: We must raise the budget caps.

What is more, this authorization relies on the same tired gimmick we have seen for years and includes $60 billion in overseas contingency operations funding. For fiscal hawks who call for us to reign in Federal spending to reduce the deficit, we cannot continue to treat OCO funds as privileged dollars—outside the scope of our budget caps—as a means to pay for what should be base spending.

Further, we cannot unilaterally boost Defense spending without similarly addressing other budgets that contribute to our national security. Earlier this year, in a hearing before the Senate Appropriations Defense Subcommittee, Secretary Mattis clearly asserted that ''history is pretty clear, nations that did not keep their fiscal house in order and their economies strong lost their military power.'' We cannot simply raise spending for the Department of Defense without investing in programs that advance our diplomatic missions overseas and strengthen our domestic security through economic development, infrastructure improvements, environmental protections, and that meet the core needs of all Americans. Inflating our Defense spending at the cost of all other programs makes us neither stronger nor more secure.

I do want to thank Senator MCCAIN and Senator REED for including, through managers' packages, more than 100 amendments from both Republicans and Democrats, including some that I filed. This kind of collaborative process is what has, in the past, yielded results in the Senate. I regret that the amendment process was not more extensive, but hyperpartisan amendments that seek to upset the discussions of how to responsibly fund our government are not the way to reach consensus for further votes.

Make no mistake: This authorization bill invests in our men and women in uniform and their families, and it supports competition to keep our Defense industry healthy, as it should. I hope the reasons for my objection to its passage at this point in the process will be resolved as we move to conference this bill with the House. I believe that, through an agreement to address the current budget caps, those objections can be resolved.

Mr. COTTON. 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.

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

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

HEALTHCARE

Ms. HIRONO. Madam President, 2 months ago, millions of Americans rose up and defeated TrumpCare. In doing so, we reaffirmed that, in the wealthiest nation on Earth, healthcare is a right and not a privilege that is reserved only for those who can afford it.

The President and the Republican Party believe the opposite. To them, healthcare is just another commodity to be bought and sold, but we all know that this is not like buying a new car or a big screen TV. The Republican position shows no heart, no care, and no compassion. It is the exact opposite of what so many of you showed me when I was diagnosed with kidney cancer.

Although we successfully defeated TrumpCare in July, we face fresh assaults to deny every American's right to healthcare, but it does not have to be this way. In July, so many of us were moved by Senator JOHN MCCAIN's impassioned plea for the Senate to return to regular order in order to debate how to strengthen our healthcare system on a bipartisan basis. Since then, Senators LAMAR ALEXANDER and PATTY MURRAY have worked to build consensus for a bill that would strengthen insurance markets and reduce out-of-pocket costs for consumers. They have done this the right way—through committee hearings, bipartisan meetings, and careful deliberation.

Instead of embracing and endorsing this effort, the President and the majority leader have now chosen to double down on their obsession with depriving healthcare to millions of people across the country through the Graham-Cassidy bill. Let me be clear. This bill is not a compromise. It is not a new and better idea for delivering healthcare in this country. It is just a new version of TrumpCare and, I might say, an even worse proposal than the one we defeated in July.

The details matter. This version of TrumpCare eliminates the Affordable Care Act's Medicaid expansion, and that threatens the coverage for more than 110,000 Hawaii residents who are now receiving such coverage. There are millions all across the country who now get healthcare coverage thanks to Medicaid expansion in their States.

This bill establishes a healthcare block grant, including a per capita cap on Medicaid spending that would severely limit Federal funding for healthcare—funds that States rely upon. Republicans, including the cosponsors of this bill, argue that this approach would provide more local control over healthcare. This, however, is what we in Hawaii call ''shibai''—or BS. Local control through a block grant is just an excuse that Conservatives and Republicans use as a pretext to make deep cuts to programs that Americans depend upon. You see them resorting to block-granting everywhere—from education to healthcare.

A new study from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities reveals the cost of this latest version of TrumpCare firsthand. Under the proposal, Hawaii would lose $659 million in Federal funding for Medicaid over 10 years—part of some $80 billion in cuts across the country. This is a lot of money for Hawaii to lose—money that is being put to great use across our State.

Last month, I visited the Bay Clinic in Hilo, on the Big Island, where the Medicaid expansion under the ACA has improved health outcomes in poor

rural communities across that island. Bay Clinic is the primary healthcare provider to 6 of the 10 poorest ZIP Codes in the entire State of Hawaii, where many residents went years without having health coverage. Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, the Bay Clinic has successfully enrolled thousands more people in Medicaid and decreased the number of uninsured patients who have gone through their doors. It is astounding what the numbers show.

The number of patients who have gone through their doors has been cut from 29 percent in 2010 to only 10 percent in 2015. That is how many more people on the island of Hawaii are able to get healthcare coverage. Over that same time period, the Bay Clinic has seen an almost 20-percent increase in the number of patients it has served every year.

In the years following the passage of the ACA, the Bay Clinic and community health centers all across Hawaii have hired more doctors and nurses, and they have expanded the types of services that they provide. The Bay Clinic, for example, has expanded its Mobile Health Unit, by which doctors go to rural communities, such as in Keaau, where residents would otherwise not have access to primary care providers.

This program and others like it in Hawaii and across the country face an imminent threat from this newest version of TrumpCare. Unfortunately, this bill's devastating cuts to Medicaid are only part of what makes it so mean and so dangerous.

It eliminates all premium subsidies that allow lower income Americans to afford coverage, and it eliminates cost-sharing subsidies that reduce out-of-pocket expenses for consumers. These are the very issues relating to the Affordable Care Act that Chairman LAMAR ALEXANDER and Ranking Member PATTY MURRAY are addressing through regular order—how to provide healthcare for more people in our country.

The Graham-Cassidy bill creates a process by which States can receive waivers to roll back essential health benefits and eliminate important consumer protections, like guaranteed coverage for millions of Americans who are living with preexisting conditions—people like me.

I have said many times on the floor of the Senate that we are all only one diagnosis away from a major illness. Every day, 6,540 people are diagnosed with cancer in our country. There are 4,109 who are diagnosed with diabetes. There are 1,309 who are diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease every day in this country. We are all one diagnosis away from a major illness. These are people like me—many of them—going about their business when, wham, suddenly, you get a devastating diagnosis. Not all of these people will have health insurance, and under this version of TrumpCare, even more of them will not have access to it.

When I was diagnosed with kidney cancer, I had insurance. Instead of worrying about how to pay for my treatment, I could focus on fighting my illness. No one facing cancer, heart disease, diabetes, or any other chronic or life-threatening medical condition—or, I should say, any kind of circumstance in which one needs to have access to a healthcare provider—should have to worry about whether one can afford the care that might, one day, save one's life—not in the richest country in the world, not where healthcare should be a right and not a privilege.

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.

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

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

Mrs. ERNST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there be up to 20 minutes of debate, equally divided, under the control of Senators MCCAIN and REED, following the first vote this evening.

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

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

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

AMENDMENT NO. 545 WITHDRAWN

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, amendment No. 545 is withdrawn.

AMENDMENT NO. 1003, AS MODIFIED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, amendment No. 1003, as modified, is agreed to.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative 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 Calendar No. 175, H.R. 2810, an act to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

John McCain, Mitch McConnell, John Thune, Thom Tillis, Pat Roberts, Mike Crapo, Richard Burr, Michael B. Enzi, Orrin G. Hatch, Ted Cruz, John Cornyn, Dan Sullivan, Roy Blunt, Cory Gardner, Tim Scott, Shelley Moore Capito, David Perdue.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on H.R. 2810, an act to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes, as amended, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) would have voted ''yea.''

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) is necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 90, nays 7, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 198 Leg.]

YEAS—90

Alexander	Feinstein	Murphy
Baldwin	Fischer	Murray
Barrasso	Flake	Nelson
Bennet	Franken	Perdue
Blumenthal	Gardner	Peters
Blunt	Grassley	Portman
Booker	Harris	Reed
Boozman	Hassan	Risch
Brown	Hatch	Roberts
Burr	Heinrich	Rounds
Cantwell	Heitkamp	Sasse
Capito	Heller	Schatz
Cardin	Hirono	Schumer
Carper	Hoeven	Scott
Casey	Inhofe	Shaheen
Cassidy	Isakson	Shelby
Cochran	Johnson	Stabenow
Collins	Kaine	Strange
Coons	Kennedy	Sullivan
Corker	King	Tester
Cornyn	Klobuchar	Thune
Cortez Masto	Lankford	Tillis
Cotton	Leahy	Toomey
Crapo	Manchin	Udall
Cruz	Markey	Van Hollen
Daines	McCain	Warner
Donnelly	McCaskill	Warren
Duckworth	McConnell	Whitehouse
Enzi	Moran	Wicker
Ernst	Murkowski	Young

NAYS—7

Durbin	Merkley	Wyden
Gillibrand	Paul	
Lee	Sanders	

NOT VOTING—3

Graham	Menendez	Rubio

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 90, the nays are 7.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

Under the previous order, there will now be 20 minutes of debate, equally divided, between the Senator from Arizona, Mr. MCCAIN, and the Senator from Rhode Island, Mr. REED.

The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Thank you, Mr. President. As we approach the final vote on

the fiscal year 2018 national defense authorization bill, I would like to make a few closing comments.

When we began considering this bill last week, Senator MCCAIN and I were interested in returning to regular order and having debate and votes on any amendment that needed a vote. We actually started off very well.

While I disagreed with Senator PAUL's amendment to sunset the current authorization for the use of military force, I am pleased we were able to follow regular order on his amendment and have a debate. It is my hope that we can use this as a step to restore regular order going forward and work together, along with Senator PAUL, in drafting a new AUMF that more precisely addresses the threats we face and resolves the issue, which is very critical, that Senator PAUL has raised; that is, updating the AUMF.

After the Paul amendment, however, we were unable to come to an agreement on further votes. As a result, several issues that are important to both sides were not fully considered. On the Democratic side, Senators BALDWIN, STABENOW, and DONNELLY had very important amendments that would have ensured important protection for American workers and that our servicemembers receive high-quality, domestically produced equipment.

In addition, Senator DURBIN had an important amendment that supports the world-class medical research DOD conducts and has a profound impact on the health of our servicemembers and citizens alike. Senator WARREN would have liked a discussion on the INF Treaty, and Senator GILLIBRAND was interested in a full debate on protections for military personnel who are transgender.

As I indicated, I also know there are Members on the other side of the aisle who also had important issues they wanted to debate. I regret we were not able to have those debates and votes.

I am pleased, however, that we are able to include several dozen agreed-upon amendments in this bill from both Democrats and Republicans which will strengthen the legislation. In the end, this bill represents a strong bipartisan effort to provide the military with the resources they need and the support they deserve.

Moving forward, more work needs to be done. It is clear we need to find a sustainable, equitable path forward that will end sequestration and provide the additional resources needed for our current readiness shortfalls. I look forward to working together to continue to address the needs of the Department and our servicemembers.

I would like to close by thanking Senator MCCAIN in my remarks about the NDAA for his leadership in guiding this bill through our committee markup process and the floor. I believe this bill truly exemplifies Senator MCCAIN's unrivaled dedication to the men and women of our Armed Forces. His firm hand and unwavering resolve for a bipartisan approach were invaluable in achieving a bill that reflects the priorities of many Members on both sides of the aisle.

Additionally, I would like to thank the committee staff who worked tirelessly over many weeks to make this bill a reality. I thank the majority staff director, Chris Brose, and his staff for their hard work and commitment to a bipartisan process. I would also like to thank my staff for their expertise and dedication to creating the best bill possible—Jody Bennett, Carolyn Chuhta, Jon Clark, Jonathan Epstein, Jorie Feldman, Jon Green, Creighton Greene, Ozge Guzelsu, Gary Leeling, Kirk McConnell, Maggie McNamara, Bill Monahan, Mike Noblet, John Quirk, Arun Seraphin, and Elizabeth King. Finally, I would like to thank the floor staff, without whom none of this could be accomplished.

I must say, having completed a truly bipartisan process using regular order, I am disappointed to hear that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle would like to bring back the partisan efforts to repeal the Affordable Care Act and its protections for people with preexisting conditions and decimate Medicare as we know it.

We have already spent so much time this year having this fight—time we could have spent working on a bipartisan basis to improve our health care system and lower costs. We voted decisively in July to reject the partisan bill. With these votes, Senators on both sides of the aisle decided we would return to regular order and work toward bipartisan health care solutions that could get at least 60 votes in this body.

As I have highlighted, this kind of bipartisan approach is why we have been successful in bringing the NDAA to the floor each year, and Senators ALEXANDER and MURRAY have been doing just that with respect to the HELP Committee. They have had four hearings over the last two weeks, with witnesses from both parties, from Governors to health insurance commissioners, to leaders in the industry. I have great confidence in my colleagues and their ability to craft a bipartisan bill to improve the ACA that a majority of Senators could support. This is a bipartisan, inclusive process, and I should note, it is undertaken by one of the two committees that have jurisdiction for health care.

So for my Republican colleagues to now decide, after this critical work is already underway, that we are going to scratch those efforts and return instead to a partisan process, in which not even Republican Senators have had the opportunity to fully review the bill, make changes or even get analysis of the bill, I think that process is wrong. Let's not be fooled by the new effort. The legislation would have the same effects as the other versions of TrumpCare we saw rejected.

We have heard the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee will hold a hearing on the latest version of TrumpCare. This is not the right process. It is not representative of the legislative process.

I would urge my colleagues to reject this approach and, rather, follow the example I think we have tried to set in NDAA—a bipartisan, regular process, in which amendments are offered by both sides, in which debate is undertaken, in which we come to a conclusion based on 60 votes and move forward to improve the country, particularly to protect the men and women in the armed services.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, today the Senate will vote on final passage of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018. This is the culmination of months of bipartisan work, and it is a product in which all Senators and all Americans can take great pride. I want to thank, once again, my friend and colleague the Senator from Rhode Island. His partnership on this legislation has been invaluable.

The fundamental purpose of this legislation, which has united Senators from both sides of the aisle, is to provide our Armed Forces what they need to do the jobs we ask of them. We, in this body, have no higher duty than to do everything we can to support our fellow Americans who serve and sacrifice every day to keep us safe.

This legislation does that. It keeps faith with our men and women in uniform. It supports a national defense budget of $700 billion for fiscal year 2018, which exceeds the administration's request by $37 billion and the defense spending caps in the Budget Control Act by $91 billion. The decision of the Committee on Armed Services to authorize these additional resources was unanimous and bipartisan, and it is a significant statement on the troubling state of our military today.

My friends, for too long, our Nation has asked our men and women in uniform to do too much with far too little. Much of the blame lies with the last administration, but we in Congress cannot escape responsibility. Our military's job is hard enough, but we are making it harder through continuing resolutions, unpredictable funding, and arbitrary spending caps that we put into law 6 years ago before the rise of ISIS, before the current crisis with North Korea, before Russia's return to aggression on the world stage, and before so many other dangerous developments.

We have been warned—we have been warned, my friends—that we can't go on like this. We have been warned. Earlier this year, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Joseph Dunford, warned us: ''In just a few years if we don't change the trajectory, we will lose our qualitative and our quantitative competitive edge, [and] the consequences will be profound.'' The Secretary of Defense, Jim Mattis,

also warned us, saying: ''We are no longer managing risk; we are now gambling.''

We are gambling, my friends. We are gambling with the lives of the best among us, and we are now seeing the cost—the tragic but foreseeable cost—of an overworked, strained force, with aging equipment and not enough of it.

On June 17, seven sailors were killed when the USS *Fitzgerald* collided with a container ship off the coast of Japan. On July 10, a Marine KC–130 crash in Mississippi killed all 16 troops on board. On August 5, an Osprey helicopter crash off the coast of Australia resulted in the deaths of three Marines. On August 15, an Army helicopter crashed off the coast of Hawaii, with five soldiers presumed dead. On August 21, 10 sailors perished when the USS *McCain* collided with a tanker near Singapore. On August 25, an Army Black Hawk helicopter went down during a training mission off the coast of Yemen, and one soldier died. Earlier this month in Nevada, two Air Force A–10 aircraft crashed into each other. Thank God the pilots safely ejected, but the planes were lost, at a cost of over $100 million.

Just last week—just last week, as we debated this legislation—there were additional accidents. Last Tuesday, one soldier died during helicopter training at Fort Hood. Last Wednesday, an amphibious vehicle explosion at Camp Pendleton injured 15 marines. Last Thursday, a demolition accident at Fort Bragg killed another soldier and injured seven others.

My friends, more of our men and women in uniform are now being killed in totally avoidable training accidents and routine operations than by our enemies in combat. Let me repeat that. More of our men and women in uniform are now being killed in totally avoidable training accidents and routine operations than by our enemies in combat.

Where is the outrage? Where is our sense of urgency to deal with this problem? Congress can criticize this administration or the last administration all we want, and there is plenty of blame to go around, but the constitutional responsibility is to ''raise and support Armies'' and ''provide and maintain a Navy.'' That responsibility is ours. How can we believe that we are meeting our responsibilities when young Americans in uniform are not receiving the necessary resources and capabilities to perform their missions? My friends, that blame rests with us, the Congress.

I know many of my colleagues agree. I have heard them—both Republicans and Democrats—speak for years about the harmful effects sequestration is having on our military and many other Federal agencies with a national security mission. How do we explain our failure to deal with this problem last week? We had an opportunity. This legislation was open for amendments under regular order for an entire week. There was an amendment offered by the Senator from Arkansas to repeal sequestration. The amendment was written in a bipartisan way and would have ended sequestration, not only for defense but nondefense spending as well. We had an opportunity to tell all of our men and women in uniform that the Senate finally was doing everything it could to support them. We had an opportunity, and we failed. Worse than that, we didn't even try. We couldn't even agree to vote.

It makes me so angry, but more than that it makes me sad. It breaks my heart.

How do we explain our failure to our men and women who are serving? How do we explain to Americans who are risking their lives for us that we could not summon the courage to take some hard votes? How can we explain we couldn't come together and vote together when it mattered most? How do we explain the signal our inaction sends to all who are serving that Congress has higher priorities than rebuilding our military? We should be ashamed of ourselves.

For those of you who will soon vote for this National Defense Authorization Act, which will authorize the necessary resources to begin rebuilding our military, let me thank you; let me thank you; let me thank you. You can be proud that you are voting for a good piece of legislation, but this legislation is only part of the solution. We still have no path to actually appropriate the money that we are about to authorize. That requires a bipartisan agreement to adjust the spending caps in the Budget Control Act.

For all of you who will join me in voting to authorize these vital additional resources for our military, I would also urge you to join me in demanding and passing a bipartisan agreement so that we can appropriate those resources. This will require some hard work. It will require some teamwork and some trust in each other. It will require having the courage of our convictions. But in the end, it will require much less of us than the service and sacrifice we ask every day from our men and women in uniform, which they so dutifully provide us.

I do not want to have to call another grieving mother or father or spouse after their loved one has perished in a mishap that might have been prevented if Congress had done its job. Let's find a way to appropriate the resources for our military that we will soon authorize. Our men and women in uniform deserve no less.

Mr. President, I will suggest a short quorum call while we get these final agreed-upon amendments on the bill at this time. It shouldn't take more than 3 or 4 minutes.

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

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

AMENDMENTS NOS. 277, 434, 574, 660, 750, 756, 833, 890, 900, 903, 904, 950, 976, 995, 1014, 1015, 1021, 1023, 1065, 1087, 1088, 1089, 1094, 1100, 470, 601, 712, 780, 873, 874, 879, 908, 927, 943, 945, 1006, 1031, 1033, 1034, 1038, 1039, 1050, 1055, 1063, 1073, 1086, 1096, AND 1032

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following amendments to H.R. 2810, as amended, be considered and agreed to en bloc: Kaine No. 277, Tester No. 434, Heitkamp No. 574, Merkley No. 660, Whitehouse No. 750, Van Hollen No. 756, Murray No. 833, Brown No. 890, Cardin No. 900, Leahy No. 903, Baldwin No. 904, Peters No. 950, Heitkamp No. 976, Cantwell No. 995, Stabenow No. 1014, Whitehouse No. 1015, Harris No. 1021, Sanders No. 1023, Cantwell No. 1065, Bennet No. 1087, Wyden No. 1088, Kaine No. 1089, Cortez-Masto No. 1094, Lee No. 470, Moran No. 601, Portman No. 712, Inhofe No. 780, Ernst No. 873, McCain No. 874, Johnson No. 879, Murkowski No. 908, Rubio No. 927, Isakson No. 943, Flake No. 945, Moran No. 1006, Tillis No. 1031, Perdue No. 1033, Strange No. 1034, Lankford No. 1038, Rounds No. 1039, Scott No. 1050, Portman No. 1055, Tillis No. 1063, Sullivan No. 1073, Strange No. 1086, Graham No. 1096, and Isakson No. 1032.

Mr. President, I ask to add Durbin No. 1100. I intentionally omitted him the first time around in hopes that it wouldn't be noticed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's request is so modified.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment numbers at the desk be reflected in the list.

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

Is there objection to the modified request?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendments (Nos. 277, 434, 574, 660, 750, 756, 833, 890, 900, 903, 904, 950, 976, 995, 1014, 1015, 1021, 1023, 1065, 1087, 1088, 1089, 1094, 1100, 470, 601, 712, 780, 873, 874, 879, 908, 927, 943, 945, 1006, 1031, 1033, 1034, 1038, 1039, 1050, 1055, 1063, 1073, 1086, 1096, and 1032) were agreed to en bloc, as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 277

(Purpose: To provide for the establishment of a visitor services facility on the Arlington Ridge tract, Virginia)

At the end of subtitle E of title XXVIII, add the following:

SEC. 2850. ESTABLISHMENT OF A VISITOR SERVICES FACILITY ON THE ARLINGTON RIDGE TRACT.

(a) ARLINGTON RIDGE TRACT DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''Arlington Ridge tract'' means the parcel of Federal land located in Arlington County, Virginia, known as the ''Nevius Tract'' and transferred to the Department of the Interior in 1953, that is bounded generally by—

(1) Arlington Boulevard (United States Route 50) to the north;

(2) Jefferson Davis Highway (Virginia Route 110) to the east;

(3) Marshall Drive to the south; and

(4) North Meade Street to the west.

(b) ESTABLISHMENT OF VISITOR SERVICES FACILITY.—Notwithstanding section 2863(g) of the Military Construction Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002 (Public Law 107–107; 115 Stat. 1332), the Secretary of the Interior may construct a structure for visitor services, including a public restroom facility, on the Arlington Ridge tract in the area of the United States Marine Corps War Memorial.

AMENDMENT NO. 434

(Purpose: To convert the authority for a National Language Service Corps into a requirement for such a Corps)

At the end of subtitle D of title IX, add the following:

SEC. 953. REQUIREMENT FOR NATIONAL LANGUAGE SERVICE CORPS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (a)(1) of 813 of the David L. Boren National Security Education Act of 1991 (50 U.S.C. 1913) is amended by striking ''may establish and maintain'' and inserting ''shall establish and maintain''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Subsection (b) of such section is amended by striking ''If the Secretary establishes the Corps, the Secretary'' and inserting ''The Secretary''.

AMENDMENT NO. 574

(Purpose: To expand the SkillBridge initiative to include participation by Federal agencies)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. EXPANSION OF SKILLBRIDGE INITIATIVE TO INCLUDE PARTICIPATION BY FEDERAL AGENCIES.

(a) MODIFICATION OF INITIATIVE BY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE.—The Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, shall make such modifications to the SkillBridge initiative of the Department of Defense as the Secretary considers appropriate to enable Federal agencies to participate in the initiative as employers and trainers, including the provision of training by Federal agencies under the initiative to transitioning members of the Armed Forces.

(b) PARTICIPATION BY FEDERAL AGENCIES.—The Director, in consultation with the Secretary, shall take such actions as may be necessary to ensure that each Federal agency participates in the SkillBridge initiative of the Department of Defense as described in subsection (a).

(c) TRANSITIONING MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''transitioning member of the Armed Forces'' means a member of the Armed Forces who is expected to be discharged or released from active duty in the Armed Forces not more than 180 days after the member commences training under the SkillBridge initiative.

AMENDMENT NO. 660

(Purpose: To treat the service of recipients of Boren scholarships and fellowships in excepted service positions as service by such recipients under career appointments for purposes of career tenure under title 5, United States Code)

At the appropriate place in subtitle B of title XVI, insert the following:

SEC. _____. CONSIDERATION OF SERVICE BY RECIPIENTS OF BOREN SCHOLARSHIPS AND FELLOWSHIPS IN EXCEPTED SERVICE POSITIONS AS SERVICE BY SUCH RECIPIENTS UNDER CAREER APPOINTMENTS FOR PURPOSES OF CAREER TENURE.

Section 802(k) of the David L. Boren National Security Education Act of 1991 (50 U.S.C. 1902(k)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (4);

(2) in paragraph (2), in the matter before subparagraph (A), by striking ''(3)(C)'' and inserting ''(4)(C)''; and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

''(3) CAREER TENURE.—In the case of an individual whose appointment to a position in the excepted service is converted to a career or career- conditional appointment under paragraph (1)(B), the period of service described in such paragraph shall be treated, for purposes of the service requirements for career tenure under title 5, United States Code, as if it were service in a position under a career or career- conditional appointment.''.

AMENDMENT NO. 750

(Purpose: To extend temporarily the extended period of protection for members of uniformed services relating to mortgages, mortgage foreclosure, and eviction)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. TEMPORARY EXTENSION OF EXTENDED PERIOD OF PROTECTIONS FOR MEMBERS OF UNIFORMED SERVICES RELATING TO MORTGAGES, MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE, AND EVICTION.

Section 710(d) of the Honoring America's Veterans and Caring for Camp Lejeune Families Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–154; 50 U.S.C. 3953 note) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking ''December 31, 2017'' and inserting ''December 31, 2019''; and

(2) in paragraph (3), by striking ''January 1, 2018'' and inserting ''January 1, 2020''.

AMENDMENT NO. 756

(Purpose: To require a report on compliance with Department of Defense and Service policies regarding runway clear zones)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. REPORT ON COMPLIANCE WITH RUNWAY CLEAR ZONE REQUIREMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 270 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Service secretaries, shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report on Service compliance with Department of Defense and relevant Service policies regarding Department of Defense runway clear zones.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The report required under subsection (a) shall include the following elements:

(1) A listing of all Department of Defense runway clear zones in the United States that are not in compliance with Department of Defense and relevant Service policies regarding Department of Defense runway clear zones.

(2) A plan for bringing all Department of Defense runway clear zones in full compliance with these policies, including a description of the resources required to bring these clear zones into policy compliance, and for providing restitution for property owners.

AMENDMENT NO. 833

(Purpose: To provide for the promotion of financial literacy concerning retirement among members of the Armed Forces)

At the end of part I of subtitle C of title VI, add the following:

SEC. _____. PROMOTION OF FINANCIAL LITERACY CONCERNING RETIREMENT AMONG MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES.

(a) PROGRAMS FOR PROMOTION REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Defense shall develop programs of financial literacy for members of the Armed Forces to assist members in better understanding retirement options and planning for retirement.

(b) INFORMATION ON COMPARATIVE VALUE OF LUMP SUM AND MONTHLY PAYMENTS OF RETIRED PAY WITH CONVENTIONAL RETIRED PAY.—The Secretary of Defense shall develop information to be provided to members of the Armed Forces who are eligible to make the election provided for in subsection (b)(1) of section 1415 of title 10, United States Code, to assist such members in making an informed comparison for purposes of the election between the following:

(1) The value of the lump sum payment of retired pay and monthly payments provided for in such subsection (b)(1) by reason of the election, including the manner in which the lump sum and such monthly payments are determined for any particular member.

(2) The value of retired pay payable under subsection (d) of such section in the absence of the election, including the manner in which such retired pay is determined for any particular member.

AMENDMENT NO. 890

(Purpose: To ensure the continued designation of the Secretary of the Air Force as the Department of Defense Executive Agent for the program carried out under title III of the Defense Production Act of 1950)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. LIMITATION ON CANCELLATION OF DESIGNATION OF SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE AS DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE EXECUTIVE AGENT FOR A CERTAIN DEFENSE PRODUCTION ACT PROGRAM.

(a) LIMITATION ON CANCELLATION OF DESIGNATION.—The Secretary of Defense may not implement the decision, issued on July 1, 2017, to cancel the designation, under Department of Defense Directive 4400.1E, entitled ''Defense Production Act Programs'' and dated October 12, 2001, of the Secretary of the Air Force as the Department of Defense Executive Agent for the program carried out under title III of the Defense Production Act of 1950 (50 U.S.C. 4531 et seq.) until the date specified in subsection (c).

(b) DESIGNATION.—The Secretary of the Air Force shall continue to serve as the Department of Defense Executive Agent for the program described in subsection (a) until the date specified in subsection (c).

(c) DATE SPECIFIED.—The date specified in this subsection is the earlier of—

(1) the date that is two years after the date of the enactment of this Act; or

(2) the date of the enactment of a joint resolution or an Act approving the implementation of the decision described in subsection (a).

AMENDMENT NO. 900

(Purpose: To require a report on the National Biodefense Analysis and Countermeasures Center (NBACC) and to provide a limitation on use of funds)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. REPORT ON THE NATIONAL BIODEFENSE ANALYSIS AND COUNTERMEASURES CENTER (NBACC) AND LIMITATION ON USE OF FUNDS.

(a) REPORT.—Not later than December 31, 2017, the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Secretary of Defense shall jointly submit to the appropriate Congressional committees a report, prepared in consultation with the officials listed in subsection (b), on the National Biodefense Analysis and Countermeasures Center (referred to in this section as the ''NBACC'') containing the following information:

(1) The functions of the NBACC.

(2) The end users of the NBACC, including end users whose assets may be managed by other agencies.

(3) The cost and mission impact for each user identified under paragraph (2) of any potential closure of the NBACC, including an

analysis of the functions of the NBACC that cannot be replicated by other departments and agencies of the Federal Government.

(4) In the case of closure of the NBACC, a transition plan for any essential functions currently performed by the NBACC to ensure mission continuity, including the storage of samples needed for ongoing criminal cases.

(b) CONSULTATION.—The officials listed in this subsection are the following:

(1) The Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

(2) The Attorney General.

(3) The Director of National Intelligence.

(4) As determined by the Secretary of Homeland Security, the leaders of other offices that utilize the NBACC.

(c) FORM.—The report submitted under subsection (a) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may contain a classified annex.

(d) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.—For purposes of this section, the term ''appropriate Congressional Committees'' means—

(1) the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate;

(2) the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives;

(3) the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate;

(4) the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives;

(5) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate;

(6) the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives;

(7) the Committee on Judiciary of the Senate;

(8) the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives;

(9) the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives;

(10) the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate; and

(11) the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives.

(e) TRANSITION PERIOD.—The report submitted under subsection (a) shall include a transition adjustment period of not less than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, or 180 days after the date on which the report required in under this section is submitted to Congress, whichever is later, during which none of the funds authorized to be appropriated under this Act or any other Act may be used to support the closure, transfer, or other diminishment of the NBACC or its functions.

AMENDMENT NO. 903

(Purpose: To require the Secretary of Defense to conduct a feasibility study and cost estimate for a pilot program that uses predictive analytics and screening to identify mental health risk and provide early, targeted intervention for part-time members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces)

At the end of subtitle C of title VII, add the following:

SEC. 737. FEASIBILITY STUDY ON CONDUCT OF PILOT PROGRAM ON MENTAL HEALTH READINESS OF PART-TIME MEMBERS OF THE RESERVE COMPONENTS OF THE ARMED FORCES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall conduct a feasibility study and cost estimate for a pilot program that uses predictive analytics and screening to identify mental health risk and provide early, targeted intervention for part-time members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces to improve readiness and mission success.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The feasibility study conducted under subsection (a) shall include elements to assess the following with respect to the pilot program studied under such subsection:

(1) The anticipated improvement in quality of behavioral health services for part-time members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces and the impact of such improvement in quality of behavioral health services on their families and employers.

(2) The anticipated impact on the culture surrounding behavioral health treatment and help-seeking behavior.

(3) The feasibility of embedding mental health professionals with units that—

(A) perform core mission sets and capabilities; and

(B) carry out high-risk and high-demand missions.

(4) The particular preventative mental health needs of units at different states of their operational readiness cycle.

(5) The need for additional personnel of the Department of Defense to implement the pilot program.

(6) The cost of implementing the pilot program throughout the reserve components of the Armed Forces.

(7) The benefits of an integrated operational support team for the Air National Guard and Army National Guard units.

(c) COMPARISON TO FULL-TIME MEMBERS OF RESERVE COMPONENTS.—As part of the feasibility study conducted under subsection (a), the Secretary shall assess the mental health risk of part-time members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces as compared to full-time members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces.

(d) USE OF EXISTING MODELS.—In conducting the feasibility study under subsection (a), the Secretary shall make use of existing models for preventative mental health care, to the extent practicable, such as the approach developed by the United States Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine.

AMENDMENT NO. 904

(Purpose: To prohibit or suspend certain health care providers from providing non-Department of Veterans Affairs health care services to veterans)

At the end of subtitle G of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1088. PREVENTION OF CERTAIN HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS FROM PROVIDING NON-DEPARTMENT HEALTH CARE SERVICES TO VETERANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—On and after the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall deny or revoke the eligibility of a health care provider to provide non-Department health care services to veterans if the Secretary determines that the health care provider—

(1) was removed from employment with the Department of Veterans Affairs due to conduct that violated a policy of the Department relating to the delivery of safe and appropriate health care;

(2) violated the requirements of a medical license of the health care provider;

(3) had a Department credential revoked and the grounds for such revocation impacts the ability of the health care provider to deliver safe and appropriate health care; or

(4) violated a law for which a term of imprisonment of more than one year may be imposed.

(b) PERMISSIVE ACTION.—On and after the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary may deny, revoke, or suspend the eligibility of a health care provider to provide non-Department health care services if the Secretary has reasonable belief that such action is necessary to immediately protect the health, safety, or welfare of veterans and—

(1) the health care provider is under investigation by the medical licensing board of a State in which the health care provider is licensed or practices;

(2) the health care provider has entered into a settlement agreement for a disciplinary charge relating to the practice of medicine by the health care provider; or

(3) the Secretary otherwise determines that such action is appropriate under the circumstances.

(c) SUSPENSION.—The Secretary shall suspend the eligibility of a health care provider to provide non-Department health care services to veterans if the health care provider is suspended from serving as a health care provider of the Department.

(d) INITIAL REVIEW OF DEPARTMENT EMPLOYMENT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, with respect to each health care provider providing non-Department health care services, the Secretary shall review the status of each such health care provider as an employee of the Department and the history of employment of each such health care provider with the Department to determine whether the health care provider is described in any of subsections (a) through (c).

(e) COMPTROLLER GENERAL REPORT.—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report on the implementation by the Secretary of this section, including the following:

(1) The aggregate number of health care providers denied or suspended under this section from participation in providing non-Department health care services.

(2) An evaluation of any impact on access to health care for patients or staffing shortages in programs of the Department providing non-Department health care services.

(3) An explanation of the coordination of the Department with the medical licensing boards of States in implementing this section, the amount of involvement of such boards in such implementation, and efforts by the Department to address any concerns raised by such boards with respect to such implementation.

(4) Such recommendations as the Comptroller General considers appropriate regarding harmonizing eligibility criteria between health care providers of the Department and health care providers eligible to provide non-Department health care services.

(f) NON-DEPARTMENT HEALTH CARE SERVICES DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''non-Department health care services'' means services—

(1) provided under subchapter I of chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code, at non-Department facilities (as defined in section 1701 of such title);

(2) provided under section 101 of the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–146; 38 U.S.C. 1701 note);

(3) purchased through the Medical Community Care account of the Department; or

(4) purchased with amounts deposited in the Veterans Choice Fund under section 802 of the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014.

AMENDMENT NO. 950

(Purpose: To authorize the Secretary of the Air Force to increase the Primary Aircraft Authorization of Air Force or Air National Guard A–10 aircraft units in the event conversion of an A–10 unit is in the best interest of a long-term Air Force mission)

At the end of subtitle D of title I, add the following:

SEC. ___. AUTHORITY TO INCREASE PRIMARY AIRCRAFT AUTHORIZATION OF AIR FORCE AND AIR NATIONAL GUARD A–10 AIRCRAFT UNITS FOR PURPOSES OF FACILITATING A–10 CONVERSION.

In the event that conversion of an A–10 aircraft unit is in the best interest of a long-term Air Force mission, the Secretary of the Air Force may increase the Primary Aircraft Authorization of Air Force Reserve or Air National Guard A–10 units to 24 aircraft to facilitate such conversion.

AMENDMENT NO. 976

(Purpose: To express the sense of Congress on use of test sites for research and development on countering unmanned aircraft systems)

At the end of subtitle E of title X, add the following:

SEC. _____. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON USE OF TEST SITES FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT ON COUNTERING UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the armed unmanned aircraft systems deployed by adversaries for military purposes pose a threat to military installations, critical infrastructure, and members of the Armed Forces in conflict areas like Iraq and Syria;

(2) the unmanned aircraft systems test sites designated by the Federal Aviation Administration offer unique capabilities, expertise, and airspace for research and development related to unmanned aircraft systems; and

(3) the Armed Forces should, as appropriate and to the extent practicable, seek to leverage the test sites described in paragraph (2), as well as existing Department of Defense facilities with appropriate expertise, for research and development on capabilities to counter the nefarious use of unmanned aircraft systems.

