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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
September 26, 2017.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DAVE BRAT to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

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

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

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

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties. All time shall be equally allocated between the parties, and in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m. Each Member, other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip, shall be limited to 5 minutes.

DON'T PRIVATIZE AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL

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

Mr. DEFazio. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, a temporary extension of the absolutely crucial Federal Aviation Administration—which runs our air traffic control system in the United States of America; the largest, most complex, and safest system in the world—failed. It actually will expire on October 1. That means that the source of funding for air traffic goes away and air traffic controllers may be working without salaries.

Now, why are we here?

We are here because the chairman of the committee insists that we must privatize the air traffic control of the United States, the largest, most complex, safest, most advanced system in the world, to make it even better. Unfortunately, he does not enjoy support adequate to get this bill through. He delayed the bill in the last Congress because he didn't have the votes, and the bill has been delayed multiple times in this Congress. It has bipartisan opposition, and the Senate isn't even thinking about this.

Now, why are we here?

Well, the airlines have this fake group they call the Citizens for On Time Flights. And they say we have to fly old zigzag patterns across the United States with World War II radar. Well, that would be really bad if it were true. However, it is a lie.

In fact, we have direct routes, performance-based navigation. Actually, the government has built and deployed a functional system where we can fly every plane in America by GPS. But the airlines haven't wanted to make the investment in their planes. So, actually, they are making a case against themselves.

Why aren't we using the system more efficiently?

Because they have failed to purchase the equipment to fly planes closer together. If every plane doesn't have GPS, we can't fly them closer together because the air traffic controllers won't know exactly where they are.

Now, they say: Well, if we get to run the system, it will be more efficient. It is ATC that is the problem.

Well, here is June: In June, actually, airline operations, overscheduling, crew dispatch, mechanicals, the host of things that they have, caused 46 percent of the delays.

And then they go on to say: Well, this is horrible, these delays. It costs Americans \$20 billion a year.

If that is true, then the airlines are costing American consumers \$11.5 billion a year because they themselves won't clean up their acts.

Again, they go on about ATO. How many times have their dispatch and reservation systems crashed in the last 5 years?

Dozens of times, stranding millions of people.

How many times has the entire ATC in the United States of America gone down?

Zero. Zero times.

So we should let them run it? They will run it better, just like their computer reservation and their dispatch systems?

Come on. There is really just a very simple agenda here. We finance the current Air Traffic Organization with a 7.5 percent tax on every ticket—a progressive tax. The more expensive your ticket, the more you pay. That pays for about 75 percent of the system today.

The bill that the chairman wants to push will repeal the ticket tax. Airlines will raise prices 7.5 percent. So everybody will still pay the same amount for their tickets.

How do I know that?

Because this tax temporarily lapsed 5 years ago and every airline in America, except for Spirit and Alaska, immediately raised ticket prices 7.5 percent.

So then how are we going to pay for the system?

Well, actually, they are going to impose a new head tax. That is right. You get on the plane and you will pay a new head tax to use the airspace of the United States of America.

Now, that, of course, is a flat fee. So if you have a \$100 ticket, 25 percent tax, \$25 to sit in that seat. If you have a \$3,000 ticket, well, you are going to pay a tiny fraction. It won't bother you very much at all. So we are going to go from a fair, progressive tax that finances the system to a flat head tax.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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The airlines get a \$10 billion windfall. And guess what. Your elected Representative will have nothing to say about it. The people on the Ways and Means Committee, the Republicans here, have decided that the airlines will have a vote on the new user fee. Yes, they will. They have a designated seat on the board of the new private corporation, so they will vote on the user fee. Your elected Representative does not have a vote, does not have review capability. It is entirely removed from the jurisdiction of the United States Congress. This is absolutely outrageous.

I mean, a campaign based on lies. We have a report from the Government Accountability Office saying, in fact, if we privatize, it will delay things in terms of implementing the new system and make it more expensive.

I happen to have the draft report. It was censored by political people in the Bush administration. So the final report just kind of waters down those conclusions. But they are still in there, and I am happy to make the draft report available to anybody who wants to know honestly what is going on around here. This place is not straight up.

REAUTHORIZE THE MATERNAL, INFANT, AND EARLY CHILDHOOD HOME VISITING PROGRAM

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of reauthorizing the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, known as MIECHV, which the House is expected to consider later today.

Proudly, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania was one of the earliest adopters of evidence-based State policies and has utilized MIECHV to aid more than 4,000 families statewide. MIECHV-supported home visiting programs are widely embraced on both sides of the aisle. The programs have a proven record of success, and they support the Nation's most vulnerable families during a critical and crucial time in their children's development.

Parents truly are the children's first teachers, and the results speak for themselves. MIECHV helps improve maternal and newborn health. It reduces child injuries, abuse, and neglect. It improves school readiness and achievement. It reduces crime and domestic violence. It improves family economic self-sufficiency.