AMENDMENT NO. 995

(Purpose: To extend the authorization of the Advisory Board on Toxic Substances and Worker Health)

At the end of subtitle B of title XXXI, add the following:

SEC. 3116. EXTENSION OF AUTHORIZATION OF ADVISORY BOARD ON TOXIC SUBSTANCES AND WORKER HEALTH.

Section 3687(i) of the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 7385s–16(i)) is amended by striking ''5 years'' and inserting ''10 years''.

AMENDMENT NO. 1014

(Purpose: To require the Government Accountability Office to evaluate Buy American training policies for the Defense acquisition workforce)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. BUY AMERICAN ACT TRAINING FOR DEFENSE ACQUISITION WORKFORCE.

(a) FINDING.—Congress finds that the Inspector General of the Department of Defense has issued a series of reports finding deficiencies in the adherence to the provisions of the Buy American Act and recommending improvements in training for the Defense acquisition workforce.

(b) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report evaluating Buy American training policies for the Defense acquisition workforce.

(2) ELEMENTS.—The report shall include the following elements:

(A) A summary and assessment of mandated training courses for Department of Defense acquisition personnel responsible for procuring items that are subject to the Berry Amendment and Buy American Act.

(B) Options for alternative training models for contracting personnel on Buy American and Berry Amendment requirements.

AMENDMENT NO. 1015

(Purpose: To encourage the United States Trade Representative to consider the impact of marine debris in future trade agreements)

At the end of subtitle G of title XII, add the following:

SEC. 1285. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON CONSIDERATION OF IMPACT OF MARINE DEBRIS IN TRADE AGREEMENTS.

Recognizing that the Senate unanimously agreed to S. 756, an Act to reauthorize and amend the Marine Debris Act to promote international action to reduce marine debris, and for other purposes (commonly referred to as the ''Save Our Seas Act of 2017'') on August 3, 2017, Congress encourages the United States Trade Representative to consider the impact of marine debris, particularly plastic waste, in relevant trade agreements entered into or negotiated after the date of the enactment of this Act.

AMENDMENT NO. 1021

(Purpose: To require a review of effects of personnel requirements and limitations on the availability of members of the National Guard for the performance of funeral honors duty for veterans)

At the end of subtitle B of title V, add the following:

SEC. _____. REVIEW OF EFFECTS OF PERSONNEL REQUIREMENTS AND LIMITATIONS ON THE AVAILABILITY OF MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL GUARD FOR THE PERFORMANCE OF FUNERAL HONORS DUTY FOR VETERANS.

(a) REVIEW REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Defense shall undertake a review of the effects of the personnel requirements and limitations described in subsection (b) with respect to the members of the National Guard in order to determine whether or not such requirements unduly limit the ability of the Armed Forces to meet the demand for personnel to perform funeral honors in connection with funerals of veterans

(b) PERSONNEL REQUIREMENTS AND LIMITATIONS.—The personnel requirements and limitations described in this subsection are the following:

(1) Requirements, such as the ceiling on the authorized number of members of the National Guard on active duty pursuant to section 115(b)(2)(B) of title 10, United States Code, or end-strength limitations, that may operate to limit the number of members of the National Guard available for the performance of funeral honors duty.

(2) Any other requirements or limitations applicable to the reserve components of the Armed Forces in general, or the National Guard in particular, that may operate to limit the number of members of the National Guard available for the performance of funeral honors duty.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than six months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives a report on the review undertaken pursuant to subsection (a). The report shall include the following:

(1) A description of the review.

(2) Such recommendations as the Secretary considers appropriate in light of the review for legislative or administrative action to expand the number of members of the National Guard available for the performance of funeral honors functions at funerals of veterans.

AMENDMENT NO. 1023

(Purpose: To authorize the provision of support for Beyond Yellow Ribbon programs)

At the end of subtitle H of title V, add the following:

SEC. 583. AUTHORIZATION OF SUPPORT FOR BEYOND YELLOW RIBBON PROGRAMS.

Section 582 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (Public Law 110-181; 10 U.S.C. 10101 note) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (k) and (l) as subsections (l) and (m), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subsection (j) the following new subsection (k):

''(k) SUPPORT FOR BEYOND YELLOW RIBBON PROGRAMS.—The Secretary of Defense may award grants to States to carry out programs that provide deployment cycle information, services, and referrals to members of reserve components of the Armed Forces, members of active components of the Armed Forces, and the families of such members throughout the deployment cycle. Such programs may include the provision of access to outreach services, including the following:

''(1) Employment counseling.

''(2) Behavioral health counseling.

''(3) Suicide prevention.

''(4) Housing advocacy.

''(5) Financial counseling.

''(6) Referrals to for the receipt of other services.''.

AMENDMENT NO. 1065

(Purpose: To increase funding for environmental restoration for the Air Force, and to provide an offset)

In the funding table in section 4301, in the item relating to Environmental Restoration, Air Force, increase the amount in the Senate Authorized column by $20,000,000.

In the funding table in section 4301, in the item relating to Subtotal Environmental Restoration, Air Force, increase the amount in the Senate Authorized column by $20,000,000.

In the funding table in section 4301, in the item relating to Total Miscellaneous Appropriations, increase the amount in the Senate Authorized column by $20,000,000.

In the funding table in section 4301, in the item relating to Undistributed, Line number 999, reduce the amount in the Senate Authorized column by $20,000,000.

In the funding table in section 4301, in the item relating to Fuel Savings, increase the amount of the reduction indicated in the Senate Authorized column by $20,000,000.

In the funding table in section 4301, in the item relating to Subtotal Undistributed, reduce the amount in the Senate Authorized column by $20,000,000.

In the funding table in section 4301, in the item relating to Total Undistributed, reduce the amount in the Senate Authorized column by $20,000,000.

AMENDMENT NO. 1087

(Purpose: To recognize the National Museum of World War II Aviation)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. RECOGNITION OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF WORLD WAR II AVIATION.

(a) RECOGNITION.—The National Museum of World War II Aviation in Colorado Springs, Colorado, is recognized as America's National World War II Aviation Museum.

(b) EFFECT OF RECOGNITION.—The National Museum recognized by this section is not a unit of the National Park System, and the recognition of the National Museum shall not be construed to require or permit Federal funds to be expended for any purpose related to the National Museum.

AMENDMENT NO. 1088

(Purpose: To authorize an additional $10,000,000 for the National Guard for training on wildfire response, and to provide an offset)

At the end of subtitle B of title V, add the following:

SEC. _____. TRAINING FOR NATIONAL GUARD PERSONNEL ON WILDFIRE RESPONSE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Army and the Secretary of the Air Force shall, in consultation with the Chief of the National Guard Bureau, provide for training of appropriate personnel of the National Guard on wildfire response, with preference given to States with the most acres of Federal forestlands administered by the U.S. Forest Service or the Department of the Interior.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated for the Department of Defense a total of $10,000,000, in addition to amounts authorized to be appropriated by sections 421 and 301, in order to carry out the training required by subsection (a) and provide related equipment.

(c) OFFSET.—In the funding table in section 4101, in the item relating to Fuzes, Procurement of Ammunition, Air Force, decrease the amount in the Senate Authorized column by $10,000,000.

AMENDMENT NO. 1089

(Purpose: To establish opportunities for scholarships related to cybersecurity, and for other purposes)

At the end of title XVI, add the following:

Subtitle F—Cyber Scholarship Opportunities

SEC. 1661. SHORT TITLE.

This subtitle may be cited as the ''Cyber Scholarship Opportunities Act of 2017''.

SEC. 1662. COMMUNITY COLLEGE CYBER PILOT PROGRAM AND ASSESSMENT.

(a) PILOT PROGRAM.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this subtitle, as part of the Federal Cyber Scholarship-for-Service program established under section 302 of the Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2014 (15 U.S.C. 7442), the Director of the National Science Foundation, in coordination with the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, shall develop and implement a pilot program at not more than 10, but at least 5, community colleges to provide scholarships to eligible students who—

(1) are pursuing associate degrees or specialized program certifications in the field of cybersecurity; and

(2)(A) have bachelor's degrees; or

(B) are veterans of the armed forces.

(b) ASSESSMENT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this subtitle, as part of the Federal Cyber Scholarship-for-Service program established under section 302 of the Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2014 (15 U.S.C. 7442), the Director of the National Science Foundation, in coordination with the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, shall assess the potential benefits and feasibility of providing scholarships through community colleges to eligible students who are pursuing associate degrees, but do not have bachelor's degrees.

SEC. 1663. FEDERAL CYBER SCHOLARSHIP-FOR SERVICE PROGRAM UPDATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 302 of the Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2014 (15 U.S.C. 7442) is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (b)(3) and inserting the following:

''(3) prioritize the employment placement of at least 80 percent of scholarship recipients in an executive agency (as defined in section 105 of title 5, United States Code); and

''(4) provide awards to improve cybersecurity education at the kindergarten through grade 12 level—

''(A) to increase interest in cybersecurity careers;

''(B) to help students practice correct and safe online behavior and understand the foundational principles of cybersecurity;

''(C) to improve teaching methods for delivering cybersecurity content for kindergarten through grade 12 computer science curricula; and

''(D) to promote teacher recruitment in the field of cybersecurity.'';

(2) by amending subsection (d) to read as follows:

''(d) POST-AWARD EMPLOYMENT OBLIGATIONS.—Each scholarship recipient, as a condition of receiving a scholarship under the program, shall enter into an agreement under which the recipient agrees to work for a period equal to the length of the scholarship, following receipt of the student's degree, in the cybersecurity mission of—

''(1) an executive agency (as defined in section 105 of title 5, United States Code);

''(2) Congress, including any agency, entity, office, or commission established in the legislative branch;

''(3) an interstate agency;

''(4) a State, local, or tribal government; or

''(5) a State, local, or tribal government-affiliated non-profit that is considered to be critical infrastructure (as defined in section 1016(e) of the USA Patriot Act (42 U.S.C. 5195c(e)).'';

(3) in subsection (f)—

(A) by amending paragraph (3) to read as follows:

''(3) have demonstrated a high level of competency in relevant knowledge, skills, and abilities, as defined by the national cybersecurity awareness and education program under section 401;''; and

(B) by amending paragraph (4) to read as follows:

''(4) be a full-time student in an eligible degree program at a qualified institution of higher education, as determined by the Director of the National Science Foundation, except that in the case of a student who is enrolled in a community college, be a student pursuing a degree on a less than full-time basis, but not less than half-time basis; and''; and

(4) by amending subsection (m) to read as follows:

''(m) PUBLIC INFORMATION.—

''(1) EVALUATION.—The Director of the National Science Foundation, in coordination with the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, shall periodically evaluate and make public, in a manner that protects the personally identifiable information of scholarship recipients, information on the success of recruiting individuals for scholarships under this section and on hiring and retaining those individuals in the public sector cyber workforce, including on—

''(A) placement rates;

''(B) where students are placed, including job titles and descriptions;

''(C) student salary ranges for students not released from obligations under this section;

''(D) how long after graduation they are placed;

''(E) how long they stay in the positions they enter upon graduation;

''(F) how many students are released from obligations; and

''(G) what, if any, remedial training is required.

''(2) REPORTS.—The Director of the National Science Foundation, in coordination with the Office of Personnel Management, shall submit, at least once every 3 years, to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives a report, including the results of the evaluation under paragraph (1) and any recent statistics regarding the size, composition, and educational requirements of the Federal cyber workforce.

''(3) RESOURCES.—The Director of the National Science Foundation, in coordination with the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, shall provide consolidated and user-friendly online resources for prospective scholarship recipients, including, to the extent practicable—

''(A) searchable, up-to-date, and accurate information about participating institutions of higher education and job opportunities related to the field of cybersecurity; and

''(B) a modernized description of cybersecurity careers.''.

(b) SAVINGS PROVISION.—Nothing in this section, or an amendment made by this section, shall affect any agreement, scholarship, loan, or repayment, under section 302 of the Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2014 (15 U.S.C. 7442), in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this subtitle.

SEC. 1664. CYBERSECURITY TEACHING.

Section 10(i) of the National Science Foundation Authorization Act of 2002 (42 U.S.C. 1862n-1(i)) is amended—

(1) by amending paragraph (5) to read as follows:

''(5) the term 'mathematics and science teacher' means a science, technology, engineering, mathematics, or computer science, including cybersecurity, teacher at the elementary school or secondary school level;''; and

(2) by amending paragraph (7) to read as follows:

''(7) the term 'science, technology, engineering, or mathematics professional' means an individual who holds a baccalaureate, master's, or doctoral degree in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, or computer science, including cybersecurity, and is working in or had a career in such field or a related area; and''.

AMENDMENT NO. 1094

(Purpose: To express the sense of Senate on increasing enrollment in Senior Reserve Officers' Training Corps programs at minority-serving institutions)

At the end of subtitle E of title V, add the following:

SEC. _____. SENSE OF SENATE ON INCREASING ENROLLMENT IN SENIOR RESERVE OFFICERS' TRAINING CORPS PROGRAMS AT MINORITY-SERVING INSTITUTIONS.

(a) SENSE OF SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the Armed Forces should take appropriate actions to increase enrollment in Senior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (SROTC) programs at minority-serving institutions.

(b) MINORITY-SERVING INSTITUTION DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''minority-serving institution'' means an institution of higher education described in section 371(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1067q(a)).

AMENDMENT NO. 1100

(Purpose: To modify the basis on which an extension of the period for enlistment in the Armed Forces may be made under the Delayed Entry Program)

At the end of subtitle C of title V, add the following:

SEC. _____. MODIFICATION OF BASIS FOR EXTENSION OF PERIOD FOR ENLISTMENT IN THE ARMED FORCES UNDER THE DELAYED ENTRY PROGRAM.

Section 513(b) of title 10, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (4);

(2) by designating the second sentence of paragraph (1) as paragraph (2) and indenting the left margin of such paragraph (2), as so designated, two ems from the left margin;

(3) in paragraph (2), as so designated, by inserting ''described in paragraph (1)'' after ''the 365-day period'';

(4) by inserting after paragraph (2), as designated by this section, the following new paragraph (3):

''(3)(A) The Secretary concerned may extend by up to an additional 365 days the period of extension under paragraph (2) for a person who enlists under section 504(b)(2) of this title if the Secretary determines that the period of extension under this paragraph is required for the performance of adequate background and security reviews of that person.

''(B) The authority to make an extension under this paragraph shall expire on December 31, 2019. The expiration of such authority shall not effect the validity of any extension made in accordance with this paragraph on or before that date.''; and

(5) in paragraph (4), as redesignated by paragraph (1) of this section, by striking ''paragraph (1)'' and inserting ''this subsection''.

AMENDMENT NO. 470

(Purpose: Relating to mechanisms to facilitate the obtaining by military spouses of occupational licenses or credentials in other States)

At the end of part II of subtitle F of title V, add the following:

SEC. _____. MECHANISMS TO FACILITATE THE OBTAINING BY MILITARY SPOUSES OF OCCUPATIONAL LICENSES OR CREDENTIALS IN OTHER STATES.

Not later than March 1, 2018, the Secretary of Defense shall—

(1) develop and maintain a joint Federal-State clearing house to process the occupational license and credential information of military spouses in order—

(A) to facilitate the matching of such information with State occupational licensure and credentialing requirements; and

(B) to provide military spouses information on the actions required to obtain occupational licenses or credentials in other States;

(2) develop and maintain an Internet website that serves as a one-stop resource on occupational licenses and credentials for military spouses that sets forth license and credential requirements for common occupations in the States and provides assistance and other resources for military spouses seeking to obtain occupational licenses or credentials in other States; and

(3) submit to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives a report setting forth an assessment of the feasibility and advisability of the establishment of a joint Federal-State task force dedicated to the elimination of unnecessary or duplicative occupational licensure and credentialing requirements among the States, including through the use of alternative, less restrictive and burdensome forms of occupational regulation.

AMENDMENT NO. 601

(Purpose: To require the Secretary of Defense to declassify certain documents related to incidents in which members of the Armed Forces were exposed to toxic substances)

At the end of subtitle G of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1088. DECLASSIFICATION BY DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OF CERTAIN INCIDENTS OF EXPOSURE OF MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES TO TOXIC SUBSTANCES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense shall declassify documents related to any known incident in which not fewer than 100 members of the Armed Forces were exposed to a toxic substance that resulted in at least one case of a disability that a member of the medical profession has determined to be associated with that toxic substance.

(b) LIMITATION.—The declassification required by subsection (a) shall be limited to information necessary for an individual who was potentially exposed to a toxic substance to determine the following:

(1) Whether that individual was exposed to that toxic substance.

(2) The potential severity of the exposure of that individual to that toxic substance.

(3) Any potential health conditions that may have resulted from exposure to that toxic substance.

(c) EXCEPTION.—The Secretary of Defense is not required to declassify documents under subsection (a) if the Secretary determines that declassification of those documents would materially and immediately threaten the security of the United States.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ARMED FORCES.—The term ''Armed Forces'' has the meaning given that term in section 101 of title 10, United States Code.

(2) EXPOSED.—The term ''exposed'' means, with respect to a toxic substance, that an individual came into contact with that toxic substance in a manner that could be hazardous to the health of that individual, that may include if that toxic substance was inhaled, ingested, or touched the skin or eyes.

(3) EXPOSURE.—The term ''exposure'' means, with respect to a toxic substance, an event during which an individual was exposed to that toxic substance.

(4) TOXIC SUBSTANCE.—The term ''toxic substance'' means any substance determined by the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to be harmful to the environment or hazardous to the health of an individual if inhaled or ingested by or absorbed through the skin of that individual.

AMENDMENT NO. 712

(Purpose: To require a plan to meet the demand for cyberspace career fields in the reserve components of the Armed Forces)

At the end of subtitle B of title V, add the following:

SEC. _____. PLAN TO MEET DEMAND FOR CYBERSPACE CAREER FIELDS IN THE RESERVE COMPONENTS OF THE ARMED FORCES.

(a) PLAN REQUIRED.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to Congress a report setting forth a plan for meeting the increased demand for cyberspace career fields in the reserve components of the Armed Forces.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The plan shall take into account the following:

(1) The availability of qualified local workforces.

(2) Potential best practices of private sector companies involved in cyberspace and of educational institutions with established cyberspace-related academic programs.

(3) The potential for Total Force Integration throughout the defense cyber community.

(4) Recruitment strategies to attract individuals with critical cyber training and skills to join the reserve components.

(c) METRICS.—The plan shall include appropriate metrics for use in the evaluation of the implementation of the plan.

AMENDMENT NO. 780

(Purpose: To increase the maximum term for intergovernmental support agreements to provide installation support services)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. INCREASED TERM LIMIT FOR INTERGOVERNMENTAL SUPPORT AGREEMENTS TO PROVIDE INSTALLATION SUPPORT SERVICES.

Section 2679(a)(2)(A) of title 10, United States Code, is amended by striking ''five years'' and inserting ''ten years.''

AMENDMENT NO. 873

(Purpose: To require the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to submit to Congress a report on the utilization of small businesses with respect to certain Federal contracts)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. REPORT ON UTILIZATION OF SMALL BUSINESSES FOR FEDERAL CONTRACTS.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

(1) since the passage of the Budget Control Act of 2011 (Public Law 112–25; 125 Stat. 240), many Federal agencies have started favoring longer-term Federal contracts, including multiple award contracts, over direct individual awards;

(2) these multiple award contracts have grown to more than one-fifth of Federal contract spending, with the fastest growing multiple award contracts surpassing $100,000,000 in obligations for the first time between 2013 and 2014;

(3) in fiscal year 2017, 17 of the 20 largest Federal contract opportunities are multiple award contracts;

(4) while Federal agencies may choose to use any or all of the various socio-economic groups on a multiple award contract, the Small Business Administration only examines socio-economic performance through the small business procurement scorecard and does not examine potential opportunities by those groups; and

(5) Congress and the Department of Justice have been clear that no individual socio-economic group shall be given preference over another.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term ''Administrator'' means the Administrator of the Small Business Administration;

(2) the term ''covered small business concerns'' means—

(A) HUBZone small business concerns;

(B) small business concerns owned and controlled by service-disabled veterans;

(C) small business concerns owned and controlled by women; and

(D) socially and economically disadvantaged small business concerns, as defined in section 8(a)(4)(A) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 637(a)(4)(A)), receiving assistance under such section 8(a); and

(3) the terms ''HUBZone small business concern'', ''small business concern'', ''small business concern owned and controlled by service-disabled veterans'', and ''small business concern owned and controlled by women'' have the meanings given those terms in section 3 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632).

(c) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship of the Senate and the Committee on Small Business of the House of Representatives a report that includes—

(A) a determination as to whether small business concerns and each category of covered small business concerns described in

subparagraphs (A) through (D) of subsection (b)(2) are being utilized in a significant portion of the Federal market on multiple award contracts, including—

(i) whether awards are being reserved for 1 or more of those categories; and

(ii) whether each such category is being given the opportunity to perform on multiple award contracts;

(B) a determination as to whether performance requirements for multiple award contracts, as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act, are feasible and appropriate for small business concerns; and

(C) any additional information as the Administrator may determine necessary.

(2) REQUIREMENT.—In making the determinations required under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall use information from multiple award contracts—

(A) with varied assigned North American Industry Classification System codes; and

(B) that were awarded by not less than 8 Federal agencies.

AMENDMENT NO. 874

(Purpose: To limit authorized cost increases in military construction projects)

At the end of subtitle A of title XXVIII, add the following:

SEC. ___. AUTHORIZED COST INCREASES.

Section 2853 of title 10, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by inserting ''by not more than 10 percent'' after ''may be increased''; and

(2) in subsection (c)—

(A) by striking ''limitation on cost variations'' and inserting ''limitation on cost decreases''; and

(B) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking ''case of a cost increase or a reduction'' and inserting ''case of a reduction''; and

(ii) in subparagraph (A)—

(I) by striking ''cost increase or reduction in scope, the reasons therefor,'' and inserting ''reduction in scope, the reasons therefor, and''; and

(II) by striking '', and a description of the funds proposed to be used to finance any increased costs''.

AMENDMENT NO. 879

(Purpose: To amend title 46, United States Code, to provide greater flexibility to the Coast Guard in deciding the Federal district court in which to prosecute individuals engaged in drug trafficking)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. VENUE FOR PROSECUTION OF MARITIME DRUG TRAFFICKING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 70504(b) of title 46, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''(b) VENUE.—A person violating section 70503 or 70508—

''(1) shall be tried in the district in which such offense was committed; or

''(2) if the offense was begun or committed upon the high seas, or elsewhere outside the jurisdiction of any particular State or district, may be tried in any district.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 1009(d) of the Controlled Substances Import and Export Act (21 U.S.C. 959(d)) is amended—

(1) in the subsection title, by striking ''; VENUE''; and

(2) by striking ''Any person who violates this section shall be tried in the United States district court at the point of entry where such person enters the United States, or in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia.''.

AMENDMENT NO. 908

(Purpose: To authorize the modification of the Second Division Memorial)

At the end of subtitle D of title III, add the following:

SEC. 3_____. MODIFICATION OF THE SECOND DIVISION MEMORIAL.

(a) AUTHORIZATION.—The Second Indianhead Division Association, Inc., Scholarship and Memorials Foundation, an organization described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and exempt from taxation under section 501(a) of that Code, may place additional commemorative elements or engravings on the raised platform or stone work of the existing Second Division Memorial located in President's Park, between 17th Street Northwest and Constitution Avenue in the District of Columbia, to further honor the members of the Second Infantry Division who have given their lives in service to the United States.

(b) APPLICATION OF COMMEMORATIVE WORKS ACT.—Chapter 89 of title 40, United States Code (commonly known as the ''Commemorative Works Act''), shall apply to the design and placement of the commemorative elements or engravings authorized under subsection (a).

(c) FUNDING.—Federal funds may not be used for modifications of the Second Division Memorial authorized under subsection (a).

AMENDMENT NO. 927

(Purpose: Requiring a report on the availability of postsecondary credit for skills acquired during military service)

At the end of subtitle D of title V, add the following:

SEC. ___. REPORT ON AVAILABILITY OF POSTSECONDARY CREDIT FOR SKILLS ACQUIRED DURING MILITARY SERVICE.

Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Secretaries of Veterans Affairs, Education, and Labor, shall submit to Congress a report on the transfer of skills into equivalent postsecondary credits or technical certifications for members of the armed forces leaving the military. Such report shall describe each the following:

(1) Each skill that may be acquired during military service that is eligible for transfer into an equivalent postsecondary credit or technical certification.

(2) The academic level of the equivalent postsecondary credit or technical certification for each such skill.

(3) Each academic institution that awards an equivalent postsecondary credit or technical certification for such skills, including—

(A) each such academic institution's status as a public or private institution, and as a non-profit or for-profit institution; and

(B) the number of veterans that applied to such academic institution who were able to receive equivalent postsecondary credits or technical certifications in the preceding fiscal year, and the academic level of the credits or certifications.

(4) The number of members of the armed forces who left the military in the preceding fiscal year, and the number of such members who met with an academic or technical training advisor as part of the member's participation in the Transition Assistance Program of the Department of Defense.

AMENDMENT NO. 943

(Purpose: To authorize the Secretary of the Air Force to enter into an agreement providing for the joint use of Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Marietta, Georgia, with civil aviation)

At the end of subtitle E of title XXVIII, add the following:

SEC. ___. JOINT USE OF DOBBINS AIR RESERVE BASE, MARIETTA, GEORGIA, WITH CIVIL AVIATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Air Force may enter into an agreement that would provide or permit the joint use of Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Marietta, Georgia, by the Air Force and civil aircraft.

(b) CONFORMING REPEAL.—Section 312 of the National Defense Authorization Act, Fiscal Year 1989 (Public Law 100–456; 102 Stat. 1950) is hereby repealed.

AMENDMENT NO. 945

(Purpose: To require information on Department of Defense funding in Department press releases and related public statements on programs, projects, and activities funded by the Department)

At the end of subtitle A of title X, add the following:

SEC. _____. INFORMATION ON DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE FUNDING IN DEPARTMENT PRESS RELEASES AND RELATED PUBLIC STATEMENTS ON PROGRAMS, PROJECTS, AND ACTIVITIES FUNDED BY THE DEPARTMENT.

(a) INFORMATION REQUIRED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 134 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 2257 the following new section:

''§ 2258. Department of Defense press releases and related public statements on Department funded programs, projects, and activities

''Any press release, statement, or other document issued to the public by the Department of Defense that describes a program, project, or activity funded, whether in whole or in part, by amounts provided by the Department, including any project, project, or activity of a foreign, State, or local government, shall clearly state the following:

''(1) That the program, project, or activity is funded, in whole or in part (as applicable), by funds provided by the Department.

''(2) An estimate of the amount of funding from the Department that the program, project, or activity currently receives.''.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of subchapter II of chapter 134 of such title is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 2257 the following new item:

''2258. Department of Defense press releases and related public statements on Department funded programs, projects, and activities.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act, and shall apply with respect to programs, projects, and activities funded by the Department of Defense with amounts authorized to be appropriated for fiscal years after fiscal year 2018.

AMENDMENT NO. 1006

(Purpose: To modernize Government information technology, and for other purposes)

(The amendment is printed in the RECORD of September 13, 2017, under ''Text of Amendments.'')

AMENDMENT NO. 1031

(Purpose: To require a certification and report related to the enhanced multi mission parachute system)

At the end of subtitle C of title I, add the following:

SEC. _____. CERTIFICATION OF THE ENHANCED MULTI MISSION PARACHUTE SYSTEM FOR THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS.

(a) CERTIFICATION.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Navy shall submit to

the congressional defense committees a certification—

(1) whether either the Marine Corps' currently fielded multi mission parachute system or the Army's RA–1 parachute system meet the Marine Corps requirements;

(2) whether the Marine Corps' PARIS, Special Application Parachute meets the Marine Corps requirement;

(3) whether the testing plan for the enhanced multi mission parachute system meets all regulatory requirements; and

(4) whether the Department of the Navy has determined that a high glide canopy is as safe and effective as the currently fielded free fall parachute systems.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Navy shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report that includes—

(1) an explanation for using the Parachute Industry Association specification for a military parachute given that sports parachutes are employed from relatively slow flying civilian aircraft at altitudes below 10,000 feet;

(2) a cost estimate for any new equipment and training that the Marine Corps will require in order to employ a high glide parachute;

(3) justification of why the Department of the Navy is not conducting any testing until first article testing; and

(4) an assessment of the risks associated with high glide canopies with a focus on how the Department of the Navy will mitigate the risk for malfunctions experienced in other high glide canopy programs.

AMENDMENT NO. 1033

(Purpose: To require a report related to the E–8C JSTARS recapitalization program)

At the end of subtitle D of title I, add the following:

SEC. ___. REQUIREMENT FOR CONTINUATION OF E–8 JSTARS RECAPITALIZATION PROGRAM.

If the Secretary of the Air Force proposes in a budget request to cancel or modify the current E–8C JSTARS recapitalization program as presented to Congress in May 2017, the Secretary of Defense shall submit a report at the same time as the Secretary of the Air Force makes such a request budget request. That report shall set forth the following:

(1) The rationale and appropriate supporting analysis for the proposed cancellation or modification.

(2) An assessment of the implications of such cancellation or modification for the Air Force, Air National Guard, Army, Army National Guard, Navy and Marine Corps, and combatant commands' mission needs.

(3) A certification that such cancellation or modification of the previous recapitalization program plan would not result in an increased time during which there is a capability gap in providing Battlefield Management, Command and Control/Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (BMC2/ISR) to the combatant commanders.

(4) Such other matters relating to the proposed cancellation or modification as the Secretary considers appropriate.

AMENDMENT NO. 1034

(Purpose: To express the sense of Congress regarding fire protection in Department of Defense facilities)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON FIRE PROTECTION IN DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE FACILITIES.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) portable fire extinguishers are essential to the safety of members of the Armed Forces and their families;

(2) the current United Facilities Criteria could be updated to ensure it provides members of the Armed Forces, their families, and other Department of Defense personnel with the most modern fire protection standards that are met by their civilian counterparts, including requiring portable fire extinguishers on military installations;

(3) United Facilities Criteria 3-600-01, Section 4-9, dated September 26, 2006, addresses the national and international standards for fire safety and Department of Defense Facilities; and

(4) the Secretary of Defense should consider amending the current United Facilities Criteria Section 9-17.1 to address the standards outlined by United Facilities Criteria 3-600-01, Section 4-9, dated September 26, 2006.

AMENDMENT NO. 1038

(Purpose: To ensure transparency in acquisition programs)

At the end of subtitle A of title VIII, add the following:

SEC. ___. ENSURING TRANSPARENCY IN ACQUISITION PROGRAMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense shall establish and implement a policy that will ensure the acquisition programs of major systems establish cost, schedule, and performance goals at the onset of the program. The policy shall also ensure that acquisition programs of major systems report on the original cost, schedule, and performance goals throughout the program to ensure transparency.

(b) MAJOR SYSTEM DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''major system'' has the meaning given the term in section 2302d of title 10, United States Code.

AMENDMENT NO. 1039

(Purpose: To devolve acquisition authority from the Office of the Secretary of Defense to the military services)

At the end of subtitle C of title VIII, add the following:

SEC. ___. ROLE OF THE CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCE IN MATERIAL DEVELOPMENT DECISION AND ACQUISITION SYSTEM MILESTONES.

Section 2547(b) of title 10, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking ''The Secretary'' and inserting ''(1) The Secretary''; and

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

''(2) Consistent with the performance of duties under subsection (a), the Chief of the armed force concerned, with respect to major defense acquisition programs, shall—

''(A) concur with the need for a material solution as identified in the Material Development Decision Review prior to entry into the Material Solution Analysis Phase under Department of Defense Instruction 5000.02;

''(B) concur with the cost, schedule, technical feasibility, and performance trade-offs that have been made with regard to the program before Milestone A approval is granted under section 2366a of this title;

''(C) concur that appropriate trade-offs among cost, schedule, technical feasibility, and performance objectives have been made to ensure that the program is affordable when considering the per unit cost and the total life-cycle cost before Milestone B approval is granted under section 2366b of this title; and

''(D) concur that the requirements in the program capability document are necessary and realistic in relation to program cost and fielding targets as required by paragraph (1) before Milestone C approval is granted.''.

AMENDMENT NO. 1050

(Purpose: To increase funding for research, development, test, and evaluation for historically Black colleges and universities and other minority-serving institutions of higher education)

At the end of subtitle C of title II of division A, add the following:

SEC. ____. IMPORTANCE OF HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES AND MINORITY-SERVING INSTITUTIONS.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

(1) historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) and minority-serving institutions play a vital role in educating low-income and underrepresented students in areas of national need;

(2) HBCUs and minority-serving institutions presently are collaborating with the Department of Defense in research and development efforts that contribute to the defense readiness and national security of the Nation;

(3) by their research these institutions are helping to develop the next generation of scientists and engineers who will help lead the Department of Defense in addressing high-priority national security challenges; and

(4) it is important to further engage HBCUs and minority-serving institutions in university research and innovation, especially in prioritizing software development and cyber security by utilizing existing Department of Defense labs, and collaborating with existing programs that help attract candidates, including programs like the Air Force Minority Leaders Programs, which recruit Americans from diverse background to serve their country through service in our Nation's military.

(b) INCREASE.—Funds authorized to be appropriated in Research, Development, Test, and Evaluation, Defense-wide, PE 61228D8Z, section 4201, for Basic Research, Historically Black Colleges and Universities/Minority Institutions, Line 006, are hereby increased by $12,000,000.

(c) OFFSET.—Funding in section 4101 for Other Procurement, Army, for Automated Data Processing Equipment, Line 108, is hereby reduced by $12,000,000.

AMENDMENT NO. 1055

(Purpose: To require a report on cyber applications of blockchain technology)

At the end of subtitle C of title XVI, add the following:

SEC. 1630C. REPORT ON CYBER APPLICATIONS OF BLOCKCHAIN TECHNOLOGY.

(a) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the heads of such other agencies and departments as the Secretary considers appropriate, shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the potential offensive and defensive cyber applications of blockchain technology and other distributed database technologies and an assessment of efforts by foreign powers, extremist organizations, and criminal networks to utilize these technologies. Such report shall also include an assessment of the use or planned use of blockchain technologies by the United States Government or critical infrastructure networks and the vulnerabilities of such networks to cyber attacks.

(b) FORM OF REPORT.—The report required by (a) may be submitted—

(1) in classified form; or

(2) in unclassified form with a classified annex.

(c) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''appropriate committees of Congress'' means—

(1) the Committee on Armed Services, the Select Committee on Intelligence, and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate; and

(2) Committee on Armed Services, the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, and the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives.

AMENDMENT NO. 1063

(Purpose: To modify the definition of custom-developed computer software)

In section 886, beginning in the new section 2320a of title 10, United States Code, as added by subsection (a)(1) of such section 886, strike subsection (c) of such section 2320a and all that follows through the end of subsection (d)(1) of such section 886 and insert the following:

''(c) APPLICABILITY TO EXISTING SOFTWARE.—The Secretary of Defense shall, where appropriate—

''(1) seek to negotiate open source licenses to existing custom-developed computer software with contractors that developed it; and

''(2) release related source code and technical data in a public repository location approved by the Department of Defense.

''(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) CUSTOM-DEVELOPED COMPUTER SOFTWARE.—The term 'custom-developed computer software'—

''(A) means human-readable source code, including segregable portions thereof, that is—

''(i) first produced in the performance of a Department of Defense contract, grant, cooperative agreement, or other transaction; or

''(ii) developed by a contractor or subcontractor exclusively with Federal funds (other than an item or process developed under a contract or subcontract to which regulations under section 9(j)(2) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638(j)(2)) apply); and

''(B) does not include Commercial Off-The-Shelf software, or packaged software developed exclusively at private expense, whether delivered as a Cloud Service, in binary form, or by any other means of software delivery.

''(2) TECHNICAL DATA.—The term 'technical data' has the meaning given the term in section 2302 of this title.''.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by adding after the item relating to section 2320 the following new item:

''2320a. Use of open source software.''.

(b) PRIZE COMPETITION.—The Secretary of Defense shall create a prize for a research and develop program or other activity for identifying, capturing, and storing existing Department of Defense custom-developed computer software and related technical data. The Secretary of Defense shall create an additional prize for improving, repurposing, or reusing software to better support the Department of Defense mission. The prize programs shall be conducted in accordance with section 2374a of title 10, United States Code.

(c) REVERSE ENGINEERING.—The Secretary of Defense shall task the Defense Advanced Research Program Agency with a project to identify methods to locate and reverse engineer Department of Defense custom-developed computer software and related technical data for which source code is unavailable.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) CUSTOM-DEVELOPED COMPUTER SOFTWARE.—The term ''custom-developed computer software''—

(A) means human-readable source code, including segregable portions thereof, that is—

(i) first produced in the performance of a Department of Defense contract, grant, cooperative agreement, or other transaction; or

(ii) developed by a contractor or subcontractor exclusively with Federal funds (other than an item or process developed under a contract or subcontract to which regulations under section 9(j)(2) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638(j)(2)) apply); and

(B) does not include Commercial Off-The-Shelf software, or packaged software developed exclusively at private expense, whether delivered as a Cloud Service, in binary form, or by any other means of software delivery.

AMENDMENT NO. 1073

(Purpose: To improve section 1653, relating to ground-based interceptor capability, capacity, and reliability)

Strike section 1653 and insert the following:

SEC. 1653. GROUND-BASED INTERCEPTOR CAPABILITY, CAPACITY, AND RELIABILITY.

(a) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that it is the policy of the United States to maintain and improve, with the allies of the United States, an effective, robust layered missile defense system capable of defending the citizens of the United States residing in territories and States of the United States, allies of the United States, and deployed Armed Forces of the United States.

(b) INCREASE IN CAPACITY AND CONTINUED ADVANCEMENT.—The Secretary of Defense shall—

(1) subject to the annual authorization of appropriations and the annual appropriation of funds for National Missile Defense, increase the number of United States ground-based interceptors, unless otherwise directed by the Ballistic Missile Defense Review, by up to 28;

(2) develop a plan to further increase such number to the currently available missile field capacity of 104 and to plan for any future capacity at any site that may be identified by the Ballistic Missile Defense Review; and

(3) continue to rapidly advance missile defense technologies to improve the capability and reliability of the ground-based midcourse defense element of the ballistic missile defense system.

(c) DEPLOYMENT.—Not later than December 31, 2021, the Secretary of Defense shall—

(1) execute any requisite construction to ensure that Missile Field 1 or Missile Field 2 at Fort Greely or alternative missile fields at Fort Greely which may be identified pursuant to subsection (b), are capable of supporting and sustaining additional ground-based interceptors;

(2) deploy up to 14 additional ground-based interceptors to Missile Field 1 or up to 20 additional ground-based interceptors to an alternative missile field at Fort Greely as soon as technically feasible; and

(3) identify a ground-based interceptor stockpile storage site for the remaining ground-based interceptors required by subsection (b).

(d) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Unless otherwise directed or recommended by the Ballistic Missile Defense Review (BMDR), the Director of the Missile Defense Agency shall submit to the congressional defense committees, not later than 90 days after the completion of the Ballistic Missile Defense Review, a report on options to increase the capability, capacity, and reliability of the ground-based midcourse defense element of the ballistic missile defense system and the infrastructure requirements for increasing the number of ground-based interceptors in currently feasible locations across the United States.

(2) CONTENTS.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) An identification of potential sites in the United States, whether existing or new on the East Coast or in the Midwest, for the deployment of 104 ground-based interceptors.

(B) A cost-benefit analysis of each such site, including tactical, operational, and cost-to-construct considerations.

(C) A description of any completed and outstanding environmental assessments or impact statements for each such site.

(D) A description of the existing capacity of the missile fields at Fort Greely and the infrastructure requirements needed to increase the number of ground-based interceptors to 20 ground-based interceptors each.

(E) A description of the additional infrastructure and components needed to further outfit missile fields at Fort Greely before emplacing additional ground-based interceptors configured with the redesigned kill vehicle, including with respect to ground excavation, silos, utilities, and support equipment.

(F) A cost estimate of such infrastructure and components.

(G) An estimated schedule for completing such construction as may be required for such infrastructure and components.

(H) An identification of any environmental assessments or impact studies that would need to be conducted to expand such missile fields at Fort Greely beyond current capacity.

(I) An operational evaluation and cost analysis of the deployment of transportable ground-based interceptors, including an identification of potential sites, including in the eastern United States and at Vandenberg Air Force Base, and an examination of any environmental, legal, or tactical challenges associated with such deployments, including to any sites identified in subparagraph (A).

(J) A determination of the appropriate fleet mix of ground-based interceptor kill vehicles and boosters to maximize overall system effectiveness and increase its capacity and capability, including the costs and benefits of continued inclusion of capability enhancement II (CE-II) Block 1 interceptors after the fielding of the redesigned kill vehicle.

(K) A description of the planned improvements to homeland ballistic missile defense sensor and discrimination capabilities and an assessment of the expected operational benefits of such improvements to homeland ballistic missile defense.

(L) The benefit of supplementing ground-based midcourse defense elements with other, more distributed, elements, including both Aegis ships and Aegis Ashore installations with Standard Missile-3 Block IIA and other interceptors in Hawaii and at other locations for homeland missile defense.

(3) FORM.—The report submitted under paragraph (1) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

AMENDMENT NO. 1086

(Purpose: To authorize $600,000,000 in increased funding for the procurement of one Littoral Combat Ship for the Navy above the President's budget request)

In the funding table in section 4101, in the item relating to Littoral Combat Ship, increase the amount in the Senate Authorized column by $600,000,000.

In line 999 of the funding table in section 4301, in the item relating to fuel savings, increase the reduction by $600 million.

AMENDMENT NO. 1096

(Purpose: To prohibit multichannel video programming distributors from being required to carry certain video content that is owned or controlled by the Government of the Russian Federation)

At the end of subtitle G of title X, add the following:

SEC. _____. CARRIAGE OF CERTAIN PROGRAMMING.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term ''local commercial television station'' has the meaning given the term in section 614(h) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 534(h));

(2) the term ''multichannel video programming distributor'' has the meaning given the term in section 602 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 522);

(3) the term ''qualified noncommercial educational television station'' has the meaning given the term in section 615(l) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 535(l));

(4) the term ''retransmission consent'' means the authority granted to a multichannel video programming distributor under section 325(b) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 325(b)) to retransmit the signal of a television broadcast station; and

(5) the term ''television broadcast station'' has the meaning given the term in section 76.66(a) of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations.

(b) CARRIAGE OF CERTAIN CONTENT.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a multichannel video programming distributor may not be directly or indirectly required, including as a condition of obtaining retransmission consent, to—

(1) carry non-incidental video content from a local commercial television station, qualified noncommercial educational television station, or television broadcast station to the extent that such content is owned, controlled, or financed (in whole or in part) by the Government of the Russian Federation; or

(2) lease, or otherwise make available, channel capacity to any person for the provision of video programming that is owned, controlled, or financed (in whole or in part) by the Government of the Russian Federation.

(c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section may be construed as applying to the editorial use by a local commercial television station, qualified noncommercial educational television station, or television broadcast station of programming that is owned, controlled, or financed (in whole or in part) by the Government of the Russian Federation.

AMENDMENT NO. 1032

(Purpose: To prohibit the availability of funds for retirement of E–8 JSTARS aircraft)

At the end of subtitle D of title I, add the following:

SEC. ____. PROHIBITION ON AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS FOR RETIREMENT OF E–8 JSTARS AIRCRAFT.

(a) PROHIBITION ON AVAILABLE OF FUNDS FOR RETIREMENT.—Except as provided by subsection (b), none of the funds authorized to be appropriated by this Act or otherwise made available for fiscal year 2018 for the Air Force may be obligated or expended to retire, or prepare to retire, any E-8 Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System aircraft.

(b) EXCEPTION.—The prohibition in subsection (a) shall not apply to individual Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System aircraft that the Secretary of the Air Force determines, on a case-by-case basis, to be non-operational because of mishaps, other damage, or being uneconomical to repair.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I yield back my remaining time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All postcloture time has expired.

The amendments were ordered to be engrossed and the bill to be read a third time.

The bill was read the third time.

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

Mr. ENZI. 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 bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) would have voted ''yea''.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) is necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 89, nays 8, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 199 Leg.]

YEAS—89

Alexander	Feinstein	Murray
Baldwin	Fischer	Nelson
Barrasso	Flake	Perdue
Bennet	Franken	Peters
Blumenthal	Gardner	Portman
Blunt	Grassley	Reed
Booker	Harris	Risch
Boozman	Hassan	Roberts
Brown	Hatch	Rounds
Burr	Heinrich	Sasse
Cantwell	Heitkamp	Schatz
Capito	Heller	Schumer
Cardin	Hirono	Scott
Carper	Hoeven	Shaheen
Casey	Inhofe	Shelby
Cassidy	Isakson	Stabenow
Cochran	Johnson	Strange
Collins	Kaine	Sullivan
Coons	Kennedy	Tester
Cornyn	King	Thune
Cortez Masto	Klobuchar	Tillis
Cotton	Lankford	Toomey
Crapo	Manchin	Udall
Cruz	Markey	Van Hollen
Daines	McCain	Warner
Donnelly	McCaskill	Warren
Duckworth	McConnell	Whitehouse
Durbin	Moran	Wicker
Enzi	Murkowski	Young
Ernst	Murphy	

NAYS—8

Corker	Lee	Sanders
Gillibrand	Merkley	Wyden
Leahy	Paul	

NOT VOTING—3

Graham	Menendez	Rubio

The bill (H.R. 2810), as amended, was passed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that H.R. 2810, as amended, be printed as passed by the Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The bill, H.R. 2810, as amended, will be printed in a future edition of the RECORD.)

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 176, William J. Emanuel.

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 bill clerk read the nomination of William J. Emanuel, of California, to be a Member of the National Labor Relations Board for the term of five years expiring August 27, 2021.

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 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 William J. Emanuel, of California, to be a Member of the National Labor Relations Board.

Mitch McConnell, John Hoeven, Joni Ernst, Thom Tillis, Steve Daines, Mike Crapo, Jerry Moran, Tom Cotton, Roger F. Wicker, Pat Roberts, James M. Inhofe, Johnny Isakson, John Cornyn, James Lankford, John Boozman, James E. Risch, John Thune.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call be waived.

Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Illinois.

HEALTHCARE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, the Senate has spent a great deal of time over the last 6 or 7 months on healthcare in America. For years after the passage of the Affordable Care Act, the Republican Party—the House and Senate—has called for repeal of the bill. Yet, when the time came, with the majority of Republicans in the House and the Senate and, of course, a Republican President, and the task was immediately before them, they faltered because they didn't have a replacement. They didn't have something to propose that was better. As a consequence, their efforts stopped short—one vote short—on the floor of the Senate several weeks ago.

We still face some significant challenges. Some of those are very immediate.

Before the end of September, we will face the prospect of needing to reauthorize the Children's Health Insurance Program, known as CHIP. This program provides health insurance coverage for more than 9 million children and pregnant women across the country—350,000 in my State. This vital program, the CHIP program, has had two decades of broad bipartisan support, and it is going to expire in 12 days.

The good news is that the Finance Committee chairman, ORRIN HATCH of Utah, and his ranking member, RON WYDEN of Oregon, have reached a bipartisan agreement on a 5-year reauthorization of the CHIP program.

The bad news is that instead of preserving healthcare for low-income children and pregnant women, the Senate Republican leadership seems more interested in the next 12 days in calling a different issue—a different bill—altogether, the Graham-Cassidy bill, relating to health insurance across America. That bill would take health insurance coverage away from millions of Americans, including 1 million in the State of Illinois.

From where I am sitting, reauthorizing the CHIP program is a priority to not only serve the 9 million children and pregnant women across our country but 350,000 in my State.

There is another bill we need to reauthorize before the end of September: the funding of our Nation's community health centers. Like CHIP, funding for community health centers expires at the end of this month—in just a few days. Also like CHIP, community health centers have enjoyed decades of broad bipartisan support. We have 10,000 community health centers across our country. They serve 26 million Americans. Community health centers serve 1 out of every 10 children, 1 in 6 Americans living in rural areas, and more than 330,000 of our Nation's veterans.

Illinois' 52 health center organizations receive $150 million in Federal funding in order to provide care to the 1.3 million people in 360 locations in the State of Illinois. I have been to many of these locations, and I have said in real candor and honesty that if I had a medical issue or if there were one in my family, I would enter the community health centers in my State with confidence that I and my family would receive the very best of care. They are outstanding organizations.

If Congress doesn't act within 12 days, community health centers in my State and across the Nation will see their funding cut by 70 percent. That dramatic funding cut would result in 2,800 community health centers closing across America, 50,000 jobs lost, and 9 million people losing access to healthcare.

Well, there is good news here as well. Because of Senators BLUNT and STABENOW taking the lead, they are pushing for swift reauthorization of community health center funding. But the problem is that there is another bill—the Graham-Cassidy bill—which has captured the attention and apparently the calendar time for the Senate—at least that is the possibility we hear. So why shouldn't Congress be spending the next 12 crucial days reauthorizing the Children's Health Insurance Program across America and making certain our community health centers don't lose the critical Federal funding they need to serve so many people?

Right now, we know we face some challenges when it comes to the health insurance market in America. Approximately 6 percent of Americans—3 percent of people in my State—purchase their health insurance in the individual marketplace, with more than 50 percent of these people receiving some subsidies to help pay for costs. However, many of these people are seeing dramatic increases in premiums. We know that, and we know it is a challenge and one we need to address.

Here is the good news—and it is time for some good news when it comes to healthcare. Almost from the minute that the critical vote was cast ending the repeal of ObamaCare, meetings started taking place. I can recall, as the Senate was adjourning, I looked back by the cloakroom, and there was Senator LAMAR ALEXANDER and Senator PATTY MURRAY talking in the middle of the night—about 3 o'clock in the morning. I later learned that they had reached an agreement between them—a Republican, a Democrat—on the HELP Committee to start a series of hearings about what we could do as a Senate to actually strengthen the healthcare system in America. That was before our August recess.

When we got back from recess, they had kept their word. I attended three or four of the Member hearings, which they held before the official public hearings a little later in the morning. These were good meetings. At the first one, I recall Senator ALEXANDER saying 53 Senators—Democrats and Republicans—showed up for coffee and doughnuts to meet with insurance commissioners from five different States. Just a few days after that, there was another coffee-and-doughnut session, another good bipartisan turnout of Senators as we sat down with five Governors, Democrats and Republicans, who talked about health insurance. A few days later, another meeting took place where experts came in and talked about the subject.

I felt there was more accomplished in those 3 hours with those outstanding witnesses from across the country than all of the time we had spent giving speeches to one another on the floor of the Senate in the previous 7 months. It was interesting. We brought in these people from different States, different political parties, and they virtually had the same thing to tell us. There were a handful of things which we could do that could make an immediate, positive impact to make the cost of health insurance a lot more predictable—not to say we are going to bring it down—I don't want to be overpromising—but to slow the rate of growth in health insurance costs as well as provide stability in the insurance market.

Here are the things that came out loud and clear from these bipartisan Senate meetings.

First, they told us to stop playing games with cost-sharing reduction subsidies. These are subsidies to insurance companies that take on individuals with expensive health histories. These insurance companies are given support by subsidies so that they can keep the premium costs for these individuals under control.

These cost-sharing reduction subsidies help 7 million Americans afford their copayments and deductibles on their health insurance policies. The current Trump administration has repeatedly threatened to stop the payments. As a result, individual market premiums keep going up because of the uncertainty of whether the government is going to keep its promise to make these cost-reduction subsidies.

I remember the commissioner from the State of South Carolina told us, I say to the Senator from Oregon, who is our ranking Democrat on the Finance Committee—he said: I am going to announce a 30-percent increase in health insurance premiums. If I knew that these cost-sharing reduction subsidies were coming, it would be 10 percent. I can eliminate 20 percent of the anticipated increase in premium costs if these subsidies come through.

It is pretty clear to me, this is sound policy, on a bipartisan basis, which would have a dramatic impact in reducing the cost of premiums to many individuals. That came through loud and clear in every meeting we had with Senators MURRAY and ALEXANDER.

The second thing they talked about was State reinsurance. I don't understand that as well as some, but it has worked in States where the State picks up a share of the liability for health insurance between certain dollar amounts so the private insurance companies don't end up with that burden. Because of this reinsurance, they are able to keep premium costs down.

The third thing is to provide States with more flexibility without undermining some really fundamental issues—without undermining, for example, the preexisting condition protection we currently have.

I left those meetings feeling encouraged. After 7 months of bitter political rhetoric, which led to nothing on the floor of the Senate, we were finally sitting down, on a bipartisan basis, with Democrats and Republicans all across our country with specific suggestions which could help our healthcare system. That, to me, is the way to move forward. That, to me, is the lesson learned from much wasted time so far this year. Unfortunately, this whole effort may be derailed.

Senators CASSIDY and GRAHAM have come up with a legislative alternative they want to move forward. Unfortunately, the measure they have proposed has not been scored by the Congressional Budget Office nor carefully measured to find out what impact it would have on the American healthcare system, which accounts for one-sixth of the American national economy.

Here is what we know about the Cassidy and Graham proposal. What they are suggesting is basically eliminating the subsidies which help individuals pay for private health insurance and bringing to a halt the Medicaid expansion which has covered millions of Americans and given them health insurance.

What they say instead is something which has been said many times on the

floor: We will just give all the money to the Governors, and they will figure it out. They will figure out how to save money in their States. It turns out, Governors of both political parties warn us: If you are going to give us a set amount of money as the cost of healthcare continues to go up, don't expect us to cover as many people or provide as good a coverage if we do it on a State-by-State basis.

So who supports this new Cassidy-Graham approach and who opposes it? Every single medical advocacy group—the hospitals, the doctors, the nurses—all across America oppose this Cassidy-Graham approach, as well as the medical advocacy groups, because they understand their approach would allow discrimination against individuals insured based on a history of preexisting conditions—going back to the bad old days before we passed the Affordable Care Act.

The Cassidy-Graham approach, which they brought to us, doesn't add up. If you take $300 billion or $400 billion out of this healthcare system, dump it into the laps of Governors across this country and say, ''Good luck. Do it on a local basis. I am sure it will all work out,'' they will quickly tell you, as they have had in the bipartisan meetings we have had, it will not work. It does not compute. It may be able to check the box from some things to repeal the Affordable Care Act, but they certainly didn't replace it with anything of equal or better value. The opposite is true. That is why I think we ought to think twice.

There is a mad dash now in the last 12 days to do many things. From a political viewpoint, there is a limited opportunity for this repeal effort. That 12-day period is a limited window under the Senate rules of reconciliation. It is a mistake, as far as I am concerned, for us to move toward Cassidy-Graham—concepts which have been roundly opposed in my State and across the Nation, concepts which have failed on the floor of the Senate.

Let us roll up our sleeves and do three things that do make sense: Let's reauthorize the Children's Health Insurance Program. Let's make sure those kids and their pregnant moms are going to have the basic coverage they have enjoyed for almost 20 years.

Let's also reauthorize the community health centers. We know they work. We know when people have a medical home, they are less likely to let medical conditions get worse and more expensive. That, to me, is a good investment to make sure they continue.

Finally, let's turn toward a real bipartisan effort, a measure which can emerge soon—I hope within days—from Senators MURRAY and ALEXANDER on a bipartisan basis. I know they are still working on it. They haven't reached a final agreement on what they are doing, but I hope all of us, in both political parties, will encourage them to do the right thing.

Remember when JOHN MCCAIN came to the floor after he had been diagnosed with the cancer he is battling now. He came here and cast a crucial vote to proceed to debate this whole issue of healthcare. Then he asked to speak for 15 minutes, and I stayed in my chair. I wanted to hear it. He reminded us of the importance of doing things on a bipartisan basis and doing them thoughtfully when it comes to something as important as healthcare. Let us keep that speech by JOHN MCCAIN and that lesson in mind. Let us resist this Cassidy-Graham approach, which has no support when it comes to the medical community, and instead work on the bipartisan approach from ALEXANDER and MURRAY, together with the Finance Committee—which I know Senator WYDEN is going to address next—so we can have a bipartisan solution.

The American people sent us here to solve problems, not to create them. Cassidy-Graham creates problems. Let's find solutions which solve problems.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, before the Senator leaves the floor, I just want to draw attention to the central point the Senator from Illinois has been making tonight. He has been focused on what our duties to the American people are all about, which is to make their lives better and particularly to improve the quality of their healthcare, which is a lifeline for millions of families.

Now, instead of looking at bipartisan approaches to make the lives of our people better—Chairman HATCH and I introduced the children's health bill today. Nine million youngsters with that program get better health. Instead of focusing on that, as my colleague from Illinois has said, we are going to be looking at a bill that will hurt our people, will give them worse healthcare, will go backward with respect to the march in our country to make sure we recognize that all our people—all our people—deserve quality and affordable healthcare.

I particularly appreciate my colleague pointing out the contrast between where we ought to go with a bipartisan proposal like the children's health plan and where we shouldn't go—which is the Graham-Cassidy-Heller proposal which is going to go backward with respect to the healthcare needs of our people.

The fact is, Graham-Cassidy-Heller has been exposed to sunlight for just a few days, but it is already clear this legislation is a bad deal for the American people.

Now, Senator CASSIDY has introduced healthcare bills before. Earlier this year, he introduced a bill with our colleague from Maine, Senator COLLINS, as an alternative to what the Senate Republican leadership put on offer. Now, I had my concerns with that proposal, but the first thing I want the Senate to understand is this Cassidy bill, which we will soon be considering, is much worse. The reason I say that is, this bill lowers the bar for legislation which has been hastily written and ill-considered. I want to be clear. This Cassidy bill will flunk the Jimmy Kimmel test of not hurting kids in America with preexisting conditions.

To make matters worse, just this evening, I have been informed that the Senate Finance Committee will shortly announce a hearing for next Monday on the Graham-Cassidy-Heller proposal. Contrary to the norms of the Senate Finance Committee, I was not consulted in this matter as the ranking Democrat. I am all for debating major legislation, but talking about a piece of legislation which will not have the Congressional Budget Office—our independent arbiter of these matters—give us their thoughts on coverage or premium matters less than 48 hours before a vote is scheduled to happen is a sham process, which makes a mockery of the very eloquent words of our colleague from Arizona Senator MCCAIN, who appealed for the regular way in which the Senate handles legislation.

This means Senators will not know how many millions of Americans are going to wake up not knowing if they have healthcare, how many seniors would get kicked out of a nursing home or see their core healthcare needs not met. How much will Americans' premiums go up? Senate Republicans have no answers on any of these matters.

What Graham-Cassidy-Heller does do is give a super block grant blank check to the States. They can do whatever they want—whatever they want—in terms of Americans' healthcare, and it guts the funding for those block grants over a very short period of time. This will mean a whale of a lot of pain for vulnerable people and an open door to some of the worst abuses of insurance companies, the abuses we thought we had gotten rid of. Democrats and Republicans thought we had gotten rid of them back when I introduced a bill with seven Democrats and seven Republicans. Now we are talking about bringing them back. This bill amounts to the largest healthcare devolution, moving power without any accountability at all to the States.

Now, if I might get into some of the specifics. This bill does especially serious damage to Medicaid. In fact, it really hollows out the Medicaid Program.

This year's debate over healthcare made one thing quite clear: Medicaid matters. It pays for the healthcare of our most vulnerable. It serves as a safety net for those who might not think they are ever going to need it. It covers nursing home care for older people who spend down hard-earned savings. It pays for critically needed addiction treatment services for those who struggle with opioids. We know that is what millions of Americans are facing now. It helps Americans with disabilities and kids with special needs

live a healthier, more productive life in their communities rather than in institutions.

That is just a little bit of the good Medicaid does for folks from Portland, OR, to Portland, ME. Under the Graham-Cassidy-Heller proposal, that is gone—simply gone. The plan ends expanded Medicaid coverage which 11 million Americans count on right now. It caps Medicaid and guts hundreds of billions of dollars in support from the Federal Government. In effect, it is like telling States, good luck, and telling them you can make the hard decisions about which Americans are going to get adequate healthcare and who are going to be those unfortunate souls who go without.

My view is, this is going to lead to destitution for older Americans who count on Medicaid for nursing home care. It also represents a massive transfer of dollars from States which expanded Medicaid to States which chose not to.

History tells us that the most vulnerable Americans without a voice or a powerful lobby are the ones who are going to be the worst off. Now, I have heard my colleagues—Senator CASSIDY, in particular—claim that this bill is modeled on the Children's Health Insurance Program—which is a block-granted program—and that means all supporters of CHIP should support Graham-Cassidy-Heller.

Nothing could be further from the truth. The Children's Health Insurance Program has been an extraordinarily successful program for more than 20 years, now covering 9 million youngsters. Part of that success is due to its reliance on a strong Medicaid Program. If Medicaid and the rest of the healthcare system is block-granted and slashed by hundreds of billions of dollars, the pillars that support a successful Children's Health Insurance Program will crumble. They will lose their structural support. A vote in favor of Graham-Cassidy is a vote to demolish successful healthcare programs like the Children's Health Insurance Program and its promise of affordable healthcare for millions of kids and their families.

There is one more step that the Graham-Cassidy-Heller bill takes that is different from previous versions. Rather than reducing the tax credits that help Americans get help—similar to earlier Republican approaches—again, this bill just chucks them out, gets rid of them, gone. That means asking States to use their Federal health block grant for a whole host of competing healthcare priorities, in effect, pitting vulnerable Americans against each other and not having enough at the table to meet the critical needs of some of our most vulnerable people—people who, day in and day out, are walking on an economic tightrope, trying to balance their food costs against their medical costs and their medical costs against housing.

Graham-Cassidy-Heller is a recipe for disaster. This proposal, again, opens loopholes for insurance companies that, as I described, we thought we had closed, thought we had finally closed the book on the days when healthcare wasn't just for the healthy and wealthy. That is what happened when we had discrimination against those with preexisting conditions. If you had a preexisting condition and you were wealthy—just pay the bill. If you didn't have any preexisting conditions, there was nothing to worry about.

For the millions of people who finally got some peace of mind at night when we eliminated discrimination against those with preexisting conditions, this brings back that ugly prospect that a key consumer protection, the protection that bars discrimination against those who have preexisting conditions, is just tossed aside—just as what looks to be the setting aside of essential health benefits that all Americans are entitled to receive.

It was pretty obvious during the TrumpCare debate that unraveling the consumer protections that our people count on today leads to the entire system falling apart, and the vulnerable bear the brunt of the pain.

Many of our friends and neighbors have spent the year raising their voices and showing up to stop bad healthcare legislation. Thanks to their grassroots efforts, the partisan approach that I have described as being used here again has been stopped multiple times.

I wanted to come on the floor tonight to say to people in every community across our great country that, once again, we need people power. Once again, we need them to stand up and say that we don't want to turn back the clock on the healthcare needs of the most vulnerable, like seniors and the disabled and our kids. Once again, we hope they will speak out all across the country.

I am going to be having townhall meetings this upcoming weekend after the Jewish holiday. You can be sure that I am going to hear a lot from the people of Oregon about this. I am very hopeful that, once again, people power around America is going to come forward and say to those who are talking about supporting Graham-Cassidy-Heller that this is a mistake, that they don't want to turn back the clock with respect to healthcare; they want to move forward. Instead of turning back the clock, what they are looking for is leadership, for example, that will hold down their prescription drug costs.

I have introduced legislation to require these companies to publicly justify raising their prices. We have had Senators introduce a host of bills. That is what we ought to be doing—talking about how we are going to improve American healthcare.

My colleague from Illinois mentioned the Children's Health Insurance Program, which Chairman HATCH and I worked with our Finance colleagues to get introduced, and there is the Community Health Center Program. I could go on and on about opportunities for bipartisanship to take the country in the right direction rather than in the wrong direction. Instead, it doesn't look as though that is going to be on offer any time soon. What is going to be on offer is a proposal that turns back the clock, guts Medicaid, harms seniors, harms the vulnerable, and I think would be a major mistake.

My bottom line has long been that for changes to the healthcare system to be sustainable and lasting, they have to be bipartisan. That is why I mentioned an effort that I was involved in. Several of my colleagues who cosponsored the bill I am talking about have been supportive of that for quite some time.

We know Republicans and Democrats know how to write bipartisan legislation. But what the Graham-Cassidy-Heller bill seeks to do is just the opposite—to use the most deeply partisan process the Senate knows, called reconciliation. It basically says: Our way or the highway—not interested in trying to find common ground.

I will point out that didn't end too well earlier when we talked about healthcare. I came to the floor tonight to make the case that we cannot let partisan reconciliation tactics win on this key issue. We ought to be working together to improve healthcare on a bipartisan basis, in a way that helps people all across the country.

I have mentioned—this is particularly important to me—a number of bills that colleagues on both sides of the aisle have worked on that would help improve the lives of the American people. Graham-Cassidy-Heller does not meet that test. I hope my colleagues will reject it, and I hope that all across the country, from one corner of America to every other, people will step up and they will say, as I have said on this floor: The political change doesn't start in Washington, DC, and then trickle down; it is bottom up. It is bottom up, as people come forward and say ''That is not the way to go'' and say ''Here is the way that really would make sense and make our lives better.''

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein.

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

(At the request of Mr. MCCONNELL, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

HURRICANE IRMA RECOVERY

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, due to ongoing efforts from Hurricane Irma, which devastated many parts of Florida, I am staying in my state to assess the damage and help marshal the full capacity of recovery resources available to us. Today I met with U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue and personally showed him various parts of Florida's agriculture lands that were damaged by Hurricane Irma.●

(At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

VOTE EXPLANATION

● Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I was unavoidably absent for rollcall vote No. 198, the motion to invoke cloture on H.R. 2810, the National Defense Authorization Act, as amended. Had I been present, I would have voted yea.

Mr. President, I was unavoidably absent for rollcall vote No. 199, passage of H.R. 2810, as amended, the National Defense Authorization Act. Had I been present, I would have voted yea.●

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF MOUNT AIRY MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

● Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, today I stand to honor the 100th anniversary of the Mount Airy Missionary Baptist Church, located on Maffitt Avenue in St. Louis, MO. This impressive 100th anniversary milestone speaks volumes about the tremendous impact Mount Airy Church has had on its congregation, community, and the broader St. Louis community.

First organized as a prayer band on August 8, 1917, Mount Airy has had many homes throughout its 100-year history. Over its history, while its base home address might have changed, the Mount Airy membership and effect of its faith leadership grew.

Today Mount Airy is a thriving house of worship led by pastor Reverend Charles J. Brown, Sr. Pastor Brown received an honorary doctorate degree of divinity from Western Bible College, becoming the first pastor in the history of Mount Airy Missionary Baptist Church to receive an honorary degree.

Over the years, the church has expanded its ministries to engage more people and positively influence thousands of lives. Mount Airy Church has been innovative and compassionate in finding ways to reach their congregation and the community. The commitment of Pastor Brown, all of Mount Airy Missionary Baptist Church leadership, and its entire congregation to studying the word of God and faithfully living it sets an incredible example for all Missourians.

Congratulations again to all connected with Mount Airy Missionary Baptist Church on its 100-year anniversary.●

REMEMBERING GRACE SHU TSAO-WU

● Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. President, today I wish to commemorate the life of Grace Shu Tsao-Wu, a dedicated entrepreneur and activist.

Ms. Tsao-Wu passed away on August 10, 2017. She is remembered for her entrepreneurial spirit and unyielding passion in her work.

As the founder of a successful company, Ms. Tsao-Wu brought her creative energy to Chicago. She was steadfast in her community leadership and always challenged others to be their best.

Ms. Tsao-Wu leaves behind not only a great legacy, but also a shining light that serves as an inspiration to many.

Thank you.●

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 3:02 p.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. 3284. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish a Joint Counterterrorism Awareness Workshop Series, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3697. An act to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act with respect to aliens associated with criminal gangs, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 3284. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish a Joint Counterterrorism Awareness Workshop Series, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 3697. An act to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act with respect to aliens associated with criminal gangs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. JOHNSON, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, without amendment:

H.R. 1117. A bill to require the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to submit a report regarding certain plans regarding assistance to applicants and grantees during the response to an emergency or disaster (Rept. No. 115–158).

H.R. 1679. A bill to ensure that the Federal Emergency Management Agency's current efforts to modernize its grant management system includes applicant accessibility and transparency, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 115–159).

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. BLUNT (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. LANKFORD, and Mr. CRUZ):

S. 1823. A bill to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to clarify that houses of worship are eligible for certain disaster relief and emergency assistance on terms equal to other eligible private nonprofit facilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. MCCONNELL:

S. 1824. A bill to reform the Appalachian Regional Commission, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. ERNST, and Mr. JOHNSON):

S. 1825. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve the accuracy of geographic adjustment factors under the Medicare program and to permanently extend certain adjustments to such factors for certain localities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL:

S. 1826. A bill for the relief of Adrian Emin; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. HATCH (for himself, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. BROWN, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. CASEY, and Mr. MENENDEZ):

S. 1827. A bill to extend funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. REED (for himself, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. BROWN, Mr. KING, Mr. FRANKEN, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. 1828. A bill to change the date for regularly scheduled general elections for Federal office to the first Saturday and Sunday after the first Friday in November in every even-numbered year; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mrs. FISCHER (for herself and Mr. BOOKER):

S. Res. 260. A resolution designating September 2017 as ''School Bus Safety Month''; considered and agreed to.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI:

S. Res. 261. A resolution recognizing the month of September 2017 as ''Alaska Wild Salmon Month''; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. BOOZMAN (for himself, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. TESTER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. CRAPO, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. UDALL, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. DAINES, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SULLIVAN, and Mr. BURR):

S. Res. 262. A resolution commemorating the 70th anniversary of the establishment of the Air Force as an independent military service and celebrating the Air Force for 70 years of serving and defending the United States; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 262

At the request of Mrs. CAPITO, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 262, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend and modify the section 45 credit for refined coal from steel industry fuel, and for other purposes.

S. 272

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 272, a bill to enhance the security operations of the Transportation Security Administration and the stability of the transportation security workforce by applying a unified personnel system under title 5, United States Code, to employees of the Transportation Security Administration who are responsible for screening passengers and property, and for other purposes.

S. 294

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 294, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to clarify the Food and Drug Administration's jurisdiction over certain tobacco products, and to protect jobs and small businesses involved in the sale, manufacturing and distribution of traditional and premium cigars.

S. 336

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 336, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to modify authorities relating to the collective bargaining of employees in the Veterans Health Administration, and for other purposes.

S. 407

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 407, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the railroad track maintenance credit.

S. 446

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 446, a bill to allow reciprocity for the carrying of certain concealed firearms.

S. 536

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 536, a bill to promote transparency in the oversight of cybersecurity risks at publicly traded companies.

S. 540

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 540, a bill to limit the authority of States to tax certain income of employees for employment duties performed in other States.

S. 744

At the request of Mr. DONNELLY, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 744, a bill to amend the Fair Credit Reporting Act to delay the inclusion in consumer credit reports and to establish requirements for debt collectors with respect to medical debt information of veterans due to inappropriate or delayed billing payments or reimbursements from the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 796

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 796, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the exclusion for employer-provided education assistance to employer payments of student loans.

S. 870

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the names of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) were added as cosponsors of S. 870, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to implement Medicare payment policies designed to improve management of chronic disease, streamline care coordination, and improve quality outcomes without adding to the deficit.

S. 910

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 910, a bill to prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities who need long-term services and supports, and for other purposes.

S. 915

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 915, a bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to repeal the Government pension offset and windfall elimination provisions.

S. 926

At the request of Mrs. ERNST, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 926, a bill to authorize the Global War on Terror Memorial Foundation to establish the National Global War on Terrorism Memorial as a commemorative work in the District of Columbia, and for other purposes.

S. 1027

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1027, a bill to extend the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000.

S. 1063

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1063, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to establish direct care registered nurse-to-patient staffing ratio requirements in hospitals, and for other purposes.

S. 1106

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1106, a bill to designate the same individual serving as the Chief Nurse Officer of the Public Health Service as the National Nurse for Public Health.

S. 1152

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1152, a bill to create protections for depository institutions that provide financial services to cannabis-related businesses, and for other purposes.

S. 1241

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the names of the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) were added as cosponsors of S. 1241, a bill to improve the prohibitions on money laundering, and for other purposes.

S. 1310

At the request of Mr. ROUNDS, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1310, a bill to amend the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act of 1975 to specify which depository institutions are subject to the maintenance of records and disclosure requirements of such Act, and for other purposes.

S. 1373

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1373, a bill to designate the Gulf of Mexico Alliance as a Regional Coordination Partnership of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and for other purposes.

S. 1498

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1498, a bill to establish in the Smithsonian Institution a comprehensive American women's history museum, and for other purposes.

S. 1503

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1503, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in recognition of the 60th anniversary of the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame.

S. 1693

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1693, a bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to clarify that section 230 of that Act does not prohibit the enforcement against providers and users of interactive computer services of Federal and State

criminal and civil law relating to sex trafficking.

S. 1746

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. SASSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1746, a bill to require the Congressional Budget Office to make publicly available the fiscal and mathematical models, data, and other details of computations used in cost analysis and scoring.

S. 1757

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1757, a bill to strengthen border security, increase resources for enforcement of immigration laws, and for other purposes.

S. 1767

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1767, a bill to reauthorize the farm to school program, and for other purposes.

S. 1779

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1779, a bill to repeal certain provisions of the Federal Switchblade Act to allow domestic manufacturers to ship and sell their products to buyers located in other States and to permit the importation of certain knife parts.

S. 1787

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1787, a bill to reauthorize the National Geologic Mapping Act of 1992.

S. 1806

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1806, a bill to amend the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 and the Head Start Act to promote child care and early learning, and for other purposes.

S. 1808

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1808, a bill to extend temporarily the Federal Perkins Loan program, and for other purposes.

S. 1816

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1816, a bill to amend the Fair Credit Reporting Act to enhance fraud alert procedures and provide free access to credit freezes, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 250

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the names of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) and the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 250, a resolution condemning horrific acts of violence against Burma's Rohingya population and calling on Aung San Suu Kyi to play an active role in ending this humanitarian tragedy.

AMENDMENT NO. 329

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 329 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 812

At the request of Mr. BROWN, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 812 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 814

At the request of Mr. BROWN, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 814 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 942

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 942 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1020

At the request of Ms. HARRIS, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1020 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1032

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the names of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 1032 proposed to H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1033

At the request of Mr. PERDUE, the names of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT), the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 1033 proposed to H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1088

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the names of the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS) and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 1088 proposed to H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. MCCONNELL:

S. 1824. A bill to reform the Appalachian Regional Commission, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr President, for decades, I have supported the Appalachian Regional Commission, or ARC, and its mission to invest in communities to strengthen economic growth throughout the Appalachian region.

As I have expressed before, however, I have grown frustrated by ARC's shortcomings. Last year, the Senate considered an amendment to abolish ARC entirely. I voted against that proposal because I believe that the Commission still serves an important purpose, but since that time I've been calling on ARC to clarify its clouded focus.

For instance, because of ARC's own rules, the most distressed counties in the region can only receive up to 30% of its area development funds. In other words, a substantial portion of the agency's resources—which should be focused on alleviating poverty—are intentionally directed away from the counties most in need of help. This has been a criticism leveled against ARC for years. I believe that, if ARC serves a valid purpose today, then it is to assist the most impoverished counties in the region.

Moreover, while the other regional commissions are headquartered in the areas for which they're designed to serve, ARC maintains its primary office right here in Washington, D.C. An expensive office near Dupont Circle, far

away from the people and the communities it serves, is not the right place for ARC.

Today, I will introduce legislation along with my friend and longtime ARC champion, Congressman HAL ROGERS, to make desperately needed reforms at ARC. Our bill is designed to reform the Commission, to focus its mission on investing more in the poorest Appalachian communities, and to direct ARC's leadership to relocate the organization to the region it serves.

These common-sense reforms will help set ARC on a path toward fulfilling what should be its central mission—poverty alleviation—and delivering vital assistance to those who need it the most. I hope that all of my colleagues will join with me to move this legislation forward and provide necessary relief to communities in Appalachia.

Mr. MCCONNELL. 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. 1824

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 ''Appalachian Regional Commission Reform Act''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

(a) HEADQUARTERS.—Congress finds that—

(1) regional commissions, such as the Delta Regional Authority, the Denali Commission, and the Northern Border Regional Commission, are each headquartered in their respective region;

(2) headquartering regional commissions within the region affected is a sensible approach to ensure that the commissions are housed in more affordable locations than the District of Columbia, thereby reducing administrative overhead and making the commissions closer and more accountable to the people the commissions were designed to serve;

(3) the Appalachian Regional Commission (referred to in this Act as the ''Commission'') is not headquartered in Appalachia but in Washington, D.C.; and

(4) the headquarters of the Commission should be relocated from the District of Columbia to a more affordable location in the Appalachian region so that it is closer and more accountable to the people the Commission was designed to serve.

(b) PERFORMANCE.—Congress finds that—

(1) the Commission was created to help foster economic opportunity and close health and educational disparities in a geographic region of the United States beleaguered by persistent poverty and high unemployment;

(2) the Commission remains the sole Federal agency focused singularly on economic revitalization in the Appalachian region;

(3) in 1998, Congress charged the Commission with ''address[ing] the needs of severely and persistently distressed areas of the Appalachian region and focus[ing] special attention on the areas of greatest need'';

(4) the Commission has long been criticized for its shortcomings in fulfilling this mission, including in—

(A) a 1999 study titled ''Mountain Money: Federal Tax Dollars Miss the Mark in Core Appalachia'' by Mark Ferenchik and Jill Ripenhoff for the Columbus Dispatch; and

(B) a 2008 book titled ''Uneven Ground: Appalachia Since 1945'' by Ronald D. Eller;

(5) in 2004, the Office of Management and Budget noted the importance of the Commission ''[f]ocusing efforts on...targeting assistance to areas of distress'';

(6) in 2017, Citizens Against Government Waste characterized the programming of the Commission as duplicative and called for drastic reductions in the budget of the Commission;

(7) in 2017, the Office of Management and Budget, citing a Government Accountability Office study, concluded that the Commission should be abolished, and that conclusion was reflected in the fiscal year 2018 budget request submitted by the President;

(8) these recent actions reflect a growing chorus that the Commission should be reformed; and

(9) therefore, given the long-recognized shortcomings of the Commission, the longstanding criticism of the Commission, and the need to ensure its optimal performance, the time has arrived for the Commission to be reformed.

(c) PERSISTENT POVERTY.—Congress finds that—

(1) using 1960 data, the Commission (which was created in 1965) concluded that there were 214 distressed counties in the Appalachian region;

(2) in 2017, according to the Commission, there are 84 distressed counties in the Appalachian region, reflecting the areas of most persistent poverty in the region; and

(3) therefore, the Commission should be reformed to focus its attention on the areas of most persistent poverty in the region.

(d) AREA DEVELOPMENT FUNDING FOR DISTRESSED COUNTIES.—Congress finds that—

(1) according to the study by the Columbus Dispatch referred to in subsection (b)(4)(A), of the 22,169 grants issued by the Commission from fiscal year 1966 through fiscal year 1998, none of the 5 counties that received the most Commission funding was considered distressed, and more than ¼ of all Commission spending during that period went to States with few, if any, distressed counties;

(2) according to author Ronald D. Eller in 2014, ''[the Commission] policies have concentrated resources in a select few 'growth centers' in the [Appalachian] region, expanding services to the poor and growing the mountain middle class, but doing little to alter conditions in the most rural distressed counties or to address systemic political or economic inequalities throughout Appalachia'';

(3) until 1995, the Commission allocated up to 20 percent of its area development grants for use in distressed counties;

(4) following instructions given to the Commission by the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives in 1995, this allocation was increased by the Commission to 30 percent;

(5) section 7.5(c) of the Code of the Commission (as in effect on the date of enactment of this Act) reflects this 1995 policy change and states that the Commission ''will allocate up to 30 percent of Commission area development funds for use in distressed counties'', even though, according to the Commission's public representations, economic conditions in distressed areas of the Appalachian region have not greatly improved since the 1960s;

(6) given the persistent levels of poverty in the distressed counties in the Appalachian region, more area development funding and emphasis should be devoted to those counties; and

(7) therefore, the allocation described in paragraph (3) should be increased to 60 percent.

(e) GRANT EXPENDITURES.—Congress finds that—

(1) section 14524(d) of title 40, United States Code, provides that ''not less than 50 percent of the amount of grant expenditures the Commission approves shall support activities or projects that benefit severely and persistently distressed counties and areas'';

(2) given the persistent levels of poverty in the distressed counties in the Appalachian region, more grant expenditures and emphasis should be devoted to those counties; and

(3) therefore, the 50 percent threshold in section 14524(d) of title 40, United States Code, should be increased to 60 percent.

SEC. 3. MISSION OF THE APPALACHIAN REGIONAL COMMISSION.

Section 14301 of title 40, United States Code, is amended by striking subsection (a) and inserting the following:

''(a) ESTABLISHMENT AND MISSION.—

''(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is an Appalachian Regional Commission (referred to in this chapter as the 'Commission').

''(2) MISSION.—The mission of the Commission shall be to focus primarily on poverty reduction and economic development in areas in the Appalachian region with the most persistent poverty.''.

SEC. 4. HEADQUARTERS OF THE APPALACHIAN REGIONAL COMMISSION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 14301 of title 40, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(g) HEADQUARTERS.—The headquarters of the Commission shall be located in the Appalachian region.''.

(b) IMPLEMENTATION.—The Federal Cochairman of the Commission shall take such actions as may be necessary to carry out the amendment made by subsection (a).

SEC. 5. GRANT EXPENDITURES.

Section 14524(d) of title 40, United States Code, is amended by striking ''50 percent'' and inserting ''60 percent''.

SEC. 6. AREA DEVELOPMENT FUNDS FOR DISTRESSED COUNTIES.

Section 14526(b) of title 40, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking ''In program and'' and inserting the following:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In program and''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(2) AREA DEVELOPMENT FUNDS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Of the funds made available for each fiscal year for the Area Development Program of the Commission, the Commission shall allocate not less than 60 percent for projects in counties for which a distressed county designation is in effect under this section.

''(B) METHODOLOGY.—The methodology for determining whether a county is designated as a distressed county under subsection (a)(1)(A) shall be the methodology in effect on the day before the date of enactment of the Appalachian Regional Commission Reform Act.

''(3) REPORT.—The Commission shall submit an annual report that describes the allocation of funds, in dollar amounts and percentage of total appropriations, for the Area Development Program to counties described in paragraph (2) to—

''(A) the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

''(B) the minority leader of the House of Representatives;

''(C) the majority leader of the Senate;

''(D) the minority leader of the Senate;

''(E) the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives;

''(F) the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate;

''(G) the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives; and

''(H) the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate.''.

By Mr. REED (for himself, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. BROWN, Mr. KING, Mr. FRANKEN, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. 1828. A bill to change the date for regularly scheduled general elections for Federal office to the first Saturday and Sunday after the first Friday in November in every even-numbered year; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, today I am pleased to be joined by Senators KLOBUCHAR, BROWN, KING, FRANKEN, and WHITEHOUSE in introducing the Weekend Voting Act. This bill makes voting in Federal elections easier and more accessible through one simple change: moving Election Day from Tuesday to the following Saturday and Sunday in November of an election year.

We know from surveys and common sense that Tuesday voting stands in the way of greater voter participation. In 1845, Congress set Tuesday as Election Day because it was the easiest day for farmers—then travelling by horse and buggy—to make it to the polls in the course of their regular Tuesday trips to bring goods to market. Tuesday voting has no such benefit for farmers, or anyone else, in the 21st Century. It does, however, force many Americans to choose between their workday and family responsibilities, and participation in our democratic process.

According to the Pew Research Center, voter turnout in the United States regularly lags behind other developed countries, many of which hold elections on one or more days during the weekend. According to U.S. Census data, the most consistent reason Americans give for not voting is that they are too busy to get away from their daily lives to make it to the polls.

The Weekend Voting Act would give Americans the ability to vote during times that make better sense for them. Rather than on a Tuesday, polls would stay open during the first Saturday and Sunday after the first Friday in November of an election year. States would retain full autonomy to continue to offer alternatives to Election Day voting, such as early voting or voting by mail, and States are encouraged to give special consideration to accommodate weekend religious practices.

Mr. President, I urge my colleagues to support the Weekend Voting Act so that more Americans can take part in our democratic process by voting at times that work for them.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 260—DESIGNATING SEPTEMBER 2017 AS ''SCHOOL BUS SAFETY MONTH''

Mrs. FISCHER (for herself and Mr. BOOKER) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 260

Whereas, every school day in the United States, approximately 500,000 public and private school buses carry more than 26,000,000 children to and from school;

Whereas school buses comprise the largest mass transportation fleet in the United States;

Whereas 55 percent of all K–12 students ride a school bus, totaling 260,000,000 miles for each of the 180 school days in a year, or 46,800,000,000 miles driven annually;

Whereas the Child Safety Network, celebrating 28 years of national public service, supports the CSN Safe Bus campaign, which is designed to provide the latest technology and free safety and security resources to the school bus industry;

Whereas the designation of School Bus Safety Month will allow broadcast and digital media and social networking industries to make commitments to disseminate public service announcements that are produced in order to—

(1) provide resources designed to safeguard children; and

(2) recognize school bus drivers and professionals;

Whereas key leaders who are deserving of recognition during School Bus Safety Month and beyond have provided security awareness training materials to more than 14,000 public and private school districts, trained more than 80,000 school bus operators, and provided more than 80,000 counterterrorism guides to individuals who are key to providing both safety and security for children in the United States; and

Whereas School Bus Safety Month offers the Senate and the people of the United States an opportunity to recognize and thank all of the school bus drivers in the United States and the professionals who are focused on school bus safety and security: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate designates September 2017 as ''School Bus Safety Month''.

SENATE RESOLUTION 261—RECOGNIZING THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER 2017 AS ''ALASKA WILD SALMON MONTH''

Ms. MURKOWSKI submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 261

Whereas the sustainable Alaska wild salmon commercial fishery contributes over 38,000 jobs and nearly $2,000,000,000 in annual labor income to the United States economy;

Whereas the commercial Alaska wild salmon harvest comprises approximately 50 percent of the wild salmon caught worldwide;

Whereas the sport fishing industry of the State of Alaska generates $500,000,000 in economic output and creates 4,500 jobs annually;

Whereas wild salmon returning to Alaskan streams and rearing young in Alaskan water are the basis for one of the most valuable and important industries of the State of Alaska;

Whereas commercial and sport salmon fishing and processing provides the greatest number of private-sector employment opportunities in the State of Alaska;

Whereas many Alaskans depend heavily on subsistence-caught wild salmon for food and cultural purposes;

Whereas Alaska Natives have relied on Alaska wild salmon for thousands of years, and Alaska wild salmon continues to comprise up to 70 percent of the subsistence harvest of many Alaska Native communities; and

Whereas, in September 2017, Alaska Wild Salmon Month celebrates and raises awareness nationwide regarding the contributions of Alaska wild salmon to the health and economy of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes September 2017 as ''Alaska Wild Salmon Month''; and

(2) encourages individuals, corporations, and other relevant organizations to celebrate the sustainable Alaska wild salmon industry and the health and social benefits Alaska wild salmon provide to the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 262—COMMEMORATING THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE AIR FORCE AS AN INDEPENDENT MILITARY SERVICE AND CELEBRATING THE AIR FORCE FOR 70 YEARS OF SERVING AND DEFENDING THE UNITED STATES

Mr. BOOZMAN (for himself, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. TESTER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. CRAPO, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. UDALL, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. DAINES, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SULLIVAN, and Mr. BURR) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 262

Whereas, on August 1, 1907, the Aeronautical Division of the Army Signal Corps, consisting of 1 officer and 2 enlisted men, began operation under the command of Captain Charles DeForest Chandler with the responsibility for ''all matters pertaining to military ballooning, air machines, and all kindred subjects'';

Whereas, in 1908, the Department of War contracted with the Wright brothers to build 1 heavier-than-air flying machine for the Army and, in 1909, the Department accepted the Wright Military Flyer, the first military airplane;

Whereas pilots of the United States, flying with both Allied air forces and with the Army Air Service, performed admirably during the course of World War I, the first air war in history, by participating in pursuit, observation, and day and night bombing missions;

Whereas pioneering aviators of the United States, including Mason M. Patrick, William ''Billy'' Mitchell, Benjamin D. Foulois, Frank M. Andrews, Henry H. ''Hap'' Arnold, James H. ''Jimmy'' Doolittle, and Edward ''Eddie'' Rickenbacker, were among the first individuals to recognize the military potential of airpower and, in the decades following World War I, courageously laid the foundation for the creation of an independent arm for the air forces of the United States;

Whereas, on June 20, 1941, the Department of War created the Army Air Forces as the aviation element of that Department and, shortly thereafter, the Department made the Army Air Forces co-equal to the Army Ground Forces;

Whereas General Henry H. ''Hap'' Arnold drew upon the industrial prowess and human resources of the United States to transform the Army Air Corps from a force of 22,400 men and 2,402 aircraft in 1939 into an entity with a peak wartime strength of 2,400,000 personnel and 79,908 aircraft;

Whereas the standard for courage, flexibility, and intrepidity in combat was established for all Airmen during the first aerial raid in the Pacific Theater on April 18, 1942, when Lieutenant Colonel James ''Jimmy'' H.

Doolittle led 16 North American B–25 Mitchell bombers in a joint operation from the deck of the USS Hornet to strike the Japanese mainland in response to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor;

Whereas the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.), signed into law by President Harry S. Truman, realigned and reorganized the Armed Forces to establish the Department of the Air Force (referred to in this preamble as the ''USAF'') as separate from other military services;

Whereas, on September 18, 1947, W. Stuart Symington became the first Secretary of the newly formed and independent USAF, marking the date on which the USAF was established;

Whereas, on September 26, 1947, General Carl A. Spaatz, a pioneering aviator and former Commanding General of the Army Air Forces, became the first Chief of Staff of the USAF;

Whereas the Air National Guard was also created by the National Security Act of 1947 and has played a vital role in guarding the United States and defending freedom in nearly every major conflict and contingency since its creation;

Whereas, on October 14, 1947, the USAF demonstrated the historic and ongoing commitment of the USAF to technological innovation when Captain Charles ''Chuck'' Yeager piloted the X–1 developmental rocket plane to a speed of Mach 1.07, becoming the first flyer to break the sound barrier in a powered aircraft in level flight;

Whereas the Air Force Reserve, created on April 14, 1948, is comprised of citizen airmen who serve as unrivaled wingmen of the active duty USAF during every deployment and on every mission and battlefield around the world in which the USAF is engaged;

Whereas the USAF carried out the Berlin Airlift in 1948 and 1949 to provide humanitarian relief to post-war Germany and has established a tradition of offering humanitarian assistance when responding to natural disasters and needs across the world;

Whereas the Tuskegee Airmen served the United States with tremendous dignity and honor, overcame segregation and prejudice to become one of the most highly respected fighter groups of World War II, and helped to establish a policy of racial integration within the ranks of the USAF, as, on April 26, 1948, the USAF became the first military branch to integrate, a full 3 months before an Executive order integrated all military services;

Whereas, in the early years of the Cold War, the arsenal of bombers of the USAF, such as the long-range Convair B–58 Hustler and B–36 Peacemaker, and the Boeing B–47 Stratojet and B–52 Stratofortress, under the command of General Curtis LeMay, served as the preeminent deterrent of the United States against the forces of the Soviet Union and were later augmented by the development and deployment of medium range and intercontinental ballistic missiles, such as the Titan and Minuteman, developed by General Bernard A. Schriever;

Whereas, on April 1, 1954, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed legislation establishing the United States Air Force Academy, the mission of which is to educate, develop, and inspire men and women to become aerospace officers and leaders of impeccable character and knowledge, and that, as of 2017, has graduated 59 classes and 49,700 cadets;

Whereas, during the Korean War, the USAF employed the first large-scale combat use of jet aircraft, helped to establish air superiority over the Korean Peninsula, protected ground forces of the United Nations with close air support, and interdicted enemy reinforcements and supplies;

Whereas, after the development of launch vehicles and orbital satellites, the mission of the USAF expanded into space and, as of 2017, provides exceptional support with respect to real-time global communications, environmental monitoring, navigation, precision timing, missile warning, nuclear deterrence, and space surveillance;

Whereas, during the Vietnam War, the USAF engaged in a limited campaign of airpower to assist the South Vietnamese government in countering the communist Viet Cong guerillas and fought to disrupt supply lines, halt enemy ground offensives, and protect United States and Allied forces;

Whereas, on April 3, 1967, former prisoner of war Paul W. Airey, a career radio operator, aerial gunner, and First Sergeant, became the first Chief Master Sergeant of the USAF;

Whereas, in recent decades, the USAF and coalition partners of the United States have supported successful actions in Grenada, Panama, Iraq, Kuwait, Somalia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Haiti, Kosovo, Afghanistan, Libya, Syria, and many other locations around the world;

Whereas USAF Special Operations Forces have served with honor and distinction around the world since their activation in 1990, providing the United States with specialized airpower across the broad spectrum of conflict in any place and at any time;

Whereas, for 27 consecutive years beginning in 1990, Airmen have—

(1) been engaged in continuous combat operations ranging from Operation Desert Shield to the Global War on Terrorism to Operation Inherent Resolve; and

(2) shown that the Airmen constitute an air and space expeditionary force of outstanding capability and are ready to fight and win wars for the United States when and where they are called upon;

Whereas, when terrorists attacked the United States on September 11, 2001, fighter and air refueling aircraft of the USAF took to the skies to fly combat air patrols over major cities of the United States and protected the families, friends, and neighbors of the people of the United States from further attack;

Whereas, on December 7, 2005, the USAF modified its mission statement to include flying and fighting in air, space, and cyberspace and prioritized the innovation, operationalization, and sustainment of warfighting capabilities to deliver unrestricted access to cyberspace to defend the United States and its worldwide interests;

Whereas women have played a prominent role in the evolution of the USAF, courageously fighting alongside their male counterparts and dedicating their lives to protecting peace, liberty, and freedom around the world as they provide ''ready to fight tonight'' airpower whenever and wherever needed;

Whereas, as of 2017, the USAF has made tremendous strides in the global warfighting domain of cyberspace by revolutionizing offensive and defensive capabilities and effects with speed, agility, and surgical precision, thereby ensuring the continuous command, control, and execution of joint and service operations in contested, degraded, and limited environments;

Whereas the untapped potential of enlisted aviators is recognized by the USAF as these highly trained, intelligent, and professional Airmen fly remotely piloted aircraft to distant skies in support of combatant commanders and meet the insatiable demand for persistent intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities;

Whereas the Civil Air Patrol, as a total force partner and auxiliary of the USAF, has maintained a steadfast commitment to the United States and the communities of the United States through a proud legacy of service, from the earliest days of World War II, when the Civil Air Patrol protected the shorelines of the United States, through 2017, as the Civil Air Patrol executes emergency service missions;

Whereas the USAF is steadfast in the commitment to fielding a world-class air expeditionary force by recruiting, training, and educating its officer, enlisted, and civilian corps comprising the active duty, Air National Guard, and Air Force Reserve components of the USAF;

Whereas more than 100,000 Airmen stand watch around the world at 175 global locations, committed to winning the constant fight against violent extremist organizations by expending more than 56,000 munitions and striking more than 32,000 enemy targets over the course of 18,200 airstrikes;

Whereas Airmen were imprisoned and tortured during several major conflicts, including World War I, World War II, the Vietnam War, the Korean War, and the Persian Gulf War, and, in the valiant tradition of Airmen held captive, continued serving the United States with honor and dignity under the most inhumane circumstances;

Whereas Airmen have earned the Medal of Honor 18 times, the Air Force Cross 183 times, the Distinguished Service Cross 42 times, and the Silver Star 74 times;

Whereas the USAF is a tremendous steward of resources, develops and applies groundbreaking technology, manages complex acquisition programs, and maintains test, evaluation, and sustainment criteria for all USAF weapon systems throughout the life cycles of those weapon systems;

Whereas talented and dedicated Airmen will continue to meet the future challenges of an ever-changing world with limitless strength, resolve, and patriotism;

Whereas, on every continent around the world, the USAF has bravely fought for freedom, liberty, and peace, preserved democracy, and protected the people and interests of the United States;

Whereas Airmen of the USAF, together with their joint force partners, will continue to be a tremendous resource for the United States in fights across every domain and at every location, delivering continuous air and space superiority, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance, rapid global mobility, global strike, and command and control capabilities, thereby ensuring the safety and security of the United States; and

Whereas, for 70 years, the USAF and the Airmen of the USAF, through their exemplary service and sacrifice, have repeatedly proven their value to the United States, the people of the United States, the allies of the United States, and all free people of the world: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) commemorates the 70th anniversary of the establishment of the Air Force as an independent military service; and

(2) remembers, honors, and commends the achievements of the Air Force in serving and defending the United States through global vigilance, global reach, and global power.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 1092. Mr. McCAIN (for Mr. RUBIO (for himself and Mrs. SHAHEEN)) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 993 submitted by Mr. MCCAIN (for Mr. RUBIO) and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities

of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1093. Ms. CANTWELL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 2810, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1094. Mr. REED (for Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 2810, supra.

SA 1095. Mr. BOOKER (for himself and Mrs. FISCHER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2810, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1096. Mr. MCCAIN (for Mr. GRAHAM (for himself and Mr. WHITEHOUSE)) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 2810, supra.

SA 1097. Mr. MCCAIN (for Mr. RUBIO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 930 submitted by Mr. MCCAIN (for Mr. RUBIO) and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 2810, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1098. Mr. BURR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1072 submitted by Mr. BURR and intended to be proposed to the amendment SA 1003 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN (for himself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2810, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1099. Mr. BURR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 544 submitted by Mr. BURR and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 2810, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1100. Mr. REED (for Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MERKLEY, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. WARNER, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE)) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 2810, supra.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 1092. Mr. MCCAIN (for Mr. RUBIO (for himself and Mrs. SHAHEEN)) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 993 submitted by Mr. MCCAIN (for Mr. RUBIO) and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In lieu of the matter proposed to be added, add the following:

Subtitle H—Matters Relating to Hizballah

SEC. 1290. SHORT TITLE.

This subtitle may be cited as the ''Hizballah International Financing Prevention Amendments Act of 2017''.

PART I—PREVENTION OF ACCESS BY HIZBALLAH TO INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS

SEC. 1291. MANDATORY SANCTIONS WITH RESPECT TO FUNDRAISING AND RECRUITMENT ACTIVITIES FOR HIZBALLAH.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 101 of the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 (Public Law 114–102; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 101. MANDATORY SANCTIONS WITH RESPECT TO FUNDRAISING AND RECRUITMENT ACTIVITIES FOR HIZBALLAH.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The President shall impose the sanctions described in subsection (b) with respect to any foreign person that the President determines knowingly provides significant financial, material, or technological support for—

''(1) Bayt al-Mal, Jihad al-Bina, the Islamic Resistance Support Association, or any successor or affiliate thereof as designated by the President;

''(2) al-Manar TV, al Nour Radio, or the Lebanese Media Group, or any successor or affiliate thereof as designated by the President;

''(3) a foreign person determined by the President to be engaged in fundraising or recruitment activities for Hizballah; or

''(4) a foreign person owned or controlled by a foreign person described in paragraph (1), (2), or (3).

''(b) SANCTIONS DESCRIBED.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The sanctions described in this subsection are the following:

''(A) ASSET BLOCKING.—The exercise of all powers granted to the President by the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) (except that the requirements of section 202 of such Act (50 U.S.C. 1701) shall not apply) to the extent necessary to block and prohibit all transactions in all property and interests in property of a foreign person determined by the President to be subject to subsection (a) if such property and interests in property are in the United States, come within the United States, or are or come within the possession or control of a United States person.

''(B) ALIENS INELIGIBLE FOR VISAS, ADMISSION, OR PAROLE.—

''(i) VISAS, ADMISSION, OR PAROLE.—An alien who the President determines is subject to subsection (a) is—

''(I) inadmissible to the United States;

''(II) ineligible to receive a visa or other documentation to enter the United States; and

''(III) otherwise ineligible to be admitted or paroled into the United States or to receive any other benefit under the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101 et seq.).

''(ii) CURRENT VISAS REVOKED.—

''(I) IN GENERAL.—The issuing consular officer, the Secretary of State, or the Secretary of Homeland Security shall revoke any visa or other entry documentation issued to an alien who the President determines is subject to subsection (a), regardless of when issued.

''(II) EFFECT OF REVOCATION.—A revocation under subclause (I) shall take effect immediately and shall automatically cancel any other valid visa or entry documentation that is in the possession of the alien.

''(2) PENALTIES.—The penalties provided for in subsections (b) and (c) of section 206 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1705) shall apply to a person that violates, attempts to violate, conspires to violate, or causes a violation of regulations prescribed under paragraph (1)(A) to the same extent that such penalties apply to a person that commits an unlawful act described in subsection (a) of such section 206.

''(c) IMPLEMENTATION.—The President may exercise all authorities provided under sections 203 and 205 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1702 and 1704) to carry out this section.

''(d) PROCEDURES FOR JUDICIAL REVIEW OF CLASSIFIED INFORMATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—If a finding under this section, or a prohibition, condition, or penalty imposed as a result of any such finding, is based on classified information (as defined in section 1(a) of the Classified Information Procedures Act (18 U.S.C. App.)) and a court reviews the finding or the imposition of the prohibition, condition, or penalty, the President may submit such information to the court ex parte and in camera.

''(2) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to confer or imply any right to judicial review of any finding under this section or any prohibition, condition, or penalty imposed as a result of any such finding.

''(e) WAIVER.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The President may, for periods not to exceed 180 days, waive the imposition of sanctions under this section if the President certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that such waiver is in the national security interests of the United States.

''(2) BRIEFING.—Not later than 30 days after the issuance of a waiver under paragraph (1) with respect to a foreign person, and every 180 days thereafter while the waiver remains in effect, the President shall brief the appropriate congressional committees on the status of the involvement of the foreign person in activities described in subsection (a).

''(f) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Amendments Act of 2017, and every 180 days thereafter for the following 5 years, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that lists the foreign persons that the President determines are described in subsection (a).

''(g) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) ADMITTED; ALIEN.—The terms 'admitted' and 'alien' have meanings given those terms in section 101 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101).

''(2) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term 'appropriate congressional committees' means—

''(A) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Ways and Means, the Committee on the Judiciary, and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives; and

''(B) the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Committee on Finance, the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, and the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate.

''(3) ENTITY.—The term 'entity' means a partnership, association, corporation, or other organization, group, or subgroup.

''(4) HIZBALLAH.—The term 'Hizballah' has the meaning given such term in section 102(f).

''(5) PERSON.—The term 'person' means an individual or entity.

''(6) UNITED STATES PERSON.—The term 'United States person' means a United States citizen, permanent resident alien, entity organized under the laws of the United States (including foreign branches), or a person in the United States.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents for the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 is amended by striking the item relating to section 101 and inserting the following new item:

''Sec. 101. Mandatory sanctions with respect to fundraising and recruitment activities for Hizballah.''.

SEC. 1292. MODIFICATION OF REPORT WITH RESPECT TO FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS THAT ENGAGE IN CERTAIN TRANSACTIONS.

Subsection (d) of section 102 of the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 (Public Law 114–102; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note) is amended to read as follows:

''(d) REPORT ON FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS ORGANIZED UNDER THE LAWS OF STATE SPONSORS OF TERRORISM.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Amendments Act of 2017, and every 180

days thereafter for the following 5 years, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that—

''(A) identifies each foreign financial institution described in paragraph (2) that the President determines engages in one or more activities described in subsection (a)(2);

''(B) provides a detailed description of each such activity; and

''(C) contains a determination with respect to each such foreign financial institution that is identified under subparagraph (A) as engaging in one or more activities described in subsection (a)(2) as to whether such foreign financial institution is in violation of Executive Order 13224 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note; relating to blocking property and prohibiting transactions with persons who commit, threaten to commit, or support terrorism) by reason of engaging in one or more such activities.

''(2) FOREIGN FINANCIAL INSTITUTION DESCRIBED.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—A foreign financial institution described in this paragraph is a foreign financial institution—

''(i) that, wherever located, is—

''(I) organized under the laws of a state sponsor of terrorism or any jurisdiction within a state sponsor of terrorism;

''(II) owned or controlled by the government of a state sponsor of terrorism;

''(III) located in the territory of a state sponsor of terrorism; or

''(IV) owned or controlled by a foreign financial institution described in subclause (I), (II), or (III); and

''(ii) the capitalization of which exceeds $10,000,000.

''(B) STATE SPONSOR OF TERRORISM.—In this paragraph, the term 'state sponsor of terrorism' means a country the government of which the Secretary of State has determined is a government that has repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism for purposes of—

''(i) section 6(j) of the Export Administration Act of 1979 (50 U.S.C. 4605(j)) (as continued in effect pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.));

''(ii) section 620A of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2371);

''(iii) section 40 of the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2780); or

''(iv) any other provision of law.''.

SEC. 1293. SANCTIONS AGAINST AGENCIES AND INSTRUMENTALITIES OF FOREIGN STATES THAT SUPPORT HIZBALLAH.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title I of the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 (Public Law 114–102; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 103. SANCTIONS AGAINST AGENCIES AND INSTRUMENTALITIES OF FOREIGN STATES THAT SUPPORT HIZBALLAH.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this section, and as appropriate thereafter, the President shall block and prohibit all transactions in all property and interests in property of any agency or instrumentality of a foreign state described in subsection (b) if such property and interests in property are in the United States, come within the United States, or are or come within the possession or control of a United States person.

''(b) AGENCY OR INSTRUMENTALITY OF A FOREIGN STATE DESCRIBED.—An agency or instrumentality of a foreign state described in this subsection is an agency or instrumentality of a foreign state that the President determines knowingly provides significant financial, material, or technological support for, goods or services to or in support of, or arms or related material to—

''(1) Hizballah;

''(2) an entity owned or controlled by Hizballah; or

''(3) an entity that the President determines has acted for or on behalf of Hizballah.

''(c) PENALTIES.—The penalties provided for in subsections (b) and (c) of section 206 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1705) shall apply to a person that violates, attempts to violate, conspires to violate, or causes a violation of regulations prescribed under subsection (a) to the same extent that such penalties apply to a person that commits an unlawful act described in subsection (a) of such section 206.

''(d) IMPLEMENTATION.—The President may exercise all authorities provided under sections 203 and 205 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1702 and 1704) to carry out this section.

''(e) PROCEDURES FOR JUDICIAL REVIEW OF CLASSIFIED INFORMATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—If a finding under this section, or a prohibition, condition, or penalty imposed as a result of any such finding, is based on classified information (as defined in section 1(a) of the Classified Information Procedures Act (18 U.S.C. App.)) and a court reviews the finding or the imposition of the prohibition, condition, or penalty, the President may submit such information to the court ex parte and in camera.

''(2) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to confer or imply any right to judicial review of any finding under this section or any prohibition, condition, or penalty imposed as a result of any such finding.

''(f) WAIVER.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The President may, for periods not to exceed 180 days, waive the imposition of sanctions under this section with respect to an agency or instrumentality of a foreign state if the President certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that such waiver is in the national security interests of the United States.

''(2) BRIEFING.—Not later than 30 days after the issuance of a waiver under paragraph (1) with respect to an agency or instrumentality of a foreign state, and every 180 days thereafter while the waiver remains in effect, the President shall brief the appropriate congressional committees on the status of the involvement of the agency or instrumentality in activities described in subsection (b).

''(g) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) AGENCY OR INSTRUMENTALITY OF A FOREIGN STATE; FOREIGN STATE.—The terms 'agency or instrumentality of a foreign state' and 'foreign state' have the meanings given those terms in section 1603 of title 28, United States Code.

''(2) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term 'appropriate congressional committees' means—

''(A) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Financial Services, the Committee on Ways and Means, and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives; and

''(B) the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, and the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate.

''(3) ARMS OR RELATED MATERIAL.—The term 'arms or related material' means—

''(A) nuclear, biological, chemical, or radiological weapons or materials or components of such weapons;

''(B) ballistic or cruise missile weapons or materials or components of such weapons;

''(C) destabilizing numbers and types of advanced conventional weapons;

''(D) defense articles or defense services, as those terms are defined in paragraphs (3) and (4), respectively, of section 47 of the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2794);

''(E) defense information, as that term is defined in section 644 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2403); or

''(F) items designated by the President for purposes of the United States Munitions List under section 38(a)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2778(a)(1)).

''(4) HIZBALLAH.—The term 'Hizballah' has the meaning given that term in section 102(f).''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents for the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 102 the following new item:

''Sec. 103. Sanctions against agencies and instrumentalities of foreign states that support Hizballah.''.

PART II—NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING AND SIGNIFICANT TRANSNATIONAL CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES OF HIZBALLAH

SEC. 1294. BLOCKING OF PROPERTY OF HIZBALLAH.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 201 of the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 (Public Law 114–102; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 201. BLOCKING OF PROPERTY OF HIZBALLAH.

''(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that Hizballah conducts narcotics trafficking and significant transnational criminal activities.

''(b) BLOCKING OF PROPERTY.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Amendments Act of 2017, and as appropriate thereafter, the President shall block and prohibit all transactions in all property and interests in property of Hizballah if such property and interests in property are in the United States, come within the United States, or are or come within the possession or control of a United States person.

''(c) PENALTIES.—The penalties provided for in subsections (b) and (c) of section 206 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1705) shall apply to a person that violates, attempts to violate, conspires to violate, or causes a violation of regulations prescribed under subsection (b) to the same extent that such penalties apply to a person that commits an unlawful act described in subsection (a) of such section 206.

''(d) IMPLEMENTATION.—The President may exercise all authorities provided under sections 203 and 205 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1702 and 1704) to carry out this section.

''(e) PROCEDURES FOR JUDICIAL REVIEW OF CLASSIFIED INFORMATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—If a finding under this section, or a prohibition, condition, or penalty imposed as a result of any such finding, is based on classified information (as defined in section 1(a) of the Classified Information Procedures Act (18 U.S.C. App.)) and a court reviews the finding or the imposition of the prohibition, condition, or penalty, the President may submit such information to the court ex parte and in camera.

''(2) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to confer or imply any right to judicial review of any finding under this section or any prohibition, condition, or penalty imposed as a result of any such finding.

''(f) WAIVER.—The President may, for periods not to exceed 180 days, waive the imposition of sanctions under this section if the President certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that such waiver is in the national security interests of the United States.

''(g) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term 'Hizballah' has the meaning given that term in section 102(f).''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—The table of contents for the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 is amended—

(1) by striking the item relating to title II and inserting the following:

''TITLE II—IMPOSITION OF SANCTIONS WITH RESPECT TO HIZBALLAH AND REPORTS RELATING TO NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING AND SIGNIFICANT TRANSNATIONAL CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES OF HIZBALLAH.''; AND

(2) by striking the item relating to section 201 and inserting the following:

''Sec. 201. Blocking of property of Hizballah.''.

SEC. 1295. REPORT ON RACKETEERING ACTIVITIES ENGAGED IN BY HIZBALLAH.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 202 of the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 (Public Law 114–102; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 202. REPORT ON RACKETEERING ACTIVITIES ENGAGED IN BY HIZBALLAH.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Amendments Act of 2017, and annually thereafter for the following 5 years, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on the following:

''(1) Activities that Hizballah, and agents and affiliates of Hizballah, have engaged in that are racketeering activities.

''(2) The extent to which Hizballah, and agents and affiliates of Hizballah, engage in a pattern of such racketeering activities.

''(b) FORM OF REPORT.—Each report required under subsection (a) shall be submitted in an unclassified form but may contain a classified annex.

''(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term 'appropriate congressional committees' means—

''(A) the Committee on the Judiciary, the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives; and

''(B) the Committee on the Judiciary, the Committee on Foreign Relations, and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate.

''(2) HIZBALLAH.—The term 'Hizballah' has the meaning given that term in section 102(f).

''(3) RACKETEERING ACTIVITY.—The term 'racketeering activity' has the meaning given that term in section 1961(1) of title 18, United States Code.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents for the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 is amended by striking the item relating to section 202 and inserting the following:

''Sec. 202. Report on racketeering activities engaged in by Hizballah.''.

SEC. 1296. MODIFICATION OF REPORT ON ACTIVITIES OF FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS TO DISRUPT GLOBAL LOGISTICS NETWORKS AND FUNDRAISING, FINANCING, AND MONEY LAUNDERING ACTIVITIES OF HIZBALLAH.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 204 of the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 (Public Law 114–102; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(1)—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''this Act'' and inserting ''the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Amendments Act of 2017, and annually thereafter for the following 5 years'';

(B) in subparagraph (D)(ii)(II), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(C) in subparagraph (E), by striking ''and free-trade zones.'' and inserting ''free-trade zones, business partnerships and joint ventures, and other investments in small and medium-sized enterprises;''; and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

''(F) a list of jurisdictions outside of Lebanon that expressly consent to, or with knowledge allow, the use of their territory by Hizballah to carry out terrorist activities, including training, financing, and recruitment;

''(G) a description of the total aggregate revenues and remittances that Hizballah receives from the global logistics networks of Hizballah.'';

(2) by redesignating subsections (b) and (c) as subsections (c) and (d), respectively;

(3) by inserting after subsection (a) the following:

''(b) ENHANCED DUE DILIGENCE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The President shall prescribe, as necessary, enhanced due diligence policies, procedures, and controls for United States financial institutions, and foreign financial institutions maintaining correspondent accounts or payable-through accounts with United States financial institutions, that the President determines provide significant financial services for persons and entities operating in a jurisdiction included in the list required under subsection (a)(1)(F) if the President determines and reports to the appropriate congressional committees that it is in the national security interest of the United States to do so.

''(2) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection, the terms 'correspondent account' and 'payable-through account' have the meanings given those terms in section 5318A of title 31, United States Code.''; and

(4) in subsection (c), as redesignated by paragraph (2) by adding before the period at the end the following: ''and on any requirements for enhanced due diligence prescribed under subsection (b)''.

(b) REPORT ON ESTIMATED NET WORTH OF SENIOR HIZBALLAH MEMBERS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and not less frequently than annually thereafter for the following 2 years, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that contains—

(A) the estimated total net worth of each individual described in paragraph (2); and

(B) a description of how funds of each individual described in paragraph (2) were acquired, and how such funds have been used or employed.

(2) INDIVIDUALS DESCRIBED.—The individuals described in this paragraph are the following:

(A) The Secretary General of Hizballah.

(B) Any other individual that the President determines is a senior foreign political figure of Hizballah.

(3) FORM OF REPORT; PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—

(A) FORM.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall be submitted in unclassified form but may contain a classified annex.

(B) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—The unclassified portion of the report required under paragraph (1) shall be made available to the public in precompressed, easily downloadable versions that are made available in all appropriate formats.

(4) SOURCES OF INFORMATION.—In preparing the report required under paragraph (1), the President may use any credible publication, database, or web-based resource, and any credible information compiled by any government agency, nongovernmental organization, or other entity provided to or made available to the President.

(5) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

(A) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(i) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives; and

(ii) the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate.

(B) FUNDS.—The term ''funds'' means—

(i) cash;

(ii) equity;

(iii) any other intangible asset the value of which is derived from a contractual claim, including bank deposits, bonds, stocks, a security (as defined in section 2(a) of the Securities Act of 1933 (15 U.S.C. 77b(a))), or a security or an equity security (as those terms are defined in section 3(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C. 78c(a))); and

(iv) anything else of value that the Secretary of the Treasury determines to be appropriate.

(C) SENIOR FOREIGN POLITICAL FIGURE.—The term ''senior foreign political figure'' has the meaning given that term in section 1010.605 of title 31, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation).

SEC. 1297. REPORT ON COMBATING THE ILLICIT TOBACCO TRAFFICKING NETWORKS USED BY HIZBALLAH.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on combating the illicit tobacco trafficking networks used by Hizballah to finance their operations, as described in the report submitted to Congress in December 2015 by the Department of State, the Department of Justice, the Department of the Treasury, the Department of Homeland Security, and the Department of Health and Human Services entitled, ''The Global Illicit Trade in Tobacco: A Threat to National Security.''.

(b) MATTERS TO BE ADDRESSED.—The report required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) A description of the steps to be taken by Federal agencies to combat the illicit tobacco trafficking networks used by Hizballah.

(2) A description of the steps to be taken to engage State and local law enforcement authorities in efforts to combat illicit tobacco trafficking networks used by Hizballah operating within the United States.

(3) A description of the steps to be taken to engage foreign government law enforcement and intelligence authorities in efforts to combat illicit tobacco trafficking networks used by Hizballah operating outside the United States.

(4) Recommendations for legislative or administrative action, as appropriate, to address the threat of illicit tobacco trafficking networks.

(c) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(1) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Armed Services, the Committee on Homeland Security, the Committee on the Judiciary, the Committee on Financial Services, and the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives; and

(2) the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Committee on Armed Services, the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, the Committee on the Judiciary, the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, and the Committee on Finance of the Senate.

PART III—GENERAL PROVISIONS

SEC. 1298. REGULATORY AUTHORITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The President shall, not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, prescribe regulations as

necessary for the implementation of this subtitle and the amendments made by this subtitle.

(b) NOTIFICATION TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 10 days before the prescription of regulations under subsection (a), the President shall notify the appropriate congressional committees regarding the proposed regulations and the provisions of this subtitle and the amendments made by this subtitle that the regulations are implementing.

(c) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(1) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives; and

(2) the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate.

SEC. 1299. EXCEPTIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—This subtitle and the amendments made by this subtitle shall not apply to the following:

(1) Any authorized intelligence, law enforcement, or national security activities of the United States.

(2) Any transaction necessary to comply with United States obligations under—

(A) the Agreement between the United Nations and the United States of America regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations, signed at Lake Success June 26, 1947, and entered into force November 21, 1947;

(B) the Convention on Consular Relations, done at Vienna April 24, 1963, and entered into force March 19, 1967; or

(C) any other international treaty.

(b) EXCEPTION RELATING TO IMPORTATION OF GOODS.—The authorities and requirements to impose sanctions under this subtitle and the amendments made by this subtitle shall not include the authority or requirement to impose sanctions on the importation of goods.

SA 1093. Ms. CANTWELL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. COLLABORATION ON CYBERSECURITY OF INDUSTRIAL CONTROL SYSTEMS FOR CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Energy, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, and the Secretary of Homeland Security shall collaborate with respect to matters relating to the cybersecurity of industrial control systems for critical infrastructure, including with respect to—

(1) the work of the Department of Energy on the cybersecurity of energy delivery systems;

(2) the work of the Department of Defense on platform information technology and critical infrastructure of the Department of Defense (as that term is defined in section 1650(f)(1) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 (Public Law 114–328; 130 Stat. 2608); and

(3) the work of the Department of Homeland Security on the cybersecurity of industrial control systems.

(b) CENTER OF EXCELLENCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—There is established a center of excellence on the cybersecurity of industrial control systems for critical infrastructure.

(2) MEMBERSHIP.—The center of excellence established under paragraph (1) shall be composed of representatives of—

(A) the Department of Defense;

(B) the Department of Energy, including national laboratories of the Department of Energy;

(C) the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission; and

(D) the Department of Homeland Security.

SA 1094. Mr. REED (for Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the end of subtitle E of title V, add the following:

SEC. ___. SENSE OF SENATE ON INCREASING ENROLLMENT IN SENIOR RESERVE OFFICERS' TRAINING CORPS PROGRAMS AT MINORITY-SERVING INSTITUTIONS.

(a) SENSE OF SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the Armed Forces should take appropriate actions to increase enrollment in Senior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (SROTC) programs at minority-serving institutions.

(b) MINORITY-SERVING INSTITUTION DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''minority-serving institution'' means an institution of higher education described in section 371(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1067q(a)).

SA 1095. Mr. BOOKER (for himself and Mrs. FISCHER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle D of title VI, add the following:

SEC. ___. IMPROVED EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE FOR MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES AND VETERANS.

(a) IMPROVED EMPLOYMENT SKILLS VERIFICATION.—Section 1143(a) of title 10, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by inserting ''(1)'' before ''The Secretary of Defense''; and

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

''(2) In order to improve the accuracy and completeness of a certification or verification of job skills and experience required by paragraph (1), the Secretary of Defense shall—

''(A) establish a database to record all training performed by members of the armed forces that may have application to employment in the civilian sector; and

''(B) make unclassified information regarding such information available to States and other potential employers referred to in subsection (c) so that State and other entities may allow military training to satisfy licensing or certification requirements to engage in a civilian profession.''.

(b) IMPROVED ACCURACY OF CERTIFICATES OF TRAINING AND SKILLS.—Section 1143(a) of title 10, United States Code, is further amended by inserting after paragraph (2), as added by subsection (a), the following new paragraph:

''(3) The Secretary of Defense shall ensure that a certification or verification of job skills and experience required by paragraph (1) is rendered in such a way that States and other potential employers can confirm the accuracy and authenticity of the certification or verification.''.

(c) IMPROVED RESPONSIVENESS TO CERTIFICATION REQUESTS.—Section 1143(c) of title 10, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by inserting ''(1)'' before ''For the purpose''; and

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

''(2) A State may use a certification or verification of job skills and experience provided to a member of the armed forces under subsection (a) and request the Department of Defense to confirm the accuracy and authenticity of the certification or verification. A response confirming or denying the information shall be provided within five business days.''.

(d) IMPROVED NOTICE TO MEMBERS.—Section 1142(b)(4)(A) of title 10, United States Code, is amended by inserting before the semicolon the following: '', including State-submitted and approved lists of military training and skills that satisfy occupational certifications and licenses''.

SA 1096. Mr. MCCAIN (for Mr. GRAHAM (for himself and Mr. WHITEHOUSE)) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the end of subtitle G of title X, add the following:

SEC. ___. CARRIAGE OF CERTAIN PROGRAMMING.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term ''local commercial television station'' has the meaning given the term in section 614(h) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 534(h));

(2) the term ''multichannel video programming distributor'' has the meaning given the term in section 602 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 522);

(3) the term ''qualified noncommercial educational television station'' has the meaning given the term in section 615(l) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 535(l));

(4) the term ''retransmission consent'' means the authority granted to a multichannel video programming distributor under section 325(b) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 325(b)) to retransmit the signal of a television broadcast station; and

(5) the term ''television broadcast station'' has the meaning given the term in section 76.66(a) of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations.

(b) CARRIAGE OF CERTAIN CONTENT.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a multichannel video programming distributor may not be directly or indirectly required, including as a condition of obtaining retransmission consent, to—

(1) carry non-incidental video content from a local commercial television station, qualified noncommercial educational television station, or television broadcast station to the extent that such content is owned, controlled, or financed (in whole or in part) by

the Government of the Russian Federation; or

(2) lease, or otherwise make available, channel capacity to any person for the provision of video programming that is owned, controlled, or financed (in whole or in part) by the Government of the Russian Federation.

(c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section may be construed as applying to the editorial use by a local commercial television station, qualified noncommercial educational television station, or television broadcast station of programming that is owned, controlled, or financed (in whole or in part) by the Government of the Russian Federation.

SA 1097. Mr. MCCAIN (for Mr. RUBIO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 930 submitted by Mr. MCCAIN (for Mr. RUBIO) and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 2 of the amendment, strike ``, is owned'' on line 21 and all that follows through ``with,'' on line 23, and insert ``or is owned or controlled by''.

SA 1098. Mr. BURR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 1072 submitted by Mr. BURR and intended to be proposed to the amendment SA 1003 proposed by Mr. MCCAIN (for himself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In lieu of the matter proposed to be inserted, insert the following:

SEC. _____. QUARTERLY NOTICE ON THE PROVISION OF DEFENSE SENSITIVE SUPPORT.

Section 1055(b)(1) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 (Public Law 114–328; 130 Stat. 2399; 10 U.S.C. 113 note) is amended—

(1) by inserting after ''department or agency'' the following: ''during a calender quarter''; and

(2) by inserting '', not later than the beginning of such calendar quarter,'' after ''shall''.

SA 1099. Mr. BURR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 544 submitted by Mr. BURR and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In lieu of the matter proposed to be inserted, insert the following:

SEC. _____. QUARTERLY NOTICE ON THE PROVISION OF DEFENSE SENSITIVE SUPPORT.

Section 1055(b)(1) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 (Public Law 114–328; 130 Stat. 2399; 10 U.S.C. 113 note) is amended—

(1) by inserting after ''department or agency'' the following: ''during a calender quarter''; and

(2) by inserting '', not later than the beginning of such calendar quarter,'' after ''shall''.

SA 1100. Mr. REED (for Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MERKLEY, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. WARNER, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE)) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title V, add the following:

SEC. _____. MODIFICATION OF BASIS FOR EXTENSION OF PERIOD FOR ENLISTMENT IN THE ARMED FORCES UNDER THE DELAYED ENTRY PROGRAM.

Section 513(b) of title 10, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (4);

(2) by designating the second sentence of paragraph (1) as paragraph (2) and indenting the left margin of such paragraph (2), as so designated, two ems from the left margin;

(3) in paragraph (2), as so designated, by inserting ''described in paragraph (1)'' after ''the 365-day period'';

(4) by inserting after paragraph (2), as designated by this section, the following new paragraph (3):

''(3)(A) The Secretary concerned may extend by up to an additional 365 days the period of extension under paragraph (2) for a person who enlists under section 504(b)(2) of this title if the Secretary determines that the period of extension under this paragraph is required for the performance of adequate background and security reviews of that person.

''(B) The authority to make an extension under this paragraph shall expire on December 31, 2019. The expiration of such authority shall not effect the validity of any extension made in accordance with this paragraph on or before that date.''; and

(5) in paragraph (4), as redesignated by paragraph (1) of this section, by striking ''paragraph (1)'' and inserting ''this subsection''.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Mac Conforti, a member of my Judiciary staff, be granted floor privileges.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that George Elmer Shambaugh, a national security fellow in Senator YOUNG's office, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of the 115th Congress.

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

ELIMINATING GOVERNMENT-FUNDED OIL-PAINTING ACT

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 37, S. 188.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 188) to prohibit the use of Federal funds for the costs of painting portraits of officers and employees of the Federal Government.

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

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The bill (S. 188) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 188

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 ''Eliminating Government-funded Oil-painting Act'' or the ''EGO Act''.

SEC. 2. PROHIBITION ON USE OF FUNDS FOR PORTRAITS.

(a) PROHIBITION.—No funds appropriated or otherwise made available to the Federal Government may be used to pay for the painting of a portrait of an officer or employee of the Federal Government, including the President, the Vice President, a Member of Congress, the head of an executive agency, or the head of an office of the legislative branch.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term ''executive agency'' has the meaning given the term in section 133 of title 41, United States Code; and

(2) the term ''Member of Congress'' includes a Delegate or Resident Commissioner to Congress.

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following Senate resolutions, which were submitted earlier today: S. Res. 260, S. Res. 261, and S. Res. 262.

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

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table en bloc.

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

The resolutions were agreed to.

The preambles were agreed to.

(The resolutions, with their preambles, are printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2017

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Tuesday, September 19; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the Francisco nomination, with the time until the cloture vote equally divided between the two leaders or their designees; further, that if cloture is invoked, all postcloture time expire at 12:15 p.m. and the Senate vote on confirmation of the Francisco nomination with no intervening action or debate; finally, that following disposition of the Francisco nomination, the Senate recess until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly conference meetings.

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

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. LANKFORD. 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 our Democratic colleagues.

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

The Senator from Massachusetts.

HEALTHCARE

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, it has been over 7 weeks since the Senate voted on three different versions of the Republican bill to repeal the Affordable Care Act. Each of these terrible bills would have stripped healthcare coverage from tens of millions of Americans and raised costs for millions more.

During this 7 weeks that followed the last of those votes, no one has clamored for another try. Phones aren't ringing off the hook with calls for Republicans to go one more round in their effort to rip up the Medicaid Program. Letters and emails aren't pouring in asking for legislation to jack up the costs for people with preexisting conditions. Tweets and Facebook posts don't demand that insurers get the chance to drop coverage for mental health issues and addiction treatment.

Instead, the families I have spoken with have told me, often through tears, that they are so relieved that Republicans stepped back from the brink and came to their senses. They are breathing just a little bit easier knowing that Medicaid will be there for their elderly parent in a nursing home or the neighbor down the street who uses a wheelchair. That tight, anxious, terrifying feeling in their chests has eased up because they don't have to worry about losing the health insurance that helps pay for their asthma medication or their children's heart surgery.

Here we are again, back on the floor of the Senate, engaged in a terrible and familiar ritual: begging the Republicans not to gut our health insurance system for the sake of political games.

If the American people want these cruel repeal bills to be thrown in the garbage, where they belong, then what are we doing here? Well, Senate Republicans are pretty desperate. This month, they learned from the Senate Parliamentarian—the independent umpire here in the Senate who gets the final say on how the procedural rules work—that the legislative instructions they passed back in January to kick off their whole effort to repeal the Affordable Care Act will expire on September 30. Once that happens, Republicans would have to start over with a new set of instructions if they want to be able to use the special Senate rules that allow them to jam this bill through without a single Democratic vote. So the Republicans have dug through the trash and pulled out an old draft of a bill they think could get the job done. It is called the Cassidy-Graham proposal, named after the Republican Senators who put it together.

You might think that after months and months of failed attempts, the Republicans would have something new to offer. You might think that after their last three terrible repeal bills went up in flames, the Republicans would propose something more reasonable this time around. You might think that—but no. This is just the same terrible set of policies with a fresh coat of paint and a new name.

The Cassidy-Graham proposal completely eliminates the parts of the ACA that help families afford health insurance. Do you think insurance is expensive right now? Just wait for Cassidy-Graham. Need help paying for your chemotherapy or your surgery? Good luck. Cassidy-Graham says you are on your own.

What about all the people who count on Medicaid to help out, people who have health insurance but have a baby who was born 8 weeks too early and who now needs breathing equipment and special therapists; people who worked hard all their lives but who couldn't save enough to make it three decades in a nursing home; people who use a wheelchair or need a home health aide to come by so they can live independently? What happens to them? Well, with massive cuts to Medicaid, the latest Republican proposal turns America's back on babies, on seniors, on people with disabilities, on our families and our friends and our neighbors who need our help.

I could go on and on about this, but let's get one thing straight about this latest Republican plan: It is not more reasonable. It is not more moderate. It is not bipartisan. And it is definitely not something that families in this country want. It is just another version of the same old cruel, heartless, shameless plan that Republicans have spent the last 8 months trying to jam down the throats of the American people.

Don't take my word for it. Doctors' groups, including the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Family Physicians, and a bunch of other medical specialities, pulled the fire alarm last week when Cassidy and Graham released their proposal. They sent Congress a letter saying it could cost millions of Americans their healthcare coverage. They begged Republicans not to start down this road again. Instead, the doctors asked Congress to do something that makes a whole lot more sense: Focus on ways to improve health insurance markets in this country, starting with the discussions that have taken place in the HELP Committee over the last 2 weeks. That is because there is another important end-of-September deadline coming up—the date when insurance companies have to set their prices for next year's insurance premiums.

Over the last couple of weeks, the two Senators who run the HELP Committee—Senator ALEXANDER on the Republican side and Senator MURRAY on the Democratic side—have held a series of hearings on policies that we could pass before the end of September to help lower premiums and make sure that when you buy health insurance, you get coverage that actually means something.

I sit on that committee, and, like most of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, I have been to each of the four hearings we held on this issue.

Senators ALEXANDER and MURRAY have also opened up the discussion to every single Senator so that even those not assigned to the committee can come and meet the witnesses and talk about how to make healthcare better. We have traded ideas. We have talked to Governors. We talked to State insurance commissioners. We talked to doctors and to patients. And not everyone sees things exactly the same way. We have argued back and forth and put a lot of different ideas on the table. We have spent hours talking about how to improve healthcare in this country.

We have 12 days left before the end of September. It is not always this simple, but this time there really is a clear tradeoff. We can either use those 12 days to let Republicans burn down healthcare in this country, or we can use those 12 days to pass a bill that would stabilize healthcare coverage for millions of Americans.

The Republicans are hoping to slip below the radar screen, to sneak the repeal of healthcare coverage across the finish line just when we let down our guard. Well, I have news for the Republicans who want to go down this road: I see you. The American people see you. And we will fight you every step of the way, for as long as it takes and for as many more rounds as you want to go, to stop your ugly bill in its

tracks. We will not give up on the families who are counting on us to defend their healthcare. We will not back down. We will not blink.

Here is the thing Republicans just don't seem to realize: We aren't tired. We don't get tired when we are fighting for kids on ventilators. We don't lose heart when we are lining up on the side of moms with breast cancer or grandparents with Alzheimer's. We never ever run out of steam when we are fighting for people's lives.

We are here today and tomorrow and every day, and we will fight back as hard as we need to for as long as it takes to defeat every single attempt to take away healthcare from millions of families in this country.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, I rise to join my colleagues in expressing actually a combination of outrage and heartbreak that Washington is still working on yet another partisan plan to take healthcare coverage and guaranteed protections away from families across this country. This is despite a clear message Americans—and Wisconsinites alike—have sent to Congress that they want us to work across the party aisle to make things better and not worse. This latest repeal plan totally ignores that message.

This plan would make things far worse, not better. It would make things worse by allowing insurers to charge older Americans an age tax. That is a worry that Greg from Stoddard, WI, has shared with me. Greg told me that he and his family can't afford for things to get worse. He has no idea how he and other older Wisconsinites will be able to afford higher costs for healthcare. Greg's sons, both of them, have diabetes, and they are already struggling with the skyrocketing cost of insulin.

It would make things worse by dramatically weakening guaranteed protections for those with preexisting conditions, allowing insurers to cut coverage for essential health benefits and charge more for needed care. As someone who was branded with those words ''preexisting condition'' as a child, I understand how this repeal would hurt Wisconsin families and families throughout America.

It would make things worse by eliminating the premium tax credits and cost-sharing reduction payments that help thousands—thousands—of Wisconsinites afford healthcare coverage, and estimates show this particular plan offered in the Senate could significantly cut funding for my home State of Wisconsin by almost $3 billion in the year 2027.

On top of this latest repeal plan, it has to be added that the Trump administration continues to play dangerous political games and engage in sabotage against the Affordable Care Act and Wisconsin's healthcare system, and it does so at the expense of families seeking affordable insurance. Instead of working to lower healthcare costs, the Trump administration continues to threaten to withhold the critical cost-sharing reduction payments that help reduce deductibles and out-of-pocket costs for Wisconsin families. Instead of giving healthcare providers certainty and working to stabilize the healthcare marketplace, the Trump administration is laying the groundwork for higher premiums next year.

In addition, just last week, the administration slashed funding to States for their outreach and education efforts to help more people sign up for healthcare. Wisconsin's trusted Navigator Programs had their funding cut, without explanation, by almost 50 percent, despite a long record of actually exceeding their enrollment goals. This would mean fewer people in rural Wisconsin will receive the support and assistance they need to obtain affordable healthcare coverage.

Instead of making things worse, we should be making things better by getting the job done on bipartisan solutions that lower costs, that expand coverage, and make healthcare more affordable. The Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions—the HELP Committee—is trying to do just that.

Chairman ALEXANDER and Ranking Member MURRAY have shown great leadership in bringing us together to work across party lines on solutions that work for the American people. Our committee has heard from leaders from across the country. These are leaders and experts who play different roles in the healthcare system, and they are telling us how we can work together to make things better.

We have had a set of four hearings over the last 2 weeks, and throughout these hearings we have received a consistent message. That message is that now is the time to work together to stabilize the health insurance market and to make healthcare more affordable.

I believe we need to be doing more to increase the enrollment of younger and healthier adults in the marketplace. We should be exploring bipartisan solutions to increase outreach and coverage for those over 6.1 million young adults who are still uninsured. Slashing the funding for outreach, education, and assistance to them will further destabilize the market and lead to higher costs for everyone.

It is past time to stop this partisan nonsense. I urge my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to do just that by ending these partisan attempts to take people's healthcare away and make them pay more for less care.

The people of Wisconsin—frankly, the people across this country—have sent a clear message. They have sent a clear message that they don't want us to take people's healthcare away, and they have sent a clear message that they want us to work together, to work across the party line to make things better, not worse.

I believe that if parties can look past this partisan debate, if we can do the people's business, then we can find common ground. Let's do that by getting the job done on bipartisan solutions that stabilize and strengthen the healthcare marketplace. Let's do that by getting the job done on solutions that would lower healthcare costs for all American families.

Thank you.

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.

Mr. MERKLEY. 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. MERKLEY. Thank you, Mr. President.

Yogi Berra once said: ''It's like deja vu, all over again.'' Here we are feeling the echoes of the recent debates over healthcare, yet we have another Republican plan to dismantle healthcare and the peace of mind of millions of Americans coming to the floor.

We have seen previous plans. We have seen the House bill that was going to wipe out healthcare for 24 million people. We saw the bill that came over from the Senate in June wipe out healthcare for 22 million people. Then we saw the Republicans' improved version of that, wiping out healthcare for 32 million people. In July of this year, there was yet another plan, back to 22 million—millions and millions of people losing their healthcare. Now we have one more last-ditch effort to destroy healthcare for ordinary Americans, for rural Americans, for working Americans.

It is just wrong, and I am going to explain some of the reasons all of us should be outraged by this bill—this new bill, which says immediately the individual mandate and the company mandate are wiped out. What does that do? That means instantly, in 2018 and 2019, there is a destructive race to the bottom for the insurance pools. If there is no pool, if there is no mandate, then only those who are sicker sign up. Those who are sicker are more expensive, so then more people drop out of the healthcare pool, and the pool becomes even more expensive. It just shoots right out of sight.

We are not talking just about damage that would be done in 2020; we are talking about damage that would be done next year and the year after.

What happens when the insurance companies say there are only 2 years left on this, and the healthcare pool has a big hole in it, the healthy people are gushing out, and only the sickest people remain? They are going to drop out of providing coverage. Suddenly, we have hundreds of counties across

the Nation with no healthcare provision for those who are currently in the healthcare marketplace.

We have been through this conversation. We have been through the Ted Cruz fake insurance bill, and it was voted down by this body with a substantial bipartisan majority. This is a repeat of that, saying let's destroy those insurance pools.

What else does this bill destroy? In 2020, it destroys the tax credits. Let's say you were fortunate enough to have the pool survive 2018 and 2019 and you have tax credits that enable you to buy insurance and there is still a provider during those 2 years, but then comes 2020, and there are no tax credits with which to buy insurance so now you are thrown out of healthcare. There is no remedy provided in this bill.

Is it possible that you are going to get covered by the Medicaid Program in your State? Well, it is not likely because Medicaid in most States provides insurance for poorer Americans, not for the folks who are getting the tax credits in the exchange. No, they are out of luck.

What else do we have? The elimination of essential benefits. Essential benefits are no longer required. Now, we have some history with this in our country. We have had those fake insurance policies that you buy that cost virtually nothing, and then you get sick and discover that your trip to the emergency room isn't covered or you discover your hospitalization is not covered. Your child gets injured—they break a bone—and you discover the x rays are not covered, and the lab tests are not covered. Well, these are the fake insurance policies that don't belong anywhere because they are simply a fraud. This is a scam.

Why are we returning to a vote on fake insurance? Not only do we lose the individual mandate and the company mandate that makes sure an insurance pool—it is the pool having both sick and healthy people so insurance companies can actually provide insurance, but we also have this provision of this fake insurance, where you have a policy that costs virtually nothing and then covers nothing. So it is sold to those who are vulnerable by the sales pitch of the scam man.

What else does this do? Well, right now we have this very complicated healthcare system. It is a big improvement over what we had 8 years ago, but it is still complicated. We have Medicaid, and we have Medicare. We have on-exchanges, and we have off-exchanges. We have special insurance for the workplace called Workers' Compensation. We have special insurance for children called the Children's Health Insurance Program. We have workplace policies that have very good benefits covered by the company, and we have workplace policies that are very poor policies. We have workplace policies that are paid for by the company, and there are those where the individual has to buy into the workplace policy. Then, we have policies that cover just the worker and ones that cover the family. What do you do as you navigate this incredibly complex array? This is a continuous stressful journey for Americans.

Maybe you have a job that doesn't pay very much, and you are able to be on the Oregon Health Plan or on similar Medicaid programs across the country. Then, you earn a little bit more or your spouse earns a little bit more, and, suddenly, you don't qualify. How do you get onto the exchange in the middle of the year? How do you work out those tax credits for the end of the year? Or maybe your next job provides insurance for you but not your children. How do you get your children signed up? It is a very, very stressful situation—this complicated, overlapping healthcare that requires continuous attention just for people to make sure that, if their loved one is sick, if their child is injured, they will get the care they need when that happens and the family will not end up bankrupt. It is a pursuit of peace of mind.

What does this bill do? It makes our already complicated system even more complicated. It says in this bill: We want to have 50 different systems for 50 different States—so much for focusing on a simpler system where we can work to drive out any fraud or inefficiencies or abuse. No, now we have 50 systems pursuing different forms of fraud, waste, and abuse. We should be going in the other direction toward simplicity, toward a world in which, just by virtue of being an American, you know you are covered. You don't have to worry about that transition from job to job or that change as you go from one income to another income or the dynamics that occur should you get married or get divorced. No, just by virtue of being an American, you are covered. That is the way the whole developed world does it. They make it easy, but here we make it complicated, and this bill is determined to make it much more complicated, much more fractured, and much more stressful.

So let's not do that.

Let's apply a little common sense and recognize that none of us would run a business determined to make the workplace more stressful, more fractured, less efficient, and more filled with fraud. But that is what this bill does.

So let's say no. Let's have a huge bipartisan response to say absolutely not. Now, it is grassroots America that defeated those previous diabolical plans to wipe out healthcare for millions of Americans. They filled the streets. Grassroots America overflowed our inboxes. They flooded our phones, and, once again, we need the common sense of working America, of grassroots America to weigh in and say how wrong this proposed bill is.

During the previous debate, I kept noting that this was like a monster that you can only put away by driving a stake through its heart. Each time we attempted to have that debate on the floor and we defeated the bill, I thought: Well, perhaps, we finally put this monster 6 feet under. But now it is back in all its ruthless, tooth-and-fang fury, ready to destroy peace of mind in healthcare for our citizens.

So let's take a vote in this Senate that will do what we hoped we had done before and truly drive a stake through the heart of this TrumpCare proposition. Let's stand up in partnership with our citizens.

Oh, I know this room is full of really wealthy Americans who have never worried about healthcare. When I was first campaigning for the Senate, I met with one of those really wealthy Americans in New York City. He said to me: I don't know why you are saying you are fighting for better healthcare. Everybody in America has good healthcare.

Well, that is because that individual lived in a bubble, where he was surrounded by everyone he knew having good healthcare because they worked for really wealthy firms in New York City. They are so dramatically disconnected from the reality of working Americans.

I will tell you what is going on in my neighborhood, in my blue collar neighborhood—the same neighborhood that I went to from grades 3 through 12, the same neighborhood that my children went to. It is getting tougher to find a full-time job. It is getting tougher to find a living-wage job. It is getting tougher to be able to save and to help your child pursue their dreams. It is tougher to be able to help your family or, perhaps, to go on a vacation—even a simple vacation—and it is certainly tougher to buy a home. In fact, many people in my neighborhood feel that the only way they are going to be able to buy a home is to inherit it from their parents.

But I will tell you that there is one thing that got easier in the last 8 years against all that—one thing—and that was that we provided expansion of Medicaid to cover a lot more people and we created a marketplace for insurance where working people could use tax credits to be able to buy care and to easily compare policies. So we made a big step forward in one single area—in one area. Now my colleagues from their gated communities and with their 7-digit wealth want to come and destroy the one thing we did for working Americans.

If President Trump cared one whit about a working American, he would be ringing up the majority leader of this Chamber right now and saying: What are you doing? I campaigned saying I was going to stand with workers. This bill attacks them. What are you doing?

He would be calling up and saying: I called that House bill mean—that House bill which eliminated healthcare for 23 million Americans—the final bill. I called it mean and heartless. This is meaner. This is even more heartless.

But we shouldn't need the insights of President Trump to be able to understand the damage that this does to ordinary Americans because you can see it plain as day right there on the pages of this bill.

So, colleagues, read the bill. Talk to your healthcare experts, and drive a stake through this healthcare monster.

Thank you, 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. BOOKER. 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. BOOKER. Mr. President, I have watched as this body has recently begun to really work in a bipartisan fashion on trying to stabilize the insurance markets under the Affordable Care Act.

Under the leadership of Senator MURRAY, the ranking member of the HELP Committee, and Senator ALEXANDER, the chairman of the HELP Committee, efforts have been going on, and a number of hearings have been held on what needs to be done to stabilize and strengthen the Affordable Care Act. This is coming about because of a crisis.

In January of this year, leading from December, we have had people—like Standard & Poor's—talking about how stable these exchanges were. Over the last months, we have seen many actions—threatening cost-sharing, not advertising the markets—many actions taken by the Trump administration that have weakened the markets and put the markets in crisis. But it is actually not the markets that are in crisis; it is fellow Americans. People want the same thing. Whether Republican or Democrat, from the West, East, North, South, or the heart of our country, they want the same thing: They want quality, affordable care.

We have come a long way to where we are right now. Under the Affordable Care Act, we have increased the number of Americans with health insurance by over 20 million. We have been able to bend the cost curve.

The Affordable Care Act has taken us out of days that no American—very few—wants us to go back to, the days where people could be denied coverage based on a preexisting condition.

The Affordable Care Act created an essential set of benefits, which Americans from both sides of the aisle think is very important. These essential benefits include such things as healthcare for women who are having children. They include things like putting parity between mental healthcare and what might be called physical healthcare.

There have been so many improvements because of the Affordable Care Act, and I have heard about them from constituents all over my State, as well as voices from around the United States of America, difficult stories about people who had lifetime caps; people who, because their child had an illness as a child—when that child became an adult, they couldn't find insurance; people who were being denied insurance because of a preexisting condition; people who were declaring bankruptcy in this country, at rates significantly higher than we are seeing now, because they could not afford their health insurance. In fact, personal bankruptcy in our Nation has been cut by about 50 percent. These are all gains we have achieved through the Affordable Care Act. There is the expansion of healthcare to millions more and the security of knowing that your health insurance won't be cut off because of a preexisting condition, knowing that when you pay for health coverage, it will carry essential benefits that every American should get. There are these gains and many more.

What has happened after the failure of TrumpCare, after the failure of Republican plans—what actually came out of that was something that was encouraging to me as a Senator who has been here for 3-plus years: seeing statespeople from our Senate—LAMAR ALEXANDER and Senator MURRAY—come together and say: Hey, we have a crisis in our country. Some of these markets are losing stability. We should work together, put aside partisan differences, and try to find a pathway forward to make sure that in some States millions of folks don't lose health insurance.

We heard—at least I did—some of the best commentary in this body. Perhaps most notable was a speech by JOHN MCCAIN, who stood up and strongly talked about regular order, talked about us doing things in the Senate in a way that brought us together, that invited in the public, that had a wide range of people participating in the crafting of policy—policy that affects nearly 20 percent of our economy, policy that affects hundreds of millions of Americans, policy that is critical to the success of our Nation.

I am grateful that Senators MURRAY and ALEXANDER have been holding bipartisan hearings to try to stabilize the marketplace. Through this process, over the past month, we have had bipartisan Governors—Governors from both parties—insurance commissioners, consumers—all have had the opportunity to come in and begin to weigh in on different proposals and their impact on the health insurance marketplace. This shows we can work together to try to improve the Affordable Care Act—not this idea that we throw it out, hurting not just a few people but literally tens of millions of Americans. This is the way it should be done.

Past proposals that have failed in this body were done the wrong way—people crafting legislation behind closed doors in a noninclusive manner, in a partisan manner, not holding hearings, not bringing in experts. That is not the way this body was meant to work.

In fact, for those who criticized the Affordable Care Act, for the Affordable Care Act, there were dozens of bipartisan hearings. Over 100 amendments from the Republican Party were included in the ultimate legislation. It was a process that took months and months. The President of the United States even met with Republican Senators and Congresspeople to discuss and debate the legislation, and it was aired on C–SPAN. This showed the best of who we are, that when we come together as a body and go through a process, good legislation—not perfect legislation but good legislation—can advance us toward our principles. Those principles were principles that were discussed during the last Presidential campaign by both candidates. Donald Trump himself, our President, said time and time again: I want us to have a health system in which everyone is covered, in which everyone has affordable and quality healthcare.

These values aren't debatable, and I am disappointed, I am frustrated, and I am angry that we are here again while a bipartisan process is going on, and, as a great New Jerseyan, Yogi Berra, once said, it is deja vu all over again.

Here we are now coming back this week, and we are hearing about another Republican bill that has not gone through regular order, that has not had hearings, that has not had a bipartisan process. Another bill is coming to the floor. People are whipping up votes, and we might have yet another dramatic moment in this body that millions of Americans will watch, holding their breaths because their families—their children, their senior citizen parents—are being held in the balance on a decision this body will make—not going through regular order, not bringing in experts—on legislation that hasn't even been scored by the Congressional Budget Office.

The CBO hasn't scored this bill. We don't know what its total impact would be on health coverage or on costs. We don't know exactly how many people could lose their coverage, how much premiums could skyrocket for the middle class, and just how much Medicaid would ultimately be gutted.

This is the bill that is coming before us. This is the threat right now to our Nation and to millions of people. But we do know enough about this bill, and previous versions of the repeal plan that looked very similar to this bill give us many hints—more than hints—give us much evidence about what this bill would do and how this bill would cause millions to lose their coverage and premiums to skyrocket. And the millions who rely on Medicaid for everything from opioid addiction treatment to maternity care would suffer.

Let me go through some things we know about this legislation which is being threatened to be brought to the Senate floor and which now casts a

shadow over the coverage earned and gained by millions of Americans.

This legislation would still take coverage away from millions of Americans. We know this destructive version—this partisan repeal plan—would take coverage away from millions of people. Experts have already projected that after 10 years, this partisan repeal plan could cause over 30 million Americans to lose their coverage—30 million Americans cast back into a world where one illness, where one injury could devastate their families, could send them into bankruptcy. That one illness, that one injury could have the worst of results; could cast us back to a time when so many Americans were using emergency room doctors as their primary care physicians; could cast us back to a time when many Americans were delaying seeing doctors because they couldn't afford to, allowing preventable diseases or treatable diseases to get worse and worse. Thirty million Americans losing their health insurance means more Americans will die. That is not a dramatic, hyperbolic statement; that is the truth. When health coverage rates go down, American mortality rates go up.

What else do we know about this legislation? It still raises costs like the other versions of TrumpCare. This version of this partisan repeal plan will still force hard-working Americans to pay more for, actually, worse care. It would abruptly end the critical assisted subsidies that have allowed millions to afford care. It would end support for people in the very marketplaces about which two other bipartisan Senators, through the HELP Committee, are trying to discuss how we are going to stabilize those markets to give people that very access.

We know that as a result of this repeal plan, Americans will see their deductibles increase by several thousand dollars. We could once again—once again, with those increases—see bankruptcy rates increase after dropping dramatically under the Affordable Care Act.

What else do we know about this legislation, this newest version of TrumpCare? It still ends Federal protections, as the other plans did, for people with preexisting conditions. TrumpCare's latest version would still enable insurance companies to charge folks who are sick or who have been ill or who have a preexisting condition for their care. States could waive that restriction on discrimination against people with preexisting conditions. This plan will still subject millions of Americans with those preexisting conditions to price discrimination, meaning Americans who may have had cancer, Americans who are pregnant, Americans who have a child with autism could be forced to pay thousands and thousands of dollars more just to get coverage.

What else does this newest piece of legislation do? It ends the Medicaid expansion, and it establishes a per capita cap and reduction of Medicaid. By ending Medicaid as we know it after over 50 years of this program, by suddenly capping it and ultimately giving block grants to States, we know it will affect dramatically the people whom this program and these expansions have covered.

Who gets covered by Medicaid? Who will be affected? In America right now, over half of all low-income families rely on Medicaid. Two out of three of our seniors living in nursing homes rely on Medicaid. Half of all the births in the United States of America—our children, our future, our greatest natural resource—half are covered by Medicaid.

Here is our reality. We are gutting a program that benefits us all—our seniors, our children, as well as the disabled. The cruel Medicaid cuts proposed in this bill—the cuts and the caps in this version—will still put those who have the most to lose in the most serious jeopardy: those seniors in nursing homes, working families, communities of color, women, Americans with disabilities, those folks who are already struggling with illness, elder Americans, Americans living in rural areas, Americans living in our cities. This is not who we are. These are not our values. This kind of draconian action is unacceptable in a nation this great.

What else does it do, this newest version of TrumpCare? What else does it do? In this version, this bill—just like the ones before—still erodes critical patient protections established by the Affordable Care Act by allowing States to apply for a waiver to opt out of the ACA's essential benefits requirement for things as basic as maternity care, substance abuse services, prescription drugs, emergency services, hospitalizations, and rehabilitation services.

This repeal plan could essentially give insurers the green light to once again charge for junk insurance plans that don't actually cover needed care. You may have health insurance, but it may be so limited and so constricted that when you actually get sick, you find out it does not cover your illness, your health challenge, your injury.

This newest version of TrumpCare, this newest version of a partisan repeal plan, also still threatens women's health. Women comprise two-thirds of all adult enrollees in Medicaid. They would be essentially hurt by the gutting of that program. This repeal plan, like previous versions, would still cut off low-income women from accessing critical preventive and healthcare services from Planned Parenthood, health centers that provide essential preventive care and, often in many counties, the only avenue to contraceptive services. It singles out Planned Parenthood by not allowing them to be reimbursed for basic health services, making it so much more difficult for women all around our country to access important care.

What else does this most recent version of TrumpCare do, this partisan bill that is not going through regular order? Just like the other ones, it would still weaken the Federal prohibition on lifetime limits, lifetime caps on the insurance that one can receive. That means Americans with chronic diseases and conditions and children with unique medical needs and challenges who still need continued lifesaving care could be forced, once they hit that cap, to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on continued care, even though they are insured, thus devastating families, sending them into bankruptcy, spiraling them into financial catastrophe.

A couple of months back, one of my constituents tweeted me a photo of her son's medical bill after a recent surgery. The bill was for $500, but it showed that without the coverage she got because of the Affordable Care Act, she would have owed over $230,000. That was just for her child's heart surgery. Her son Ethan, who was born with a rare genetic disorder, has had four of those surgeries.

Under this partisan plan, not only could essential health benefits, like hospitalizations and prescription drugs, be denied Ethan, but lifetime caps on coverage would disqualify Ethan from accessing the care he needs.

As Ethan's mom put it, the lifetime cap is the equivalent of saying: ''Sorry, you're not worth keeping alive anymore. You're just too expensive.''

That is what this plan would allow insurance companies to do, essentially saying to Americans: If you had a problem when you were a child, if you had surgeries as a child, once you hit that cap, you are not worth covering anymore.

We had a vote on the floor today. It was for national defense. It was a major bill. There were strong statements and speeches on both sides of the aisle. At the end of the day, the overwhelming majority of us joined together to provide for our Nation's national defense; that is, to provide for our Defense Department.

It is a common ideal in this body that this government, formed by our forefathers and foremothers, the Constitution upon which we stand proclaims that this government was formed for the common good, for the common defense.

As we have seen in recent days, the idea of defense isn't just protecting us against the threat of North Korea, isn't just protecting us from the efforts of the Russians. It is not just protecting us from terrorist organizations. We have seen that the national defense also means the challenges of natural disaster.

It was profound for all of us to see the crisis faced from Texas to Florida and how we—as a nation, hero after hero in communities large and small—stood up during this time and were

there for fellow Americans, never asking their party, never asking or questioning what different religion they might have. People from all different ethnic backgrounds banded together because that is what Americans do. When we are threatened, when we are attacked, when there is a natural disaster or an enemy from afar, we stand up and take care of each other. The very formation and foundation of our government is based on the ideals that we are stronger together when we stand together, when we fight together, when we invest in each other and sacrifice for each other.

I am one who believes the defense of this Nation isn't just a powerful military abroad and at home. The defense of our Nation also means that for a vulnerable child, who has a terrible disease that we can cure—we, our Nation, should take care of our own.

The defense of our country means that our elder citizens, two-thirds of whom are in nursing homes and rely on the Medicaid Program—the defense of our Nation, the preservation of our ideals is evidenced in the care of the elderly, the dignity that we acknowledge and afford them. That is the very definition of who we are as Americans.

I am one of those people who believes that the ideals of this Nation are evident not just in the strength of our military but also in the strength of our system of healthcare. It is a violation of our principles and values as a nation when our healthcare system breaks down—not to the ideals we see in our military where we protect all of our country; we stand for everyone, rich or poor. But, suddenly, with our healthcare system, with accessing lifesaving medicines and procedures, critical preventive care, it suddenly boils down to those who are very wealthy getting access, and people who are struggling in minimum-wage jobs, fighting every day to raise their kids—somehow that should not be covered in our ideals.

We are a nation that professes the most profound values—the oldest constitutional democracy, which put forth ideals that we are not a theocracy, a nation based upon privilege, based upon how you pray. We are not a monarchy. We are the oldest constitutional democracy that put ideals forward that became lights to other nations.

This ideal that we believe in liberty and justice for all—what justice is there in a piece of legislation that would cast millions of Americans, our poorest Americans, our sickest Americans, our elderly Americans into a world where they no longer have the security of healthcare? Is that justice in this country?

What is the concept of liberty in our Nation if some people are shackled to fear and worry that if their child gets sick, they will not have access to care? What is freedom if people are imprisoned by an illness or disease that they cannot get adequately treated because they do not have health coverage? Essential to the ideals of our country—the ideals of life and liberty and happiness—is having a system of healthcare that provides a stable foundation for life.

When half of the children born in this country are beneficiaries of a Medicaid Program, why would we slash that program if doing so undermines the very start of the lives of our children? That is against our values as a country. We are a nation in which every generation has expanded access, has expanded opportunity.

Over 50 years ago, when Medicare and Medicaid Programs were formed, expanding access to healthcare for the elderly, expanding access to healthcare for the sick, expanding access to healthcare for hard-working, low-income people, that was an advancement forward. When this body passed the Affordable Care Act—and 20 million more Americans gained access to healthcare, to lifesaving procedures, to the stability that comes from having that security—we advanced this Nation more toward its ideals.

This body should be coming together to take the imperfections of the Affordable Care Act, to find where it has fallen short, and work together to build upon that foundation so everyone in this Nation can have justice and opportunity; that everyone, when it comes to the grip of illness or disease, can find the freedom that comes with the security and the ease of mind in knowing they can afford to go to a doctor. That is a national aspiration. That is national defense. That is who we are and what we stand for.

So now here we are again. The most frustrating moments of my time as a U.S. Senator were to have seen legislation not in any way coming through the processes set up by our forefathers and foremothers in this place. How can we usurp the traditions of the Senate and rush to the floor to vote on legislation that hasn't benefited from the wisdom and the genius and the experience of medical professionals or experts? It was just pushed to the floor. Even nonpartisan experts say it would rip healthcare from millions and would raise costs for the elderly. How can we as a body do this to ourselves?

We are in this situation again, where legislation is being proposed, where votes are being counted, where people are discussing if can we bring a bill to the floor, another version of those that have fallen and been defeated. Can we bring this version forward? I say it is time we stop. It is time we understand that in the same way we hammered out a bill today and passed legislation—billions of dollars to protect our country from threats of wrongdoing—that we make the same kind of effort to work together, to talk, to hold hearings, to listen to each other, to try to make sure we are defending each other, supporting each other, and helping each other so that we are a generation, like our forefathers and foremothers, expanding concepts of liberty and freedom and access for more people.

Instead, here we are, with millions of Americans now turning their attention back to the U.S. Senate—Americans with disabilities; parents with children like Ethan who worry that should they need another operation, if the rules change, if legislation changes, they will not have that access; young people with parents in nursing homes, wondering will Medicaid expansion survive yet another attempt to gut the program. At a time when we need to be encouraging each other and strengthening our commitments to one another, we face a time of jeopardy, a decision point, a crossroads—not just in the pragmatic realities of healthcare that will come forward but a crossroads of our values and a crossroads of our ideals. Will we go forward as a nation together, expanding opportunities, securing justice, defending each other, empowering each other, or will we go back?

I end with saying this. What I have learned is, the decisions made here are not always easy, and they are often dependent upon the engagement of the Nation as a whole. I stand here, the beneficiary of courageous Americans, who stood and fought for all of our values and all of our ideals, fought to expand access and equality and opportunity, fought to defend this Nation at home and abroad, and to insist that every child have certain basic rights and opportunities.

This is yet another moral moment for our Nation. I believe every child should have access to affordable, quality healthcare. I believe every senior citizen growing old should have the security and the dignity of healthy environments. I believe people should not be denied the justice of healthcare because they have a preexisting condition.

I don't think these are radical beliefs in any way. I don't think it was radical to stand up in the late 1800s and say women should have the right to vote, that it was radical to think children should not have to experience child labor. It wasn't radical to say that Black Americans should have equal access to restaurants and hotels. These are not radical ideas. The reason this body stood up, generation after generation, securing privileges and expanding opportunities and opening access—the reason this body did that was not just because of the decisions of the people on this floor, it was because Americans stood up and demanded these changes, demanded this progress, and fought for every inch of ground.

That is the moment we are in right now, a call to the conscience of our country. This is not a time to be silent. This is not a time to be indifferent. This is not a time for apathy. This is a time for all of us to make a decision about who we will be as a nation. Will we be a nation that provides affordable, quality healthcare to all or will we slide back into that basic right being only available to a smaller and smaller group of people? That is the decision,

and the decision will be made, not just by the votes on this floor or the decisions made by the 100 in this body, it must be made collectively, through our engagement and through our activism and what we demand from our representatives.

Here we are in this moral moment with this decision before our country. My prayer and my hope is that all of us, with a collective voice, with a chorus that resonates with that of our ancestors—that we fight for the defense of our Nation, that we stand up and take responsibility for ideals of equal justice, ideals of liberty and freedom, ideals of life and liberty and the pursuit of happiness, ideals that have made this Nation shine and have shown our greatness and our character. That doesn't happen by accident or some inevitability of history. It happens because we fight for it and work for it.

If there is any moment in American history where we need that spirit, that American grit, that toughness and that fight, it is this moment right now.

Mr. President, thank you.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CASEY. 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. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise tonight to talk about yet another healthcare debate we are having here in the Senate. As many people know and have been following this over the last number of months, we had a long debate and then a vote here at the end of July. At that point, despite all of the conflict and all of the debate and arguing about healthcare for not just months but for years, we moved to a new chapter, and that new chapter for a number of weeks has been very positive.

When I went home to Pennsylvania, I went to 32 counties in the month of August, and in a lot of those counties, I tried to give a bit of good news on healthcare despite all of the conflict about it. I was able to say that since July 28, when the vote was held, we have had very positive bipartisan discussions. I was part of several of them.

The chairman of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee—the so-called HELP Committee—Senator LAMAR ALEXANDER from Tennessee, announced, in agreement with Senator PATTY MURRAY of Washington, that they were going to preside over bipartisan healthcare hearings in that committee—probably the first bipartisan hearings in a long time. What that meant was that we were going to finally have hearings and a thorough examination of a few issues, not a sweeping bill that would repeal the Affordable Care Act and decimate Medicaid the way the prior bills would have but take elements or pieces of some of the challenges we have before us and try to fix those problems. That took place over the last 2 weeks and was among the most positive healthcare moments we have had in the Senate in a long, long time.

What did we do? Well, we were focused on making sure that the cost-sharing payments were made—hoping we can get a bipartisan bill on that in the next couple of days—and focused on problems in the individual market, real problems, serious attention to serious issues—not a game, not a political exercise, not an ideological exercise; Democrats and Republicans sitting down and working together in the HELP Committee to solve some of—not all of but some of the problems in our healthcare system. It has been a very positive development for the committee, for the Senate, and for the Nation.

There is a little more good news. Both parties have come together to make sure that the Children's Health Insurance Program continues. It is one of the most important programs in Pennsylvania. These are approximate numbers, but about 175,000 children in Pennsylvania get their healthcare that way. So both parties came together on that as well. It is very bipartisan. Since its enactment way back in the midnineties, CHIP has been bipartisan. There have been a couple of rocky roads here and there, but it has been mostly bipartisan for 20 years, and it will be again at this time in the Senate.

It is very personal to me. My father was the Governor of Pennsylvania in 1992 when CHIP passed. I think we might have been the largest State with a children's health insurance program, and those kinds of State models became the basis for Federal legislation.

It is deeply personal to families across Pennsylvania who, absent the CHIP program, would not have healthcare. The same is true of Medicaid, which, of course, is a much bigger number. A lot of children in the country have healthcare solely because of Medicaid, and some adults have healthcare solely because of Medicaid—millions of them.

I think when we have these debates, we should remind ourselves about the value, the importance, the significance of these programs and the consequence of undermining them or wiping them out. In the case of Medicaid, what some earlier versions of the Republican healthcare bills would do would be to decimate Medicaid over time. Maybe not in year 1 or year 2, but over time they would have a terribly devastating impact on Medicaid.

What is Medicaid? It happens to be the program through which 40 percent of all children get their healthcare and 60 percent of all children with disabilities get their healthcare. About two-thirds of nursing home care is paid for by Medicaid. Ask a family member who has a loved one with a disability what Medicaid means to that family. Medicaid is life or death.

I know we have debates around here where people talk about Medicaid as if it is just another program, just another budget matter, just another healthcare talking point. Well, one of the reasons these bills have not passed is because a lot of Americans—Democrats and Republicans and Independents out there far away from Washington—realize what would have happened if we passed some of these bills, what would have happened to the Medicare Program that covers more than 70 million Americans.

No one here would lose their healthcare, by the way. No Senator, no House Member, or their families would lose their healthcare. But folks here were perfectly willing to support legislation that would result in millions—not a few million; double-figure millions—15 million, maybe, would have lost their healthcare and Medicaid if these bills had passed and several million more in the exchanges or otherwise.

That is what we were debating, but, as I said, since July 28, we have had a lot of bipartisan moments and that is a good thing.

Where are we right now? Well, here is where we are: with a piece a legislation—the shorthand is Cassidy-Graham, the two Senators who are leading the bill. What would it do? Well, it would do a couple of things that we should never allow to pass, in my judgment. It establishes a per capita cap on Medicaid. That is a bad idea. We should reject that. It ends Medicaid expansion as we know it, the part of Medicaid that now covers 11 million people.

In the context of how difficult it is for States and counties and communities across the country to deal with the opioid crisis, I hope they don't say: We are going to pass a bill that will end Medicaid expansion as we know it, because we know that the biggest payer—the program that has the most impact on treating people who are in the grip of the opioid epidemic, who are gripped by that addiction—Medicaid expansion provides more help than any other program. At last count, 68,000 Pennsylvanians with an opioid issue got their help from Medicaid expansion. Solely because of Medicaid expansion, they can get help for opioids. So ending the Medicaid expansion as we know it is another bad idea.

It rolls back protections for Americans with preexisting conditions. I thought we settled this, that this would be a guarantee going forward, that no matter what bill—Democratic, Republican, or otherwise—we would make sure that was a national standard, that no one had to worry about preexisting conditions again. Well, here we are again concerned about what might happen as a result of this legislation and what a State might do to take away the protections on preexisting conditions because they waive it, and they are allowed to waive it under these bills.

It allows States to impose burdensome work requirements as a condition

of coverage. That is another result of the bill.

It takes coverage away from millions of Americans. We mentioned that, but it bears repeating.

This isn't just a policy debate; this is about folks whom we all represent. I represent families in Pennsylvania, many of whom wrote to me, have contacted me telling me their stories. One of them was Pam Simpson.

Pam is from southeastern Pennsylvania, Coatesville. Her son Rowan was diagnosed on the autism spectrum a number of years ago. Prior to having the protection of Medicaid—what we call in Pennsylvania Medical Assistance—that family had a big challenge. Challenges continue even after the coverage.

What Pam said to me in a letter was how much benefit there was to her family in terms of getting the treatment and the help from Medicaid. She said:

> Without Medicaid, I am confident I could not work full-time to support our family. We would be bankrupt or my son—

Meaning Rowan—

> would go without the therapies he sincerely needs.

So here is a child who was 5 years old when he was diagnosed, and here is a mother telling me that their lives are a lot better because they have the protection of Medicaid because their son has a disability. And there are a lot of families in which a child might have more than one disability. And even some families who have wealth or very good healthcare coverage still need Medicaid if they have a child with a profound disability. So this isn't just about one group of Americans; this cuts across all incomes, all regions, all parties, all beliefs. That is what Medicaid does, because do you know what Medicaid is? It is an American program.

We are the greatest country in the world. We have the strongest economy in the world. We have the strongest military in the world. And we can do all that and still have a program that says to any family who has a loved one with a disability: We are going to help you. We don't care where you live—we are going to try to help you because your family member has a disability. If you are low income, we are going to make sure your child has healthcare and gets all the excellent screening and diagnoses that take place early in a child's life to prevent disease, to prevent all kinds of challenges in the life of that child, because we are a great country.

We are called America, and that is what America does—we take care of people who need help. And if it costs some more, we find the money to do it, just as we find the money to protect our security when we have a conflict. We all come together as a country, and we protect the country.

Well, it is about time that Washington came together to protect people who have the benefit of a great program called Medicaid or other healthcare programs because that is what a great country does.

If we do to Medicaid what some here have wanted to do, we will be diminished as a country. We will all be diminished. Do we want to live in a country where we just had 20 million people gain healthcare coverage and go backward, have more people without health insurance, have more children lose their Medicaid coverage? Is that the country we want to be? I don't think so. I don't think any Republican believes that, and I don't think any Democrat believes that—if you call yourself an American, because that is what America does. We take on big challenges and we solve problems.

Medicaid is not the problem here. We have problems in our healthcare system; Medicaid is not one of them. Medicaid is helping a lot of people, and we are going to protect it.

This idea that we have come together in the HELP Committee on fixing the parts of the system that we have to fix and doing a thorough examination and having hearings—isn't that a radical idea? I just heard in the last couple of hours that there is a healthcare hearing on Monday. Oh my goodness. Isn't that wonderful? So there will be a hearing on Monday, and I guess they want to pass the bill on Thursday. That is what counts for thorough examination or regular order on one of the most complicated challenges we have? Why don't they agree to do it the way LAMAR ALEXANDER did, as the chair of the HELP Committee? He said we are going to take these discrete, individual challenges and examine them closely, come together on a bill, and then pass the bill, and then we are going to move to the next problem and the next challenge and solve them one at a time or two at a time, not take a meat ax to Medicaid and hope it works out for people who don't have any healthcare coverage. That is what a great Senate would do. We would have months of hearings on this bill that some people want to pass by the end of September.

But I will go back to the positive plane that we have been on. There has been good work on the HELP Committee on some issues, good work on the Finance Committee on the Children's Health Insurance Program getting reauthorized. While all of that collaboration is going on, all of those good discussions, all of that back-and-forth about policy, no yelling, no screaming, no finger-pointing, all the while, just in the last couple of days, this bill is moving through Washington quietly, but it is moving and it is starting to pick up momentum, like a snake in the grass. That is what this bill is—it is like a snake in the grass. You may not see it yet, you may not know much about it, but it is coming. And if they pass it next week, you may not feel the impact in 2017, you may not feel the bite of that serpent in 2018, you may not feel it in 2019, but you are going to feel it. And if we allow that snake in the grass to inject its venom into people—my analogy for losing your healthcare coverage—then we are not the Senate we should be. We are not the government we should be.

We should be an institution—the U.S. Senate—that protects people from those kinds of adverse consequences. And this bill is that kind of a threat to people. It will bite, and that bite will have a lot of venom.

Why do I say that? Well, think of what would happen to the Medicaid Program. By one estimate, starting in 2027, funding would be cut off completely, leaving 32 million Americans without access to health insurance of any kind and leaving States with zero Federal dollars to replace Medicaid expansion, marketplace tax credits, and cost-sharing reductions. So please don't make the argument that Medicaid is going to be just fine when you are block-granting it, which is a rather benign description of giving a block of money to a State and hoping that it works out, hoping that it is enough money or enough funding to pay for that State's Medicaid needs.

What if you have more children with disabilities? What if that number grows? This bill basically says to the State: Good luck, State. The State has to balance its budget, by the way. The Federal Government doesn't have to do that. The State has to balance its budget, and they, by definition, will have to cap services and treatment to people with disabilities. So that is what this is all about in the end. It is about sending the problem back to the States and calling it flexibility. Isn't that a nice word? All these benign words—flexibility, block granting, per capita caps—all sound so benign. There is a lot of venom in those policies.

What does it mean for one State? I will just give you one example. In Pennsylvania, we had more than 700,000 people obtain health insurance through Medicaid expansion—over 700,000 people. In the marketplace or the exchange, there are another over 400,000 people. So more than 1.1 million people got healthcare in one State through Medicaid expansion or through the marketplace.

How about rural Pennsylvania? We have 67 counties. How about the 48 rural counties in my State? How many people living in rural Pennsylvania got healthcare? At last count, it was over 278,000 people—almost 280,000 people—and 180,000 obtained health insurance through the Medicaid expansion. The balance was through the exchanges. What are we going to say to rural Pennsylvania? I know 180,000 of your neighbors, friends, and family members got health insurance through Medicaid expansion, but we are going to wind that down, and you will be just fine. Don't worry; Washington will guarantee that you are just fine. That is a big lie, if you try to make that argument to rural Pennsylvania and to other parts of our State as well.

What do we say to rural hospitals that have very thin margins already?

Some of them are on the brink of having a major problem and depend upon the support they get from Medicaid. In rural Pennsylvania we have a lot of folks who have illnesses and challenges that maybe some of the rest of us don't have. They tend to be older folks who have those challenges, too. What do we say to them?

Are we saying to them that we are just going to wind down the support that Medicaid provides in a State like Pennsylvania?

So my plea to my colleagues is this. Don't allow this snake in the grass to get close to anyone and to bite them and to inject venom in them. Don't allow that to happen. Don't allow this bill to rip away healthcare from millions of people, just like the bill before that and the bill before that. Work with people in both parties to do what we are doing in the HELP Committee and, to a certain extent, although very limited, in the Finance Committee. I think we have a good model to work together, but I can't go back to Pam Simpson and say: Pam, you know what; I know that you are happy with the Medicaid that Rowan is receiving, and I know it is working out for you, but there are some people in Washington who just had a different idea for you. So you are on your own. You and your family are on your own.

I don't think that is what we do as Americans. Forget being Senators; I don't think that is an American thing to do. We help people that need help. All of us in our lives need help at some point or another. No one is immune to some of these challenges.

I will just read one or two sentences from the end of the letter that Pam Simpson wrote me months ago, in the earlier part of this year, when she talked about how important Medicaid was to her. She is pleading with me at the end of this letter to protect her son and to protect her family. I would just ask that my colleagues consider this when they are considering how to vote.

Pam talked about all the benefits that Medicaid provides her son because of his disability and her family. She said: Please think of Rowan, my son. Please think of my husband and me, she said. But here is how she concludes:

Please think of my 9-month-old daughter Luna—

That is Rowan's younger sister—

who smiles and laughs at her brother daily. She will have to care for Rowan later in her life after we are gone. Overall, we are desperately in need of Rowan's Medicaid assistance and would be devastated if we lost these benefits.

I hope we can all say to Pam Simpson and her family and to any family who benefits from Medicaid or Medicaid expansion or the protections of the Affordable Care Act that we are guaranteeing that you are going to have those protections. We are going to guarantee that those protections are going to be there for you.

Hopefully, every Member of the Senate can say that and vote in accordance with that promise. I would use an old expression and ask Members of the Senate to examine their conscience. Is this what you want people to remember you for—this kind of vote, where Rowan's mother has to worry, Rowan has to lose his Medicaid coverage, a poor child in a big city has to lose their healthcare coverage, or a child in a rural area or someone working at a rural hospital loses their job because of these massive ideologically driven cuts to Medicaid?

I hope you can answer the call of your own conscience when you vote that way.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. CAPITO). The Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. SCHATZ. Madam President, for the past several months, Republicans in Washington have done just about everything they can to hide their healthcare repeal bill. Remember that way back in the beginning they tried to actually move a bill without a CBO score. Then, they realized that even Republicans didn't want to vote on something without knowing how much it would cost or how many people would lose healthcare coverage. So they said the score didn't matter or that it was wrong, except for in the areas where they liked the numbers. They trashed the CBO even though, for the last 8 years, they referred to the CBO to make their argument against the Affordable Care Act.

When that didn't work, they tapped 13 men to draft a bill in secret. It is no surprise that a bill crafted without women, without hearings, and without Democrats was not able to cross the finish line.

Now they are actually back to their original plan, which is to push legislation without a score from the CBO. In other words, we are going to go to next week, and we are going to vote without knowing how bad this bill is. This is not the way the Senate is supposed to work. If there is no score, there should be no vote.

Clearly, CBO got back to the Senate today and said that they will have enough time to analyze the fiscal impact of this proposal, but they will not be able to analyze the impact it has on our constituents.

So do you remember the last 2 or 3 iterations of this bill? People were concerned with the fiscal impact. But remember that the headlines were that 18 million people lose coverage, 26 million people lose coverage, and 32 million people lose coverage.

We are going to vote next week not knowing how many people are going to lose coverage. It shouldn't matter what side of the aisle you sit on. We should all be able to agree that something as complicated as healthcare needs as much debate as we could possibly get, and that is certainly more than the 90 seconds that procedurally we have left on this bill.

After all, this is one-sixth of the American economy, but for the third time this year, Republicans are going to do whatever it takes to pass a healthcare bill, even if no one knows what is in it or what it will do, even if this bill is very clearly bad policy. By doing this, they are letting down millions of Americans who were counting on the Senate to be the cooling saucer and to slow down and consider policy carefully.

There has been very little debate around this bill. We have not heard from doctors. We have not heard from patients or advocacy groups. We have not heard from healthcare administrators or economists. That is because we have had no hearings.

Just tonight, Senate Finance Chairman HATCH announced that on Monday at 10 a.m. his committee will hold a hearing on the bill, and I am hopeful that, through that process, we will begin to understand the damage that this bill will do. But right now, here is what we know. This is actually the most extreme of all of the versions of TrumpCare that we have seen. Here is what it does. It eliminates everything in the ACA that was essential: tax credits and subsidies to help people to afford their insurance; the Medicaid expansion, which is very, very successful and very popular; and the protocols that we have in place for people with preexisting conditions.

It eliminates Medicaid as we know it. This bill eliminates Medicaid as we know it. So what they did was that they established block grants, which means you get a fixed amount. Each State gets a fixed amount for Medicaid. Then, those Medicaid block grants disappear after 10 years.

It is shocking to me that having failed to get the votes, they went further to the right, with deeper cuts to Medicaid—both to the Medicaid expansion program and to the Medicaid Program as it existed before the Affordable Care Act. They went ahead and said: You know, we only got to 49 votes last time. So I think what we should do is to eliminate all of the subsidies, all of the patient protections, all of the essential health benefits, and all of the Medicaid expansion, and let's take Medicaid as it exists and eviscerate it.

The latest version of TrumpCare will take healthcare coverage away from tens of millions of people.

Last week our country hit an important milestone. The number of Americans who do not have health insurance fell to a historic low of 8.8 percent. That means that 9 out of 10 Americans now have health insurance. But instead of celebrating this milestone, Republicans are about to end our country's progress on healthcare.

Americans who don't lose their coverage will still get hurt with higher premiums or insurance plans that don't cover basic things like getting help for opioid addiction, pregnancy, hospital stays, mental health. So if this bill passes, healthcare will no longer be a right in this country. It will be a privilege. It depends on where you live,

where you work, and how much money you make.

This bill devastates one of the best and most successful programs this country has, and that is Medicaid. This is a program that helps one out of every five Americans and two out of every five children. It helps one out of every two families with a newborn baby, and it covers three out of every four long-term nursing home residents. Medicaid saves lives—nursing home patients, people struggling with opioid addiction, and people who are working two jobs but still don't have enough to cover their own healthcare.

This bill destroys Medicaid as we know it. They start off by putting traditional Medicaid into what they call per capita caps or block grants. That basically means that, whatever money was spent last year, that is the amount the State gets in perpetuity until they just zero it out completely. What that means is that States will be left without adequate Federal funding for Medicaid. Think about what this means for the healthcare infrastructure in this country.

In many States hospitals and local governments have actually designed the healthcare system based on a certain amount of Federal funding coming in. If you take away that funding, hospitals will collapse. In rural areas, hospitals and clinics will close, and people will be left without options and ultimately without access. That is just the damage done by cutting Medicaid.

This bill also lets insurance companies opt out of covering what they call ''essential health benefits.'' This is a term of art, a piece of jargon. So I want to explain what this means. Under current law, there are certain things that have to be in any healthcare plan. Those are called essential health benefits. You buy a healthcare plan, wherever you buy it. If you get an employer-covered plan, if it is a DOD plan or a VA plan, or if you are on the exchange—whatever it is—it has to cover certain things. Let me list what is covered right now as an essential health benefit: ambulatory patient services, emergency services, hospitalization, maternity and newborn care, mental health and substance abuse services, prescription drugs, rehab, lab services, preventive and wellness services, chronic disease management, and pediatric services. These are the things that actually have to be in your healthcare plan under ACA.

Yet do you know what this bill does? It says: No need. Configure your healthcare plan however you see fit.

If you are a health insurance company and if you are a for-profit health insurance company, you are going to pick and choose these things based on what is profitable, and if there is a certain thing that is costing you a lot of money, you are under no obligation to provide any of these health benefits because it is not in the law anymore. This eviscerates essential health benefits.

This bill will also take away protections for people with preexisting conditions. Nothing will hold States back from allowing insurers to charge people with diabetes more or people with cancer more for their health insurance. Experts have started to look at what this will mean for people with preexisting conditions, and they will pay thousands of dollars more. A patient with asthma will pay more than $4,000 a year extra if this bill passes, while a patient with metastatic cancer will pay $142,000 extra. If you have metastatic cancer, this bill will cost you $142,000. If you have a kid with asthma, that will be $4,000 a year. This is their healthcare bill—to charge people more who get sick. That is their healthcare bill.

Everything that is working under our healthcare system is being shredded by this bill. Take Planned Parenthood. These health centers serve millions of women and men across the country. They are part of the solution, not the problem, but this bill cuts funding to Planned Parenthood, which will cause many of these clinics to close.

I want you to think about how many people in this country are actually employed in the healthcare industry. When the Affordable Care Act started to kick in, research estimated that as many as half a million jobs were created. But if millions of people are to lose their insurance, that means that they will lose access. If fewer people can access healthcare, that means that we will have fewer doctors, nurses, and technicians. In other words, cuts to healthcare coverage are also cuts to American jobs.

I know that, in a lot of rural communities across Hawaii and across West Virginia and across the country, the community healthcare centers or the small rural hospitals are not just the centers of their communities in a social context or in a community context, but a lot of the time they are the economic drivers. So this will do great damage to rural America.

I end by making clear what this means for Americans and their healthcare. This is bad policy, plain and simple. It is bad if you live in a State like Ohio, where lives have literally been changed because people now have access to prescription drugs or to a primary care provider under Medicaid. It is bad for people who buy their insurance on the exchanges because their prices are going to go up.

It is really bad for people with disabilities. This is not unusual. For whatever reason, people with disabilities are the first to be punished when the battle over healthcare comes up.

It is bad for people with preexisting conditions because States will no longer be required to protect their ability to get healthcare. This bill does not pass Senator CASSIDY's own Jimmy Kimmel test. That is why more than half a million doctors in the United States have come out as being opposed to this bill, because it will take healthcare away from the people who need it, who are sick, and who will not be able to get healthcare if the bill goes into law.

This may feel like the zombie bill we have killed several times already. I know it feels like that for me. I am sure that people are exhausted. I am sure that people thought this was over. We had that magnificent moment on the Senate floor when JOHN MCCAIN walked over to that well right there and did a thumbs down. I tell everybody back home that it is so rare that politics is just like the movies, but that night was just like the movies. JOHN MCCAIN saved healthcare for the American people and put us on a path toward regular order. What does ''regular order'' mean? I did not know what that phrase meant until I came to this institution. Regular order just means that the Senate understands that it has a special obligation in American society—that we are the place in which we are supposed to handle tough issues.

Chairman MCCAIN pricked our consciences as Senators. Forget Democrats and Republicans; forget Liberals and Conservatives. We are all here because we want to try to make a difference. So there we were with LAMAR ALEXANDER, the chairman of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, and PATTY MURRAY, the top Democrat on that committee. They were ready to work on a bipartisan basis. LAMAR had held hearings and, by all accounts, they had had tough negotiations and difficult challenges, not as much progress as you would want or as quickly as you would want. That is the way legislating works. They are in a bipartisan process, and we show up here, and that process is in danger of being blown up.

This bill is a rotten piece of legislation. It is not like this thing has been vetted by experts. It is not like this thing is bipartisan. It is not like this thing will help. It would be one thing if this were absolutely necessary. Then, you could make some procedural accommodations because you just must. This is a political necessity for a party that has not yet had a legislative win. That is why they are doing this. They are in a hurry because they have until September 30 to check a box called ''We repealed and replaced the Affordable Care Act.'' They have no new ideas. So what they did was to take all of the bad ideas from all of their previous bills and put them into one bill, and they are going to take one last swing at it.

I cannot tell you how disappointed I am, not just on policy but on process. I was never prouder to be in the Senate than on that early morning, after a long session, when JOHN came in and, in my view, saved the Senate and put us on a path toward regular order. Do not blow that up. We have a chance to do things in a bipartisan way and restore the dignity of this institution, but what we are fixing to do next week will take us in a very, very dark direction.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, before the Senator leaves the floor, I just want to probe him for a moment on this question of process.

Listen, this is an affront to the Senate—a bill that reorders one-fifth of the U.S. economy and that is being delivered to us days or weeks before we are to vote on it.

The Senator may have covered this, and if he did, he may just reiterate it for me.

My understanding is that there is not going to be a CBO score before this bill is before us. For the folks who do not know what that means, that means that everyone who votes on this bill will have no clue as to how many people will lose insurance, how high premiums will go, or how much money their States will lose. I do not think that we have ever, ever voted on a bill of this scope and size without having an analysis from the CBO. My understanding is that, today, when you list or rank the affronts on the process involved in the debate over Graham-Cassidy, at the top of that list will be the fact that we are not going to see a CBO score.

Mr. SCHATZ. Madam President, I thank the Senator from Connecticut.

That is right. I would just point out that they are going to get the fiscal impact from the CBO in order to comply with the terms of reconciliation, but that is, actually, not what impacts the American people the most.

When you get a CBO score—and it is exactly right, what the Senator from Connecticut said—you find out what impact it has on your home State. You find out the number of Americans who are going to be harmed by this bill or helped by this bill. What we do know is that, basically, this contains elements of all of the previous pieces of legislation. It, actually, just kind of combines them all and puts them in a pile. So it is very hard for me to imagine, when they do come back with their analysis, that it will not be 20, 30, 35 million people who will lose healthcare.

The craziest thing about this is that these Republicans who will vote yes are going to vote yes and then find out 10 days later that 25 million people are going to lose their healthcare. Why they will not wait is beyond me, except that they have a deadline to deliver a win for the President. As near as I can tell, that is the only reason that they are in such a rush.

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, if I may ask the Senator a follow-up question, we are in a different position today because, when we were taking these votes a month ago, there was only the faint talk of a bipartisan process to try to keep what works in the Affordable Care Act and fix what is not working.

It is another assault on the process, in my mind, and I ask for the Senator's thoughts on it. Literally, as we speak, Republicans and Democrats are talking to each other about the bipartisan bill that Americans in every State are begging for. Apparently, if this bill is going to be brought before the Senate, then that whole process was a fraud. It was a ruse to distract Democrats into thinking that there might be a bipartisan fix. It was pulling one over on the American public to give the impression that, maybe, Republicans were interested in a bipartisan compromise.

Right now, there is a process playing out, and if this bill comes up for debate with no CBO score, then, that bipartisan process, which was really hopeful for a lot of Americans, I assume just falls apart; right?

Mr. SCHATZ. Madam President, I think the Senator is right. I agree with him.

I think that one of the most encouraging things over the last 5 weeks has been LAMAR ALEXANDER and PATTY MURRAY and their ability to work together. I mean, if you had told, I think, either of us that we were going to repeal and replace No Child Left Behind with 77 votes in the Senate, I would have said: I don't know. That seems like it is going to get into some pretty difficult, partisan, thorny territory.

Yet what LAMAR and PATTY were able to do is to conduct hearings and bring us through a process by which we acted like a Senate, and we got all the votes.

Now we are in that process when it comes to healthcare, and I think some people feel deeply uncomfortable with empowering the chair men and women of this body. They feel deeply uncomfortable. They talk about the regular order, but they really just want to get their way on the floor.

I will just make one other point here. As people on the Republican side were justifying their ''yes'' votes in BCRA and whatever the other one was called before that, they were always talking about advancing the conversation and bringing us into a conference committee negotiation. Now, because September 30 is the deadline, there will be no negotiation. If Graham-Cassidy passes the Senate, it will pass the House, and it will be enacted into law. Nobody will get to hide behind: Well, this is not perfect, but I want to advance the conversation, and maybe we can fix this in the House or fix this in the conference committee.

This is the bill. The bill that gets voted on next week is the bill. Everybody owns it, and you own the fact that you don't even know what it is going to do to your own constituents.

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, I thank the Senator. I know it is late, and I thank him for staying on the floor for a few moments.

You do not know what it is going to do to your own constituents. We do not have a CBO score telling us how many people will lose coverage, how high rates will go, what will happen to Medicaid. It is also another bill that has been written behind closed doors. Senator CASSIDY and Senator GRAHAM may have spent some time in thinking about what this legislation does, but virtually no one else has been let into the room. Patients have not been in that room. Doctors have not been in that room. Hospitals have not been in that room. Do you know why I am pretty confident of that? It is because all of the groups that represent those populations oppose this legislation.

Potentially, we are going to vote next week on a healthcare bill that massively, massively reorders the American healthcare system and that is opposed by the American Academy of Family Physicians, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American College of Physicians, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the American Osteopathic Association, and the American Psychiatric Association. Those are the physician groups.

By the way, it is kind of hard to know for these groups whether they are for it or against it, as there is no CBO analysis of this, but the patient groups have weighed in. Basically, every group that represents patients who are sick in this country is begging this Congress not to pass this bill.

Also included is the ALS Association, the Cancer Society, the American Diabetes Association, the Heart Association, the Lung Association, the Arthritis Foundation, the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, the Juvenile Diagnosis Research Fund, the Lutheran Services of America, the March of Dimes, the National Health Council, the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, the National Organization of Rare Diseases.

How do you pass a bill that has no CBO score, that has had no hearings, that is opposed by every single group that Republicans welcome into their office every year representing people with serious diseases?

There have been some really mean healthcare proposals, but Graham-Cassidy is the meanest version of TrumpCare yet. Let me walk you through why I say that.

Again, we don't have the numbers so we don't have a CBO analysis of how many million people are going to lose access to healthcare, but let me guarantee you it will be in the millions, likely in the tens of millions.

The bill radically—radically—trims the amount of money States will get in order to insure the population that has been insured by the Affordable Care Act. What this bill does is shrink the amount of money we are spending, then redistributes it out to States, and it will simply not be enough—not nearly enough money—in order to cover the 20 million people who have insurance today because of the Affordable Care Act; many of those through Medicaid, others through the healthcare exchanges.

An early analysis by an outside group that is trying to help us understand what this means suggests that for my little State of Connecticut, it will be a $4 billion reduction in healthcare dollars from the Federal Government to

the State of Connecticut. We are a State that doesn't have a $20 billion annual budget. Four billion dollars means that we will either have to kick hundreds of thousands of people off of healthcare or we will have to dramatically raise people's taxes.

So all of the reductions in insurance are in this bill. We will just have millions of people losing access to health insurance under this bill.

The specific, targeted harm to women is in this bill. Planned Parenthood is one of the country's biggest providers of primary care and preventive healthcare services to women. I get that many Republicans have a problem with Planned Parenthood because they also provide abortion services, but the majority of their work is, in fact, providing basic preventive healthcare to women in this country.

My wife, when she was a low-income twenty-something, could only afford to get her healthcare through Planned Parenthood. That is where she went for her preventive healthcare, for her wellness checkups, and there are millions of women just like her. This bill is particularly cruel and particularly mean to all of the women in this country who, without access to a Planned Parenthood clinic, may not be able to get quality, affordable, preventive healthcare.

This bill is perhaps the meanest, though, to individuals who are sick or individuals who have been sick because at least in prior versions of TrumpCare that came before this body, there was at least a meager attempt to try to preserve protections for people with preexisting conditions. It wasn't workable, but at least there was a face-saving gesture by Republicans and by the Trump administration to try to at least claim there was language to protect people with preexisting conditions.

Senator CRUZ stood on this floor a few years ago during his long overnight filibuster. I sat in the chair listening to him explain how everyone knows, including him, that you cannot protect people with preexisting conditions without requiring, in some way, shape, or form, that healthy people buy coverage. Why is that? Let me walk you through it for a minute because it is not hard to understand, but it is really important to understand because people don't like the individual mandate. They are not going to understand that. Nobody likes to be required to do something, but you cannot protect people with preexisting conditions if you don't require people to buy insurance.

The logic goes like this. If you say to insurance companies that you cannot charge people who are sick more than people who are not sick, if you say to an insurance company that you cannot charge someone with cancer more than someone who is healthy and you don't require that healthy people buy insurance, then what does the rational individual do? The rational individual, in that case, says: Why would I buy health insurance while I am healthy? If I will not be charged anything more for it when I become sick, then there is no rational economic reason for me to be covered when I am healthy.

So what insurance companies tell you—what every insurance expert tells you is, if you require insurance companies to charge the same between sick people and healthy people, then healthy people will not buy insurance. If I were advising someone, I am not sure I would tell them to buy insurance if they didn't have to until they were sick. So the pools get so skewed with sick people and no healthy people that rates dramatically rise for everyone. Some estimates suggest that the rate increases would be 20 percent per year, compounding year after year after year.

In the last version of this bill, Republicans knew that so they included a version of the individual mandate in their bill. Now, it wasn't the same mandate, but it was a mandate nonetheless. The mandate under the Affordable Care Act says that if you don't buy insurance, you will pay a fee on your taxes.

What the Republican bill said—the version of TrumpCare that came very close to getting a vote on this floor—is that if you go without insurance, you will pay a penalty when you try to get back on. The timing of the penalty was just different. Under the Affordable Care Act, you pay it when you lose insurance. Under the first version of TrumpCare, you would pay the penalty when you try to get back on insurance. It is a mandate. It is a penalty. It is just in a different place.

Republicans did that because they knew that was the only way to require States or give States the option to continue to require insurance companies to treat sick people the same as healthy people.

So why am I talking about this? Because in Graham-Cassidy, the individual mandate is totally gone—gone—replaced with nothing. Thus, even though it says that States, if they wanted to, could preserve protections for people with preexisting conditions, States did not do that because the Federal Government does not require healthy people to have insurance. If you think that States are going to reimpose an individual mandate, A, there will be some real question as to whether they can do that, and, B, they will not. They will not because that issue has become, thanks to my Republican friends, so politically toxic around the country.

You will be left with massive discriminatory treatment of people with preexisting conditions, and nowhere for them to go because Medicaid is obliterated under this bill. Medicaid dollars get lumped into all the rest of the money. It gets sent to States, and then Medicaid dollars are capped going forward—intentionally capped—at a number that is well below what the general rate of increase in the Medicaid Program is. There is intentionality to the underfunding of Medicaid here.

Now, the old bill would have taken, I think, 15 million people off of the rolls of Medicaid. I think I am getting that number right, and we will never know what this number is before the vote happens. It is likely around the same number because this bill treats Medicaid in roughly the same way, in terms of capping the amount of money States get.

The formula by which States get this money is so wildly complicated that no one could understand it between now and next week. I would challenge any Republican, other than BILL CASSIDY and LINDSEY GRAHAM, to come down and give us an explanation as to how this formula works. It is the most bizarre Rube Goldberg scheme you could ever imagine, but in it is a dramatic reduction in Medicaid payments to the State over time.

So think about this little boy Deacon. Deacon is 10 years old, and he lives in Ohio. I am just looking here at a picture of him clutching a Pokemon character. I know what Pokemon character this is. It is Pikachu. I know that because I have a 9-year-old who is the same age as Deacon, but, for the grace of God, my 9-year-old is not going through what Deacon the 10-year-old is going through.

I will just read a little bit about Deacon. He loves playing baseball, playing video games, volunteering at animal shelters. He loves being a patient champion for children's hospitals, spending time with his friends and family, being a big brother, raising money and awareness for heart disease and defects.

Now, my 9-year-old doesn't enjoy raising awareness for heart disease and defects. The reason Deacon enjoys doing that is because he has a condition called hypoplastic left heart syndrome. That is combined with asthma and acid reflux. It essentially means Deacon has half a heart. We have whole hearts. Deacon has half a heart.

Right now, everything is controlled for Deacon by medications. He has had six heart surgeries to get to the point of stability. His heart will fail—not may fail. His heart will fail. He will go into heart failure, requiring a heart transplant. That is Deacon's future. The heart cannot last on the two-chamber system that Deacon's surgeons put into place.

Affordable, quality insurance means everything to Deacon. Strep throat could be a death sentence for him. Any little virus that gets into him and goes into his bloodstream, that is it—game over for 10-year-old Deacon.

His parent writes:

My child is alive because he has Medicaid. That allowed for him to have the doctors, the surgeons, and the care he has always needed. Deacon had 6 heart surgeries before 3 years of age. He has continued medications as well as regular doctors checkups as he needs them. Because of his diagnosis, he even has a specialist for simple things like dental care. If he had not had Medicaid coverage, there is no way I could have afforded his care. By his first surgery at 10 days, he was

over the million dollar mark. I would have lost our house easily, quickly. I am a single mom. Medicaid helps keep my son alive and healthy, and it has given me my best friend to love and watch grow up.

Medicaid helps a boy live a normal life. Where we would have never thought that it would be possible, Medicaid lets a boy with half a heart be on a baseball team with his friends, a best friend.

This is not hyperbole. This isn't a game. It is not about scoring political points just because you made a promise that you were going to repeal the Affordable Care Act in the first year that you had control of this body. This is about this little boy who lives in a State that had the wisdom, on a bipartisan basis, to expand Medicaid.

Ohio would be one of the biggest losers under this bill—a massive withdrawal of billions of dollars away from Ohio's healthcare system, simply to fulfill a political promise Republicans made.

We are not making this up. We are not trying to tug your heartstrings just for our own political purposes. Kids are going to die if they don't have access to healthcare. If 20 million people lose insurance, as may be the case under this legislation, thousands of people will not be able to survive. That is $1 million of care. I can guarantee you that this single parent's home is not worth $1 million. At some point you just stop being able to provide the care necessary to keep people alive.

Republicans are treating this like it is a game, talking about taking a vote next week when no one in this country has looked at this legislation. Not a single townhall has been held in which your constituents can weigh in. No Member of this body will have looked at an analysis by the Congressional Budget Office to know what its impact is. This bill will be rammed through in the dead of night, I guarantee you, without any input from people like Deacon and his family.

This is the meanest version of TrumpCare yet, in part because of what is in it, in part because of the butchered process, but in part because Deacon's family will not get to come down here and talk to you about it because you are going to rush it through next week, if reports are to be believed.

What a great trick Republicans will have pulled on this country. Everyone said that the repeal bill was dead, that we were going to move on to a bipartisan process in the HELP Committee, that the Senate was going to move on to another issue of tax reform. What a great head fake that would be if it were all a lie, if it were all a ruse just to be able to give cover for Republicans to quietly muster support for another devastating assault on America's healthcare while Democrats were looking hopefully at a bipartisan process playing out in the HELP Committee that was never intended to result in an outcome.

I hope that is not the case. I really do. I have put enormous faith and trust in Senator ALEXANDER. Admittedly, I gave him a very hard time over the course of the first 6 months of this year because I could not understand what the point was of being on the HELP Committee if we weren't going to debate a reordering of one-fifth of the economy: the healthcare system. Why be a member of the HELP Committee if the biggest reform to the healthcare system during my tenure in the Senate wasn't going to be debated in the HELP Committee? I thought that was an abomination.

I have been very pleased that in the last 2 weeks Senator ALEXANDER has convened a bipartisan process, which I have invested in. I have shown up to all of those hearings. I have talked to him over and over again on the floor of the Senate and in these committee meetings. I have offered constructive suggestions about how we can come up with a bipartisan fix to the parts of the Affordable Care Act that aren't working as well, while maintaining the parts that are working. As I sit here today, I hope and I pray this wasn't all one big ruse to distract me and the Democratic Members of the Senate while Republicans quietly worked on building support for the meanest version of TrumpCare yet. That would be a deceit, and I hope it is not going to be the case.

This isn't a game. People are going to be really, terribly, badly hurt if this bill becomes law. I don't even know what the effects will be because we don't have the analysis. We don't have a score. I can guess. But I have never been part of anything like this in my 20 years of public service. I have never seen a group of public officials so hellbent on achieving a political goal as to throw out decades of precedent on how this body has normally worked on major pieces of legislation, shown such casual disregard for good, old-fashioned nonpartisan analysis as is happening if this bill comes to the floor without a CBO score.

We can do something together. We can continue the work of the HELP Committee to pass a truly bipartisan product that admittedly would just be a start, that could involve real compromise on both sides. Republicans could compromise by saying: We know we need to have some stability in these healthcare exchanges, and, thus, we are going to make sure that President Trump can't take away payments from insurers or threaten to take them away on a month-to-month basis. Democrats can recognize that Republicans want flexibility in these exchanges—want the ability for States to do a little bit more innovation, whether it be with benefit design or reinsurance pools. We can both give, and we can get a product that would build trust between both sides, that might allow us to do something bigger later on.

I have no idea whether Deacon's family is Republican or Democrat. I have no idea whether his single mother—who is so deeply fearful today of what Republicans are about to do to her and her child, her best friend, her 10-year-old son—voted for Donald Trump or voted for Hillary Clinton. When it hits you—when that heart defect or that schizophrenia or that heroin addiction or that lung cancer strikes you, it doesn't discriminate as to whether you are a Democrat or Republican. It hits you hard no matter who you voted for.

That is why, when we go back home—I know what Republicans hear because I hear it in Connecticut. They want us to work together. They are sick and tired of healthcare being a political football that just gets tossed from one party to the other. We used it to bludgeon Republicans, and Republicans used it to bludgeon us, and we used it to bludgeon you, back and forth, and back and forth.

We are on the verge of passing a bill, getting a bill out of the HELP Committee that might begin to end the use of healthcare as a simple political bludgeon. That is what our constituents want. We are not going to have time to get any public polling on this because no one is going to be able to understand it by next week, but I will guarantee you, it will poll at the same rate that previous versions of TrumpCare have polled—in the teens and the twenties, with base Trump voters being the only folks who support it. That is because people have gotten hip to what is in here. They don't actually think it is a good idea to take healthcare away from tens of millions of Americans, but they also don't like the fact that this has been done behind closed doors. This has been done with Republicans only. They want this debate to occur in the open.

Whether they are Republican or Democrat, they want both sides to be a part of it, and we are closer to that reality than ever before. Pulling the rug out from under the bipartisan process is not the meanest or cruelest part, but it is pretty high on the list.

Think about Deacon. Think about the tens of thousands of little boys and girls like Deacon who live in your State. Don't do this to the people of America. Don't do this to the U.S. Senate. Don't break this place beyond recognition by ramming this through without any process or without any CBO score next week. Let this bipartisan process play out. Let us build some good faith together. That is what the American people want, and that is what the American healthcare system needs.

I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 10:39 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, September 19, 2017, at 10 a.m.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING MARCELLA BARNES

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 18, 2017

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask the House of Representatives to join me in recognizing the achievements of Marcella Barnes, the CEO and founder of Pink Hardhat Construction, LLC.

Ms. Barnes, who was raised in New York, began her career immediately after she graduated from high school and went on to attend college in California. Once she moved to California, she had a dream to enlist in the military and make a difference in people's lives. Upon enlisting, she was then stationed in Maryland, which is also where she opened her first business, Pink Hardhat Construction, LLC. However, once her construction business started to gain traction, Ms. Barnes also noticed a need for providing housing to homeless veterans. As a veteran herself, she recognized and understood the challenges that homeless veterans face in obtaining quality, affordable housing. Ms. Barnes decided to do something about it and opened another business, Our Pink Doors, LLC, which provides shelter for homeless veterans. On July 9, 2017, she held a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the grand opening of her first veterans' home.

Ms. Barnes is also a member of the National Congress of Black Women and the Maryland Minority Contractors Association.

Therefore, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in recognizing Marcella Barnes for her work.

INTRODUCTION OF THE SAFE COMMUNITIES ACT OF 2017

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 18, 2017

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, more than 10 years ago, following Hurricane Katrina, then-Rep. Curt Weldon and I introduced the bipartisan Safe Communities Act. Today, with wildfires burning in my state and Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and José ravaging the Southeast, the ability to prepare for, withstand, and quickly recover from disasters is an essential component of livable communities. That's why I am reintroducing the Safe Communities Act, which will give state and local governments the tools to help them plan for and reduce the impact of these events.

Federal investments in natural disasters should include prevention and mitigation as well as response and recovery. In fact, investment in prevention can save money in the long-term. Research by an independent group of experts in 2005 found that every dollar invested in actions to reduce disaster losses saves the nation about $4 in future costs. We all agree that by planning for the future communities can help prevent damage and save money, but rarely do we do it.

The Safe Communities Act will create a new grant program to support state, local and regional planning activities aimed at reducing threats posed by natural and human-caused disasters. Grant-eligible projects under this program include comprehensive risk assessments and inventories of critical infrastructure, land-use planning for natural hazards and terrorism security, updates to building codes and development of new urban design techniques for risk-reduction. The bill will also create a research program to investigate the best practices in comprehensive land use and community planning aimed at reducing threats posed by natural hazards and acts of tenor.

The number of people who live in harm's way is expanding dramatically, and more properties and more lives are at risk from both natural and human-caused disasters. The associated increases in rising disaster recovery costs impact us all. I look forward to working with my colleagues to ensure communities have the resources they need to help prepare for future natural disasters.

WISHING A HAPPY 100TH BIRTHDAY TO MS. PEARL GENEVIEVE MOORE

HON. DAVID G. REICHERT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 18, 2017

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Ms. Pearl Genevieve Moore of Preston, WA on her 100th birthday today.

Pearl was born in Washington State on September 18, 1917 to parents Hulda and Olaf Carlson, who immigrated to Preston, Washington from Varmland, Sweden. Pearl graduated from Broadway High School in 1935.

In 1941, Pearl married the love of her life, Mr. Marshall Moore. They were married for 56 beautiful years.

Pearl credits her wonderful life to God's grace, her ancestors, and a busy social life. She is actively involved in her church community and many have been blessed by her hospitality and care over the years. Pearl also loves to garden and enjoys eating lots of vegetables, peanuts, and chocolate.

Through her big heart and dedication to her community, Pearl has continued to make Preston a better place throughout her lifetime. I join with her family, friends, and the Eighth District in congratulating her on this special occasion and wishing her a wonderful birthday.

16TH DISTRICT CONGRESSIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AWARDS

HON. VERN BUCHANAN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 18, 2017

Mr. BUCHANAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Fire and Rescue and EMS personnel who have provided distinguished service to the people of Florida's 16th Congressional District.

As first responders, fire departments and emergency medical service teams are summoned on short notice to serve their respective communities. Oftentimes, they arrive at scenes of great adversity and trauma, to which they reliably bring strength and composure. These brave men and women spend hundreds of hours in training so that they are prepared when they get "the call."

In 2012, I established the 16th District Congressional Fire and Rescue and EMS Awards to honor officers, departments, and units for outstanding achievement.

On behalf of the people of Florida's 16th District, it is my privilege to congratulate the following winners, who were selected this year by an independent committee comprised of a cross section of current and retired Fire and Rescue personnel living in the district:

Manatee County Community Paramedicine Program was chosen to receive the Congressional Unit Citation Award;

Training Officer Christopher Stark of the Hillsborough County Fire Rescue was chosen to receive the Congressional Dedication and Professionalism Award;

Chief Dennis Jones of the Hillsborough County Fire Rescue was chosen to receive the Congressional Career Service Award; and

Division Chief-Fire Marshal Tammy Zurla was chosen to receive the Congressional Dedication and Professionalism Award.

CONGRATULATING THE MISSOURI ASSOCIATION OF STUDENT FINANCIAL AID PERSONNEL

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 18, 2017

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Missouri Association of Student Financial Aid Personnel (MASFAP) on their 50th Anniversary on November 7, 2017. The Missouri Association of Student Financial Aid was founded on April 3, 1967, starting with a steering committee of only five members. Today, MASFAP has grown to 83 schools and over 790 members. This anniversary will provide an opportunity to recognize their continued partnerships and highlight the need for affordable post-secondary education.

Since its founding, the MASFAP has and continues to be a dynamic association dedicated to serving and advocating for practitioners, users, and providers of student financial aid programs. Many students depend on financial aid programs to assist them through their post-secondary education, providing many students with the means to continue their education. Missouri is home to many institutions of post-secondary education that serve students from Missouri and abroad. Obtaining a higher education opens doors for students, develops their individual skills and knowledge, and makes them invaluable resources to our communities, state, and nation.

MASFAP is ready and willing to assist students who need help or information. The financial aid programs provided to students assist with tuition, fees, housing, food, books and supplies, transportation and personal expenses. Additionally, millions of dollars in grants, scholarships, and student loans allow students to continue pursuing their professional goals.

Every day, student financial aid administrators throughout Missouri do their best to assist students in identifying the resources and options they have regarding the cost of their education. These administrators work at removing barriers so students can be successful in choosing the appropriate assistance program. The dedication these administrators show to the students and their future is appreciated.

I ask you to join me in recognizing the Missouri Association of Student Financial Aid Personnel on their 50th Anniversary Celebration.

HONORING MARY ''EDITH'' LOCKARD

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 18, 2017

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, communities thrive when hard work, dedication, and sacrifice are set by the example of its residents. In Yonkers, no one has set that example better than Mary ''Edith'' Lockard.

Edith was born in Yonkers in 1924 to Andrew and Mary Lena Deloatch. She was the youngest of 6 and the only girl. After graduating from Yonkers High School, Edith earned her Associates Degree in Early Childhood Development from Pace University.

Edith has been the life-blood of Messiah Baptist Church for over 76 years. In April of 1940 she was baptized on Easter Sunday at the church, and has remained an active member serving the parish in any capacity needed.

Following high school, Edith focused on raising her family with her husband, Wilfred Lockard. She got involved volunteering in the Yonkers school district and eventually served as the Vice President of the Parents Teachers Association (PTA). She also served at the South Yonkers Youth Council, an organization dedicated to fostering growth and development for the youth in the community through after school care and activities. They also held summer day camps which exposed the youth to cultural and sporting events, positive role models, and educational opportunities.

After her beloved husband Wilfred passed away, Edith began volunteering at St. John's Hospital. She faithfully served in the mailroom on Thursdays from 1995 to 2001. In 1995 she also became a member of the Nepperhan Senior Center—Senior Group No. 15—located on Warburton Avenue. For over a decade, Edith has faithfully worked for the Yonkers Parks and Recreation.

For as active as Edith is in the community, her true passion has always been her family. She is the proud mother of her four children: Juanita, Tyrone, Lindsay, and Lila, she has eight grandchildren, seven great grandchildren, and, remarkably, 9 great-great grandchildren.

Edith's commitment to helping others has been an inspiration to those in her community and beyond. I want to congratulate Edith for all of her hard, selfless work, and I want to wish her a very happy 93rd birthday on September 9, 2017.

BERT HACK

HON. MIMI WALTERS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 18, 2017

Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California. Mr. Speaker, on March 24, 1999, Laguna Woods, California officially became Orange County's 32nd city.

A great deal has changed in the last 18 years, but Laguna Woods Councilman Bert Hack has remained a constant in our community.

Since taking office in 1999, Bert served as Mayor five times and sat on numerous boards throughout Southern California.

Bert's deep knowledge of local history and passion for service to others has made him a beloved fixture in Laguna Woods.

Bert's presence on the City Council will surely be missed, but he will undoubtedly continue to serve as an inspiration for all who follow in his footsteps.

I wish Bert well in retirement, and thank him for his many years of service to Laguna Woods and Orange County.

HONORING SADIE M. MACCHIA

HON. LEE M. ZELDIN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 18, 2017

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Sadie Macchia, who celebrated her 100th bitihday on July 6th,

Born on July 6, 1917, in the Bronx, New York, Sadie came into this world with a remarkably low birth weight, and was the surviving child of a set of twins, the other of whom was born prematurely and sadly passed away shortly afterward. Sadie was so small that her mother used a shoebox as a cradle, and could not even properly wear a bonnet. With such a low birthweight, her chances for survival seemed slim. Yet, with incredible strength, this miracle baby pulled through infancy and is still here with us today, 100 years later.

As an adult, Sadie spent many years working as a seamstress in the Bronx while living in her own apartment above her brother, Dominick, and his wife, Angelina. In those days, Sadie was renowned for her hospitality and insatiable laughter, always happy to have friends and family over to share a meal, reminisce over old photos, or simply spend time with those dearest to her. A kind and generous soul, she is truly loved by all who know her.

To commemorate her 100th birthday, two of her brothers, Guy and Nick, threw her a birthday party where she was able to celebrate with her extended fmnily. The look on her face to see so many loved ones gathered together to celebrate her birthday was said to be that of pure joy.

This miracle baby fought all the odds and is now one of America's great centennials. It is a privilege to honor Sadie Macchia, who has brought joy and laughter into the hearts of so many others.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 18, 2017

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, September 14, 2017 I was absent due to Hurricane Irma relief efforts. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows:

Roll Call No. 516 on the motion to recommit with instructions—Nay; Roll Call No. 517 on the passage of H.R. 3697—Aye; Roll Call No. 518 on the Palmer amendment to H.R. 3354—Aye; Roll Call No. 519 on the Gohmert amendment to H.R. 3354—Aye; Roll Call No. 520 on the Norton amendment to H.R. 3354—Nay; Roll Call No. 521 on the Ellison amendment to H.R. 3354—Nay; Roll Call No. 522 on the Ellison amendment to H.R. 3354—Nay; Roll Call No. 523 on the Ellison amendment to H.R. 3354—Nay; Roll Call No. 524 on the Mitchell amendment to H.R. 3354—Aye; Roll Call No. 525 on the Huizenga amendment to H.R. 3354—Aye; Roll Call No. 526 on the Jackson Lee amendment to H.R. 3354—Nay; Roll Call No. 527 on the motion to recommit—Nay; Roll Call No. 528 on the passage of H.R. 3354—Aye; Roll Call No. 529 on the passage of H.R. 3284—Aye.

CONGRATULATING THE MOY FAMILY ASSOCIATION U.S.A. NATIONAL CONVENTION

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 18, 2017

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to congratulate the Moy Family Association U.S.A. National Convention on their 27th Annual event and to recognize past and present members. I commend their community service and civic engagement that benefit not only the local Asian community in New York City but also the national and international community.

The Association is a charitable organization with a focus on community, education, civic engagement and social welfare. Since its inception over 125 years ago, the Moy Family Association has played a key role in community building efforts, particularly in the vibrant Chinatown communities I represent.

In particular, I congratulate Mr. Robin Mui for his public service. His accomplishments and contributions to the Asian community I represent is immeasurable. Mr. Mui has been instrumental in increasing awareness and dialogue about issues and concerns that impact Asian American communities. Through their leadership, the Moy Family Association has championed numerous community causes and relief efforts for families impacted by tragedy. This includes raising millions of dollars for the American Red Cross during Hurricane Katrina and for the families of slain NYPD Officers Wenjian Liu and Officer Rafael RaInos in 2014.

As a nation, we must embrace the diverse cultures and organizations that have worked to advance the needs of all citizens and have helped to define what it means to be American. I ask my colleagues to join me today in congratulating the Moy's Family Association U.S.A. National Convention on this special occasion. I commend their public service and shared goal of enriching the lives of the constituents of my district. My best wishes for a successful event.

REMARKS BY STEPHEN W. CAMP

HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 18, 2017

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to include in the RECORD remarks made by the Reverend Stephen W. Camp at the Be the Light Interfaith Candle Lighting Vigil at Congregation Beth Israel in West Hartford, CT on August 23, 2017.

THE REVEREND STEPHEN W. CAMP, M.DIV., SENIOR PASTOR, FAITH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF HARTFORD, CT

''The prophetic voice Maya Angelou once said, 'I've learned that people will forget what you have said; people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.'

America was sent a message recently, a message that America rarely feels as deeply. As America watched the unfolding story centered in the little sleepy college town in Virginia. it was forced to feel, the kind of feeling that one never forgets. It was reminiscent of Selma and ''Bloody Sunday.'' It brought to mind Birmingham with the dog and fire hoses; it reminded America of the open hostility and defiance of a George Wallace. As America watched in recent days, some were stirred by the memory of ancestors and family members being marched into ovens, reminded of some of the worst inhumanity that our world has produced. The genie, we thought, was back in the tightly dosed bottle, the monster was locked away in its cage, but here it was again raring it ugly head, saying, ''I'm not dead yet! America felt pain once again.

For some I'm sure, it simply felt like a scab had been ripped off an old wound. Still others may have thought these days were behind us, a past just-as-soon forgotten. But lest we forget, lest we ignore for even a moment—this pain rooted in forced Indian reservations and the buying and selling of human beings, lest we forget, it will surely surface and seek to cause havoc and pain until it is faced and fixed. The events of late teach all of us, as if any had doubt; that America is not healed yet. The work is not done. It seems just yesterday that Jewish cemeteries were vandalized, or just the other day that terrorist bombed a mosque or burned churches in the south. Were they just isolated incidents? No, but somehow they connected us and called us to feel, to be awake, to be alert—to mobilize for good. And here we are again.

Charlottesville conjured up old feelings. Many who marched in Charlottesville that day, as we watched, most of us glued to the television, as they boldly marched, unhooded this time, khaki wearing white men, with their contorted angry faces, and carrying tiki torches, trying it seemed to desperately symbolize their power, their might, but only succeeding to pull back the scab and memory of historic oppression, failing to offer even a flickering of light, and of peace. We watched with sadness while they shouted hateful words and embodied a most detestable part of the American mosaic, frankly, only making many of us remember and feel the acute sickness that is still a part of America. For those who marched with counter intent, with ''never again'' etched upon their hearts, with ''non-violent direct action'' embedded in their spirit, many of them young people who have gotten the lessons that many of us who are older have tried to teach. So many counteracted and confronted, they stood tall and whether we liked it or not, they stood their ground and they gave us hope that one day the pain would give way to promise.

We can take heart, because through them we knew that ''we shall indeed, overcome.'' But dearly, we have not yet reached that Promised Land. We have not yet fully embraced the place that Dr. King and Rabbi Hershel who marched arm in arm tried to show and to teach us. We haven't yet felt how Malcom who epitomized both the hope and the worry of the movement for justice, worry that integrity in the movement would be comprised given the times they were in, yet united with a yearning to taste real freedom for all. All of them understood that justice had a cost attached to it. However, we still haven't learned yet, how to include all the voices, sit with all the pain, open and feel all of the diverse ways we are together, but there is hope shining through, maybe given the Boston event, that we will get there. The beloved community will one day be! Think of the blueprint that was left to us, the light that was given and passed to us, as they each in their own ways, gave their lives to pass on to us, a real hope for a better tomorrow.

What I guess Charlottesville has challenged me to do, is to keep singing songs of justice, keep speaking words of peace. The challenge is to sing a new song in this often strange land, this place where America is still striving to form a more perfect union, this place where free speech should always be celebrated, must always be protected, but never allowed by any to be abused. We are called to sing together the words of peace, the words of hope, sing so as to feel that hope and that peace until it is never forgotten, until it is so deeply felt that no one is left behind without voice or value.

So we come together again, gathered by the many ways God gathers us, we come together to sing even when we may not feel like singing, sing even though the words may not always be dear to us or the language understood by everyone is not plain. We come together to share words of peace, even when it seems the world is bent upon acts of violent expression. We come together knowing that love trumps hate, that without love and hope we perish, so we hope, we believe and work for a better day.

Maya Angelou was right, people will never forget—when it is felt. It is our work, to help each other feel the presence of peace. It's our work to care for one another, to bind up those who are broken, to repair the world and make the world a just place for all. This is our work to feel, not the hate that some would have us feel, but to offer a binding, sustaining and enduring feeling that builds community and opens hearts to know and feel that another world is possible. It is there, don't you feel it, can't you see it? It is there, just over the horizon. Let's go there together! Thank you.''

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 18, 2017

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and so I missed Roll Call vote number 485 regarding "On Motion to Suspend the Rules" (H.R. 2611). Had I been present, I would have voted "Yes".

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KYRSTEN SINEMA

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 18, 2017

Ms. SINEMA. Mr. Speaker, I missed the vote on Roll Call vote 516. I would have voted aye on Roll Call number 516.

DESIGNATION OF MAPLE VALLEY, WASHINGTON AS A PURPLE HEART CITY

HON. DAVID G. REICHERT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 18, 2017

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the City of Maple Valley, in light of its designation as a Purple Heart City. The City of Maple Valley will be the first in Washington's Eighth Congressional District to become a Purple Heart, as well as the third city in the State of Washington. Additionally, the designation falls on the anniversary of 9/11, an event that will forever be seen in our hearts as a symbol of strength, hope, and freedom.

The Purple Heart is awarded to wounded members of the armed forces of the United States as a combat decoration for their commitment to our great country. As you visit the City of Maple Valley, you will find a road sign explaining the Purple Heart significance, which reminds all those visiting, of the sacrifice made for a just and free civilization. Furthermore, I would like to also thank the Boy Scout Troop 711 for building the display case for the plaques and other Purple Heart memorabilia, for the public to observe, learn and enjoy.

I thank the City of Maple Valley for its dedication to our armed forces who've risked their lives for ours. The City will not only be known as a beautiful place for wilderness, recreation and to raise a family; but one as an allegiance to our public servants.

RECOGNIZING GOUVERNEUR HEALTH

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 18, 2017

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Gouverneur Health and its dedicated professional staff and volunteers for the critical work they are doing for patients and families in New York City.

Gouverneur Health is a Medicare and Medicaid certified center. It is one of the largest institutions in Lower Manhattan, and the largest freestanding ambulatory care center in New York State.

Gouverneur Health has taken care of the ever-changing population of the Lower East Side for more than a century. Gouverneur's dedicated and professional staff removes barriers caused by language, culture and income, enabling patients to make informed decisions vital to their physical, mental and social well-being.

With Gouverneur's help, our neighbors receive important disease prevention information and screenings to ensure a healthy future for children and hard-working families. These important services have grown and evolved over the past century, proving that the hospital is responsive to the needs of the community.

As they celebrate 132 years of tremendous work, I am confident that NYC Health + Hospitals Gouverneur will continue to build on its history of service and find many more years of success.

HONORING ANGELO R. MARTINELLI

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 18, 2017

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my friend and former colleague in government, Angelo R. Martinelli, who has done so much to strengthen and promote the Yonkers community and beyond.

Though known as a Yonkers staple, Angelo was actually born in the Bronx and grew up in Mt. Vernon. After graduating from high school, he enlisted in the United States Army and was honorably discharged in 1946 with the rank of Sergeant.

Upon returning home, Angelo worked in the family business, The Yonkers Daily Times, and in 1948 he bought the Gazette Press, the oldest printing firm in Westchester County.

In 1973, Angelo was elected Mayor of the City of Yonkers. He served from 1974 to 1979 and again from 1982 to 1987, making him the longest-tenured mayor of Yonkers. During his career, Angelo held a number of other offices and positions in national and state organizations, which earned him a reputation as an effective and forceful advocate for municipal government interests, especially in the areas of senior-citizen and anti-crime programs.

In addition, Angelo has served on the Board of Directors of the Yonkers Police Athletic League since 1991 and as Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Yonkers Chamber of Commerce for 22 years. In 1976, he was one of the founding members of the Untermyer Performing Arts Council. He previously served on the Board of St. Joseph's Medical Center and was Chairman of the Advisory Board of St. Patrick's Home for the Aged and Infirm. He was also the President of the Queen's Daughters Day Care Center, and, in January 1984, Mercy College conferred upon him an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters.

Angelo has always been a passionate man when it comes to public service, but his greatest passion and love always belonged to his family. He was married to his beloved late wife, Carol, for 65 years. Together their family grew to include their six sons, five daughters-in-law, twelve grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren. In 2016, Angelo once again demonstrated his commitment and love for the City of Yonkers, by donating the funds to restore the Temple of Love at the historic Untermyer Gardens in memory of his late wife, Carol. The donation served as a beautiful tribute to both his city and the amazing woman he loved.

It is truly an honor to have a friend like Angelo, just as it is an honor for me to recognize him here today. I thank Angelo for his years of service to our community. Yonkers is surely a better place for all he has done on its behalf.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018

SPEECH OF

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 12, 2017

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3354) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018, and for other purposes:

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of my amendment numbered 86 to Division C of H.R. 3354 printed in House Report 115–297 to direct the National Institute of Standards and Technology to establish standards for acceptable levels of pyrrhotite in concrete aggregate, and to continue providing technical assistance to those interested in pyrrhotite detection, prevention, and mitigation tools.

Pyrrhotite is a rare natural mineral that has been found in higher than normal concentrations in stone aggregate used in concrete poured for residential foundations in northern Connecticut and Massachusetts. Over time, pyrrhotite oxidizes, expanding within the foundation and causing the foundation wall to bow and crack. Severe cracking weakens the foundation to the point of collapse over a period of 10–15 years, and potentially thousands of homeowners in the region could see their homes collapse.

By establishing standards for pyrrhotite content, NIST could prevent a similar problem from occurring in residential buildings in other areas. In addition, providing technical assistance to those already affected by this problem will help establish best practices for mitigation of pyrrhotite-related damage. I look forward to continuing to work with the Appropriations Committee and the agency on this important issue, and I urge the adoption of my amendment.

HONORING BARBARA GRIMM-MARSHALL AND KARI GRIMM-ANDERSON FOR THEIR DEDICATED COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

HON. KEVIN McCARTHY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 18, 2017

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today and am joined by my colleague from California, Mr. VALADAO, to recognize two outstanding leaders in our community: Barbara Grimm-Marshall and Kari Grimm-Anderson. Throughout the years, Barbara and Kari have been deeply involved in our community and it comes as no surprise they have each been named by the Kern County Fair as 2017 Person of the Year.

Every year, the Kern County Fair attracts families from all over the Central Valley to partake in the unique festivities ranging from the Great American Duck Race to the highly-competitive 4–H livestock showcases. However, we also take time to acknowledge and pay tribute to individuals who have improved our community with the Person of the Year award.

While Barbara and Kari may be known for their leadership roles with the world's largest carrot operation through their family-owned farm, Grimmway Enterprises, Inc., they have each played an integral part in the betterment of our community. Notably, in 1998, Grimmway Enterprises created a college scholarship program for the children of their employees that has provided access to higher education through more than 300 college scholarships.

Through their philanthropic endeavors, Barbara and Kari have been instrumental in helping students in rural regions of the Central Valley prepare for college, while also working to address the increasing prevalence of childhood diabetes and obesity through various programs and outreach efforts.

Barbara founded and currently serves as the CEO of the Grimm Family Education Foundation and has worked tirelessly to establish rural charter schools throughout Kern County to ensure students have access to a world-class education. In August 2011, the Foundation opened the Grimmway Academy in Arvin, California, enrolling more than 280 students Kindergarten through third grade. Today, the Academy has two campuses, one in Arvin and the other in Shafter, with total enrollment surpassing 1,200 students for the 2017–2018 school year. Additionally, the Foundation recently opened the Buena Vista Edible Schoolyard, dedicated to exposing students to the many facets of agricultural and environmental stewardship in the region.

Kari is widely known for her insight and contributions to a number of civically-minded groups, including the Board of Directors for the Junior League of Bakersfield and the Board of Regents at Concordia University, Irvine. Similarly, Barbara has dedicated her time serving on various boards, such as the Lori Brock Children's Museum, St. John's Lutheran Church, the California State University

Foundation, the Regents of Concordia University, and the Board of Directors of Tejon Ranch, among others.

The selfless efforts of Barbara and Kari have impacted so many and both have set an exceptional example for all of us to follow as we work to improve our community. Through investing in education to providing resources to those less fortunate, Barbara and Kari are steadfast in their vision and commitment to helping others. We congratulate Barbara and Kari for jointly being named the 2017 Kern County Person of the Year and commend them for their tireless service, work, and vision for our community. We look forward to witnessing their continued efforts that touch the hearts of so many.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF CRAIG ANDERSON

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 18, 2017

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Craig Anderson and his 20 years of active stewardship as the Executive Director of LandPaths, a non-profit organization in Sonoma County that has become a national innovator in land conservation practices under his leadership.

Craig Anderson's career has consistently engaged his dual passions of land conservation and community engagement. Beginning in 1985, Mr. Anderson worked at the Yosemite Institute where he taught field science courses to high school students. Four years later he became the Director of Outdoor Classroom Programs for the Ojai Valley School, leading students on wilderness trips that exposed some of them to land use and natural history curriculum for the first time. During that same period, Mr. Anderson took his knowledge from the classroom and applied it in the field, when he became the site manager for the McCloud River Preserve. As the site manager he oversaw all activities taking places across the 2,200 acre preserve on a daily basis. All of these experiences prepared Mr. Anderson for his next role as the Executive Director of Land Paths, a position he took on in 1997, and continues to hold to this day.

As the Executive Director of Land Paths, Mr. Anderson has grown the organization from a single staff member working out of his apartment to a staff of 15. Pushing the organization's mission of connecting people to nature, Mr. Anderson successfully spearheaded the agency's efforts to create nature preserves with public access. LandPaths has created five such preserves throughout Sonoma County as a result of his leadership to date. In addition to these efforts, Mr. Anderson led the development of the award winning Bayer-Farm Park & Community Garden, which has now been held up as a model for expanding green spaces in urban areas. Because of his foresight in developing local preserves and community gardens, LandPaths has also been able to create student and community stewardship programs that use these properties to ensure the public's commitment to environmental conservation and land use practices. Beyond the local impact of Mr. Anderson's leadership, he has also been recognized on a national level for his innovative practices and stewardship programs.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in expressing deep appreciation for Craig Anderson's extraordinary leadership in the field of land use, conservation and stewardship, by extending to him congratulations on his two decades of service.

SUPPORTING THE LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION

HON. DAVID G. REICHERT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 18, 2017

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Legal Services Corporation and its important work across the country in facilitating civil legal aid for those in need.

Civil legal aid is one of the most effective strategies for helping victims of domestic violence and that is why our federal government must make a strong investment in the Legal Services Corporation (LSC), which administers federal funding for civil legal aid.

From my over 33 years in law enforcement, I know all too well that unlike people who commit crimes, victims do not always have the same opportunity for an attorney. For a low-income individual in need of help with a civil legal issue, paying expensive legal fees for an attorney is not an option. And for people who are in abusive relationships, the thought of navigating the legal system alone can often be what keeps them from leaving their abuser.

Research shows that providing an attorney can reduce the number of domestic violence victims by as much as 21 percent. A 2015 study out of King County, WA, where I was the Sheriff, found that when survivors received legal representation they were 85 percent more likely to have child visitation rights denied to the abusive parent, 77 percent more likely to have restrictions placed on the abusive parent's child visitation, and 47 percent more likely to have treatment ordered for the abusive parent.

Our great nation was founded on the principle of justice for all, not just for those who can afford it. When low-income families and survivors of domestic violence are forced to face the justice system on their own, it is a failure of our society. As the appropriations process moves forward, I urge you to support and strengthen funding for the Legal Services Corporation.

RECOGNIZING MARK GOTTO

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 18, 2017

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my appreciation to Mark Gotto, Centennial City Council Member for District 3 Mark Gotto, for his many years of hard work and dedication to the City of Centennial. Council Member Gotto's leadership and vision has, amongst other accomplishments, contributed to the City of Centennial's reputation as one of the best in Colorado.

Council Member Gotto has consistently and effectively guided the City of Centennial towards a more business-friendly atmosphere that increases growth and the quality of life. He has continually provided his guidance and leadership as the City Council Liaison to a variety of different boards and committees, such as the Centennial Budget Committee, the Southgate Water and Sanitation District, and the Arapahoe Library District Board of Trustees.

Outside of his service on the Centennial City Council, Council Member Gotto has also dedicated his time making our community and the State of Colorado a better place. He continues to volunteer at the Children's Hospital of Colorado on the Anschutz Medical Campus and ensures that the Centennial City Council does not pass any resolution that would negatively affect the aging population in his city.

Mr. Speaker, City Council Member Mark Gotto represents the very best the State of Colorado and our nation has to offer in public service. I offer my sincere appreciation for his unyielding dedication to public service, and I wish him the very best of luck as he leaves the Centennial City Council and moves on to future endeavors.

HONORING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SMITHSONIAN'S ANACOSTIA COMMUNITY MUSEUM

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 18, 2017

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask the House of Representatives to join me in honoring the 50th Anniversary of the Smithsonian's Anacostia Community Museum.

The Anacostia Community Museum, which opened in 1967, has been a staple of the District of Columbia community. Not only has the museum served as a major cultural institution, including in highlighting the important contributions made by African Americans to D.C. and the nation, but it has also served as a pillar of educational enrichment and achievement through its Museum Academy Program. In addition, the museum's Citizen Scientist Program brings high school students and Smithsonian educators, as well as scientists, together to engage in environmental stewardship and learn more about science, technology, engineering and mathematics initiatives.

The museum also continues to be a dominant force in terms of community engagement, creating a hands-on children's room and a youth advisory council. Additionally, the museum works on a number of events and projects that focus on community restoration within Anacostia. For example, the museum recently hosted a community forum with the National Park Service to illustrate the importance of volunteering within one's community and also partnered with WTTG Fox 5 to allow visitors to participate in an urban gardening project.

Aside from its community engagement and restoration, the Anacostia Community Museum showcases various exhibits that focus on the different issues that impact urban communities, both in D.C. and nationwide. Specifically, the museum works with D.C. residents, artists, community activists, scholars, local officials and other outside organizations to cultivate carefully crafted exhibits that challenge

museum visitors to think critically and enhance their museum experience.

Therefore, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in honoring the Anacostia Community Museum, an institution that continues to remain at the forefront of addressing social and political issues that affect individuals in D.C. and the nation, as it celebrates its 50th Anniversary.

CELEBRATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF JONATHAN WILLIAMS PLAZA

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 18, 2017

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Jonathan Williams Plaza, a New York City Public Housing Authority (NYCHA) development located in my district in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. This complex is home to more than 1,340 residents. Built at the height of the Civil Rights movement, and three decades after the New Deal and the 1934 Federal Housing Act, Williams Plaza's towering buildings have long symbolized innovation and hope.

Williams Plaza has provided a sound foundation and pathway to self-sufficiency for thousands of its residents. The stability it provides families is what helped launch the educational achievement and careers of former public housing residents like U.S. Supreme Court Sonia Sotomayor.

Williams Plaza provides meaningful support and services for its residents. Under NYCHA's Family Partnerships initiative, residents are able to connect to critical resources that help support family stability and tenancy. It offers job training opportunities, on-site afterschool partnership and accessible childcare in addition to NYCHA's city-wide network of social services.

On this special 50th year celebration, I also would like to recognize the Jonathan Williams Plaza Tenant Association for their volunteerism. The community service they provide improves the quality of life for their neighbors and surrounding community. They are a valuable asset to NYCHA and the resident stakeholders. I also want to recognize Mr. Juan Bello, Housing Manager and his team for their unwavering dedication to residents. I salute the following:

Mr. Joel Gross—Tenant Association President

Ben Zion Weiss—Vice-President

Abraham Frankel—Treasurer

Joanne Sanchez—Corresponding Secretary

Joel Schwartz—Secretary

Louise Sanon—Sergeant At Arms

Housing Manager—Mr. Juan Bello

Superintendent—Marian Polowcyk

Housing Assistant—Nina Dinkevich

Maintenance Staffer—Efrain Quintana

Caretaker—Andrew Adams

Resident Volunteer—Abraham Frankel

Resident Volunteer—Pedro Roman

HONORING MAJOR GENERAL GREGORY S. CHAMPAGNE

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 18, 2017

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the retirement of Major General Gregory S. Champagne who will retire from the United States Air Force and the Missouri Air National Guard on November 1, 2017 with 36 years of dedicated service. Since his commissioning, Major General Champagne has spent his career as a Missouri Air National Guardsman and currently serves as the Air National Guard Advisor to the Commander, Air Force Global Strike Command at the Barksdale Air Force Base in Louisiana where training, equipping, and maintenance for all United States intercontinental ballistic missile and bomber forces are conducted. The Air Force Global Strike Command provides strategic deterrence, global strike, and combat support and houses the nation's inventory of Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missiles, B–1, B–2, and B–52 bomber aircraft under its nine wings.

In 1981, Major General Champagne received his commission through the Academy of Military Science. He has served on numerous assignments such as wing staff assignments, logistics and flying operations and has flown in combat missions in Operations Provide Comfort and Southern Watch. Furthermore, he commanded the 207th Air Expeditionary Group at Tallil Air Base, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Prior to his current post, Major General Champagne was Commander, 131st Bomb Wing, Missouri Air National Guard, and Whiteman Air Force Base. At Whiteman, he oversaw the National Guard's only B–2 unit that provides nearly 1,100 combat-ready Airmen for both state and federal missions.

Throughout his many years of service, Major General Champagne has received numerous awards and decorations including: Legion of Merit with oak leaf cluster, Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters, Air Force Commendation Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Air Force Achievement Medal, Joint Meritorious Unit Award, Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with oak leaf cluster, Combat Readiness Medal with two silver oak leaf clusters and two bronze oak leaf clusters, National Defense Service Medal with bronze star, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal with bronze star, and Iraq Campaign Medal with bronze star.

Major General Champagne intends to spend precious moments with his wife, Cheri Champagne and his sons, 1st Lieutenant Clayton Champagne and wife, Cara, and Captain Tyler Champagne and wife, Kris and his grandson Nicolas.

I ask you to join me in recognizing this distinguished public servant, Major General Gregory S. Champagne on his retirement after 36 years of dedicated service to our nation. This retirement is well deserved.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Tuesday, September 19, 2017 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's record.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

SEPTEMBER 20

9 a.m.

Special Committee on Aging

To hold hearings to examine disaster preparedness and response, focusing on the special needs of older Americans.

SD–562

10 a.m.

Committee on Environment and Public Works

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Michael Dourson, of Ohio, to be Assistant Administrator for Toxic Substances, and Matthew Z. Leopold, of Florida, David Ross, of Wisconsin, and William L. Wehrum, of Delaware, each to to be an Assistant Administrator, all of the Environmental Protection Agency, and Jeffery Martin Baran, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

SD–406

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Allison H. Eid, of Colorado, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Tenth Circuit, Annemarie Carney Axon, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Alabama, Michael Lawrence Brown, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Georgia, Thomas Alvin Farr, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of North Carolina, and William M. Ray II, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Georgia.

SD–226

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Subcommittee on Federal Spending Oversight and Emergency Management

To hold hearings to examine end of the year spending.

SD–342

SEPTEMBER 25

10 a.m.

Committee on Finance

To hold hearings to examine the Graham-Cassidy-Heller-Johnson proposal.

SD–215

SEPTEMBER 26

10 a.m.
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
To hold hearings to examine block grants, focusing on how States can reduce health care costs.
SD–342

SEPTEMBER 27

10 a.m.
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
To hold hearings to examine threats to the homeland.
SD–342

2 p.m.
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Subcommittee on National Parks
To hold hearings to examine encouraging the next generation to visit National Parks.
SD–366

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Indian Affairs
To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Government Accountability Office reports on human trafficking of Native Americans in the United States.
SD–628

POSTPONEMENTS

SEPTEMBER 26

10 a.m.
Joint Economic Committee
To hold hearings to examine tax reform and entrepreneurship.
RHOB–2020

Daily Digest

HIGHLIGHTS

Senate passed H.R. 2810, National Defense Authorization Act, as amended.

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S5775–S5823

Measures Introduced: Six bills and three resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 1823–1828, and S. Res. 260–262. **Page S5800**

Measures Reported:

H.R. 1117, to require the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to submit a report regarding certain plans regarding assistance to applicants and grantees during the response to an emergency or disaster. (S. Rept. No. 115–158)

H.R. 1679, to ensure that the Federal Emergency Management Agency's current efforts to modernize its grant management system includes applicant accessibility and transparency. (S. Rept. No. 115–159) **Page S5800**

Measures Passed:

National Defense Authorization Act: By 89 yeas to 8 nays (Vote No. 199), Senate passed H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, after taking action on the following amendments and motions proposed thereto: **Page S5776–84**

Adopted:

McCain/Reed Modified Amendment No. 1003, in the nature of a substitute. **Pages S5776, S5785**

Reed (for Kaine) Amendment No. 277, to provide for the establishment of a visitor services facility on the Arlington Ridge tract, Virginia. **Pages S5787–96**

Reed (for Tester) Amendment No. 434, to convert the authority for a National Language Service Corps into a requirement for such a Corps. **Pages S5787–96**

Reed (for Heitkamp/Sullivan) Amendment No. 574, to expand the SkillBridge initiative to include participation by Federal agencies. **Pages S5787–96**

Reed (for Merkley) Amendment No. 660, to treat the service of recipients of Boren scholarships and fellowships in excepted service positions as service by such recipients under career appointments for purposes of career tenure under title 5, United States Code. **Pages S5787–96**

Reed (for Whitehouse) Amendment No. 750, to extend temporarily the extended period of protection for members of uniformed services relating to mortgages, mortgage foreclosure, and eviction. **Pages S5787–96**

Reed (for Van Hollen) Amendment No. 756, to require a report on compliance with Department of Defense and Service policies regarding runway clear zones. **Pages S5787–96**

Reed (for Murray) Amendment No. 833, to provide for the promotion of financial literacy concerning retirement among members of the Armed Forces. **Pages S5787–96**

Reed (for Brown) Amendment No. 890, to ensure the continued designation of the Secretary of the Air Force as the Department of Defense Executive Agent for the program carried out under title III of the Defense Protection Act of 1950. **Pages S5787–96**

Reed (for Cardin/Portman) Amendment No. 900, to require a report on the National Biodefense Analysis and Countermeasures Center (NBACC) and to provide a limitation on use of funds. **Pages S5787–96**

Reed (for Leahy) Amendment No. 903, to require the Secretary of Defense to conduct a feasibility study and cost estimate for a pilot program that uses predictive analytics and screening to identify mental health risk and provide early, targeted intervention for part-time members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces. **Pages S5787–96**

Reed (for Baldwin/Moran) Amendment No. 904, to prohibit or suspend certain health care providers from providing non-Department of Veterans Affairs health care services to veterans. **Pages S5787–96**

Reed (for Peters/Stabenow) Amendment No. 950, to authorize the Secretary of the Air Force to increase the Primary Aircraft Authorization of Air Force or Air National Guard A–10 aircraft units in the event conversion of an A–10 unit is in the best interest of a long-term Air Force mission. **Pages S5787–96**

Reed (for Heitkamp) Amendment No. 976, to express the sense of Congress on use of test sites for research and development on countering unmanned aircraft systems. **Pages S5787–96**

Reed (for Cantwell/Murray) Amendment No. 995, to extend the authorization of the Advisory Board on Toxic Substances and Worker Health. **Pages S5787–96**

Reed (for Stabenow) Amendment No. 1014, to require the Government Accountability Office to evaluate Buy American training policies for the Defense acquisition workforce. **Pages S5787–96**

Reed (for Whitehouse) Amendment No. 1015, to encourage the United States Trade Representative to consider the impact of marine debris in future trade agreements. **Pages S5787–96**

Reed (for Harris) Amendment No. 1021, to require a review of effects of personnel requirements and limitations on the availability of members of the National Guard for the performance of funeral honors duty for veterans. **Pages S5787–96**

Reed (for Sanders) Amendment No. 1023, to authorize the provision of support for Beyond Yellow Ribbon programs. **Pages S5787–96**

Reed (for Cantwell) Amendment No. 1065, to increase funding for environmental restoration for the Air Force, and to provide an offset. **Pages S5787–96**

Reed (for Bennet/Gardner) Amendment No. 1087, to recognize the National Museum of World War II Aviation. **Pages S5787–96**

Reed (for Wyden) Amendment No. 1088, to authorize an additional $10,000,000 for the National Guard for training on wildfire response, and to provide an offset. **Pages S5787–96**

Reed (for Kaine) Amendment No. 1089, to establish opportunities for scholarships related to cybersecurity. **Pages S5787–96**

Reed (for Cortez Masto) Amendment No. 1094, to express the sense of Senate on increasing enrollment in Senior Reserve Officers' Training Corps programs at minority-serving institutions. **Pages S5787–96**

Reed (for Durbin) Amendment No. 1100, to modify the basis on which an extension of the period for enlistment in the Armed Forces may be made under the Delayed Entry Program. **Pages S5787–96**

McCain (for Lee) Amendment No. 470, relating to mechanisms to facilitate the obtaining by military spouses of occupational licenses or credentials in other States. **Pages S5787–96**

McCain (for Moran/Tester) Amendment No. 601, to require the Secretary of Defense to declassify certain documents related to incidents in which members of the Armed Forces were exposed to toxic substances. **Pages S5787–96**

McCain (for Portman) Amendment No. 712, to require a plan to meet the demand for cyberspace career fields in the reserve components of the Armed Forces. **Pages S5787–96**

McCain (for Inhofe) Amendment No. 780, to increase the maximum term for intergovernmental support agreements to provide installation support services. **Pages S5787–96**

McCain (for Ernst) Amendment No. 873, to require the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to submit to Congress a report on the utilization of small businesses with respect to certain Federal contracts. **Pages S5787–96**

McCain Amendment No. 874, to limit authorized cost increases in military construction projects. **Pages S5787–96**

McCain (for Johnson/Flake) Amendment No. 879, to amend title 46, United States Code, to provide greater flexibility to the Coast Guard in deciding the Federal district court in which to prosecute individuals engaged in drug trafficking. **Pages S5787–96**

McCain (for Murkowski) Amendment No. 908, to authorize the modification of the Second Division Memorial. **Pages S5787–96**

McCain (for Rubio) Amendment No. 927, requiring a report on the availability of postsecondary credit for skills acquired during military service. **Pages S5787–96**

McCain (for Isakson/Perdue) Amendment No. 943, to authorize the Secretary of the Air Force to enter into an agreement providing for the joint use of Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Marietta, Georgia with civil aviation. **Pages S5787–96**

McCain (for Flake) Amendment No. 945, to require information on Department of Defense funding in Department press releases and related public statements on programs, projects, and activities funded by the Department. **Pages S5787–96**

McCain (for Moran) Amendment No. 1006, to modernize Government information technology. **Pages S5787–96**

McCain (for Tillis) Amendment No. 1031, to require a certification and report related to the enhanced multi mission parachute system. **Pages S5787–96**

McCain (for Perdue/Isakson) Amendment No. 1033, to require a report related to the E–8C JSTARS recapitalization program. **Pages S5787–96**

McCain (for Strange) Amendment No. 1034, to express the sense of Congress regarding fire protection in Department of Defense facilities. **Pages S5787–96**

McCain (for Lankford) Amendment No. 1038, to ensure transparency in acquisition programs. **Pages S5787–96**

McCain (for Rounds) Amendment No. 1039, to devolve acquisition authority from the Office of the Secretary of Defense to the military services. **Pages S5787–96**

McCain (for Scott/Brown) Amendment No. 1050, to increase funding for research, development, test, and evaluation for historically Black colleges and universities and other minority-serving institutions of higher education. **Pages S5787–96**

McCain (for Portman) Amendment No. 1055, to require a report on cyber applications of blockchain technology. **Pages S5787–96**

McCain (for Tillis) Amendment No. 1063, to modify the definition of custom-developed computer software. **Pages S5787–96**

McCain (for Sullivan) Amendment No. 1073, to improve section 1653, relating to ground-based interceptor capability, capacity, and reliability. **Pages S5787–96**

McCain (for Strange) Amendment No. 1086, to authorize $600,000,000 in increased funding for the procurement of one Littoral Combat Ship for the Navy above the President's budget request. **Pages S5787–96**

McCain (for Graham/Whitehouse) Amendment No. 1096, to prohibit multichannel video programming distributors from being required to carry certain video content that is owned or controlled by the Government of the Russian Federation. **Pages S5787–96**

McCain (for Isakson/Perdue) Amendment No. 1032, to prohibit the availability of funds for retirement of E–8 JSTARS aircraft. **Pages S5787–96**

Withdrawn:

McConnell (for McCain) Amendment No. 545 (to Amendment No. 1003), of a perfecting nature. **Pages S5776, S5785**

During consideration of this measure today, Senate also took the following action:

By 90 yeas to 7 nays (Vote No. 198), three-fifths of those Senators duly chosen and sworn, having voted in the affirmative, Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on the bill. **Page S5785**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the bill, as amended, be printed as passed by the Senate. **Page S5785**

Eliminating Government-funded Oil-painting Act: Senate passed S. 188, to prohibit the use of Federal funds for the costs of painting portraits of officers and employees of the Federal Government. **Page S5810**

School Bus Safety Month: Senate agreed to S. Res. 260, designating September 2017 as ''School Bus Safety Month''. **Page S5800**

Alaska Wild Salmon Month: Senate agreed to S. Res. 261, recognizing the month of September 2017 as ''Alaska Wild Salmon Month''. **Page S5800**

70th Anniversary of the Air Force: Senate agreed to S. Res. 262, commemorating the 70th anniversary of the establishment of the Air Force as an independent military service and celebrating the Air Force for 70 years of serving and defending the United States. **Page S5800**

Emanuel Nomination—Cloture: Senate began consideration of the nomination of William J. Emanuel, of California, to be a Member of the National Labor Relations Board. **Page S5796**

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, a vote on cloture will occur upon disposition of the nomination of Noel J. Francisco, of the District of Columbia, to be Solicitor General of the United States. **Page S5796**

Prior to consideration of this nomination, Senate took the following action:

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Executive Session to consider the nomination. **Page S5796**

Francisco Nomination—Agreement: A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that Senate resume consideration of the nomination of Noel J. Francisco, of the District of Columbia, to be Solicitor General of the United States, at approximately 10 a.m. on Tuesday, September 19, 2017, with the time until the cloture vote equally divided between the two leaders or their designees; and that if cloture is invoked, all post-cloture time expire at 12:15 p.m., and Senate vote on confirmation of the nomination with no intervening action or debate. **Page S5811**

Messages from the House: **Page S5800**

Measures Referred: **Page S5800**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S5801–02**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S5802–05**

Additional Statements: **Page S5800**

Amendments Submitted: **Pages S5805–06**

Privileges of the Floor: **Page S5810**

Record Votes: Two record votes were taken today. (Total—199) **Pages S5785, S5796**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 3 p.m. and adjourned at 10:39 p.m., until 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, September 19, 2017. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Acting Majority Leader in today's Record on page S5811.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

No committee meetings were held.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 6 public bills, H.R. 3802–3807; and 1 resolution, H. Res. 529 were introduced. **Page H7429**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H7429–30**

Report Filed: A report was filed today as follows:

H.R. 3668, to provide for the preservation of sportsmen's heritage and enhance recreation opportunities on Federal land, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 115–314, Part 1). **Page H7429**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Holding to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H7427**

Guest Chaplain: The prayer was offered by the Guest Chaplain, Rev. Michael Wilker, Lutheran Church of the Reformation, Washington, DC. **Page H7427**

Senate Referrals: S. 129 was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources. S. 1393 was held at the desk. S. 1532 was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. S. 1536 was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. **Page H7427**

Senate Messages: Messages received from the Senate by the Clerk and subsequently presented to the House today appears on page 7427.

Quorum Calls—Votes: There were no Yea and Nay votes, and there were no Recorded votes. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 2 p.m. and adjourned at 2:03 p.m.

Committee Meetings

No hearings were held.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

NEW PUBLIC LAWS

(For last listing of Public Laws, see DAILY DIGEST, *p. D977)*

S.J. Res. 49, condemning the violence and domestic terrorist attack that took place during events between August 11 and August 12, 2017, in Charlottesville, Virginia, recognizing the first responders who lost their lives while monitoring the events, offering deepest condolences to the families and friends of those individuals who were killed and deepest sympathies and support to those individuals who were injured by the violence, expressing support for the Charlottesville community, rejecting White nationalists, White supremacists, the Ku Klux Klan, neo-Nazis, and other hate groups, and urging the President and the President's Cabinet to use all available resources to address the threats posed by those groups. Signed on September 14, 2017. (Public Law 115–58)

H.R. 624, to restrict the inclusion of social security account numbers on Federal documents sent by mail. Signed on September 15, 2017. (Public Law 115–59)

S. 1616, to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Bob Dole, in recognition for his service to the nation as a soldier, legislator, and statesman. Signed on September 15, 2017. (Public Law 115–60)

House

No hearings are scheduled.

CONGRESSIONAL PROGRAM AHEAD

Week of September 19 through September 22, 2017

Senate Chamber

On *Tuesday*, Senate will resume consideration of the nomination of Noel J. Francisco, of the District of Columbia, to be Solicitor General of the United States, and vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination at 11 a.m. If cloture is invoked on the nomination, Senate will vote on confirmation of the nomination at 12:15 p.m.

Following disposition of the nomination of Noel J. Francisco, Senate will resume consideration of the nomination of William J. Emanuel, of California, to be a Member of the National Labor Relations Board, and vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination.

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

Senate Committees

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry: September 19, to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Stephen Censky, of Missouri, to be Deputy Secretary, and Ted McKinney, of Indiana, to be Under Secretary for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs, both of the Department of Agriculture, 9:30 a.m., SH–216.

Committee on Armed Services: September 19, to hold hearings to examine recent Navy incidents at sea, 10 a.m., SD–G50.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: September 19, to hold hearings to examine S. 1693, to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to clarify that section 230 of that Act does not prohibit the enforcement against providers and users of interactive computer services of Federal and State criminal and civil law relating to sex trafficking, 10:30 a.m., SR–253.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: September 19, business meeting to consider the nominations of Richard Glick, of Virginia, and Kevin J. McIntyre, of Virginia, both to be a Member of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, and David S. Jonas, of Virginia, to be General Counsel, all of the Department of Energy, and Joseph Balash, of Alaska, to be an Assistant Secretary, and Ryan Douglas Nelson, of Idaho, to be Solicitor, both of the Department of the Interior; to be immediately followed by a hearing to examine the vegetation management requirements for electricity assets located on Federal lands and to receive testimony on Section 2310 of S. 1460, to provide for the modernization of the energy and natural resources policies of the United States, and H.R. 1873, to amend the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 to enhance the reliability of the electricity grid and reduce the threat of wildfires to and from electric transmission and distribution facilities on Federal lands by facilitating vegetation management on such lands, 9:30 a.m., SD–366.

Committee on Environment and Public Works: September 20, to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Michael Dourson, of Ohio, to be Assistant Administrator for Toxic Substances, and Matthew Z. Leopold, of Florida, David Ross, of Wisconsin, and William L. Wehrum, of Delaware, each to to be an Assistant Administrator, all of the Environmental Protection Agency, and Jeffery Martin Baran, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, 10 a.m., SD–406.

Committee on Finance: September 19, to hold hearings to examine business tax reform, 10 a.m., SD–215.

Committee on Foreign Relations: September 19, business meeting to consider H.R. 390, to provide emergency relief for victims of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes in Iraq and Syria, for accountability for perpetrators of these crimes, S. Res. 168, supporting respect for human rights and encouraging inclusive governance in Ethiopia, an original bill entitled, "Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2017", and the nominations of Barbara Lee, of California, and Christopher Smith, of New Jersey, both to be a Representative to the Seventy-second Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, Doug Manchester, of California, to be Ambassador to the Commonwealth of The Bahamas, Kathleen Troia McFarland, of New York, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Singapore, Stephen B. King, of Wisconsin, to be Ambassador to the Czech Republic, and John R. Bass, of New York, to be Ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, all of the Department of State, and Steven T. Mnuchin, of California, to be United States Governor of the International Monetary Fund, United States Governor of the African Development Bank, United States Governor of the Inter-American Development Bank, United States Governor of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, United States Governor of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, United States Governor of the African Development Fund, and United States Governor of the Asian Development Bank; to be immediately followed by a hearing to examine the nominations of Jon M. Huntsman, Jr., of Utah, to be Ambassador to the Russian Federation, and A. Wess Mitchell, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary (European and Eurasian Affairs), both of the Department of State, 10 a.m., SD–419.

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: September 19, to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Carlos G. Muniz, of Florida, to be General Counsel, Department of Education, and Janet Dhillon, of Pennsylvania, and Daniel M. Gade, of North Dakota, both to be a Member of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 10 a.m., SD–430.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: September 20, Subcommittee on Federal Spending Oversight and Emergency Management, to hold hearings to examine end of the year spending, 2:30 p.m., SD–342.

Committee on the Judiciary: September 20, to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Allison H. Eid, of Colorado, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Tenth Circuit, Annemarie Carney Axon, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Alabama, Michael Lawrence Brown, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Georgia, Thomas Alvin Farr, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of North Carolina, and William M. Ray II, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Georgia, 10 a.m., SD–226.

Select Committee on Intelligence: September 19, to receive a closed briefing on certain intelligence matters, 2:30 p.m., SH–219.

Special Committee on Aging: September 20, to hold hearings to examine disaster preparedness and response, focusing on the special needs of older Americans, 9 a.m., SD–562.

House Committees

No hearings are scheduled.

Next Meeting of the **SENATE**

10 a.m., Tuesday, September 19

Senate Chamber

Program for Tuesday: Senate will resume consideration of the nomination of Noel J. Francisco, of the District of Columbia, to be Solicitor General of the United States, and vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination at 11 a.m. If cloture is invoked on the nomination, Senate will vote on confirmation of the nomination at 12:15 p.m.

(Senate will recess following disposition of the nomination of Noel J. Francisco until 2:15 p.m. for their respective party conferences.)

Next Meeting of the **HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

11 a.m., Thursday, September 21

House Chamber

Program for Thursday: House will meet in Pro Forma session at 11 a.m.

Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

HOUSE

Congressional Record

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