Mr. Speaker, during the home visiting process, nurses, social workers, educators, and other trained professionals form relationships with the expectant parents and visit with them until their child has completed his or her first year of school. This model of care empowers parents to make healthy decisions that positively impact their child's health, well-being, and learning development.

In Pennsylvania, MIECHV's funds support four evidence-based home visiting models. These include Early Head Start, Healthy Families America, Nurse-Family Partnership, and Parents as Teachers. MIECHV funding plays a critical role in helping increase the availability of these services to more and more families across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Scientific research has supported claims that these services positively impact health, education, and employment outcomes for children while reducing criminal justice costs, instances of child abuse, and independence on public assistance.

These services can also play a key role in helping to support infants and mothers struggling with addiction. Pennsylvania has a long history of evidence-based home visiting programs because they are a proven way to strengthen families and improve the lives of children.

For these reasons, I look forward to supporting H.R. 2824, the Increasing Opportunity and Success for Children and Parents through Evidence-Based Home Visiting Act, when it comes to the House floor this afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to do the same.

ADMINISTRATION NEEDS TO FOCUS ON COUNTRY'S REAL ISSUES

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

Mr. POCAN. Mr. Speaker, our Nation has a lot of issues on its plate. We have to stabilize healthcare. We need an infrastructure plan that creates millions of good-paying jobs. We need to deal with the hurricanes and the aftermath not just in Texas and Florida, but also in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. We have a huge problem with North Korea and nuclear weapons, and that is just for starters.

So what did President Trump spend his weekend doing? Fixing healthcare for tens of millions of people?

No.

Lobbying for a robust job-creating infrastructure plan?

No.

Sending aid to Puerto Rico?

Not that either.

De-escalate the situation in North Korea?

Well, actually, quite the opposite. No. President Trump spent his weekend doing one of his favorite things: attacking Americans and various groups on his favorite medium: Twitter.

His most recent attack: NFL players who use their constitutional right to freedom of speech to protest.

But they are not the only ones and the only group being attacked. Back in July, The New York Times found that President Trump was on track to insult 650 people, places, and things on Twitter by the end of his first term. Well, 2 months later, he is certainly

still at it. Instead of attacking our Nation's problems, he is attacking us.

Let's take a quick look at some of the people and groups he has attacked both as a candidate and President. On this board we have just a handful of the people, places, and things President Trump has insulted, and if we were going to list them all, we would probably have to have dozens of poster boards.

Here is a sampling: JOHN MCCAIN and JEFF FLAKE; Barack Obama; Hillary Clinton, even though the election happened a year ago; the media from The "failing" New York Times and the Amazon Washington Post to individual reporters like Katy Tur and Mika Brzezinski; ObamaCare; Hamilton, the Broadway musical; Jeff Sessions, his own Attorney General; the Emmys; Nordstrom; the Russian investigation; Rosie O'Donnell; the Paris climate agreement; Meryl Streep; Mexicans; protesters; fake news; John Oliver; Mark Cuban; Snoop Dogg; and this weekend, the NFL and its players.

The list goes on and on. Well, it is actually easier to name the people and things that President Trump has not attacked than all of the ones that he has. So I came up with a very small list of people or groups that he has not attacked after several extensive Google searches.

First, I don't think the President has attacked the barbershop quartet singing organization: the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barber Shop Quartet Singing, also known as SPEBSQSA. To the best of my knowledge, he has never attacked them, so maybe he is a fan of barber-shop crooners.

Although it is fairly recent, pumpkin spice lattes. I know they just came out. It is a sign of fall, but so far there is no Twitter traffic from Trump attacking these tasty treats.

Finally, these very fine people President Trump hasn't attacked nearly enough: the Klan, neo-Nazis, and other White supremacists.

Instead of being the attacker in chief, President Trump is supposed to unify the Nation, but all he does is divide us. His job is to work for the American people, to deliver on the promises and actually help Americans.

Here are the issues we need help with: stabilize the Affordable Care Act to ensure tens of millions of people keep their coverage, and don't just sabotage the marketplace.

We need good-paying jobs and better wages for the American people. We need a job and infrastructure plan like the President promised, but we have yet to see.

We need trade agreements that work for American workers. Again, another promise we have had with no tangible results.

And we need aid for Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands after last week's devastating hurricanes, much of what has yet to materialize.

Mr. President, while you are so busy tweeting about the NFL, you attack a

Black man for nonviolence more severely than White supremacists for violence.

Look, taking a knee may have started as a protest about racial inequality, about behavior by some in law enforcement discriminating against others in this country, but unarmed people of color are being killed simply for the color of their skin.

I think today taking a knee is becoming a broader sign of patriotism and respect for our country, for a country that can be even greater for every one of its citizens. It respects the lives lost for those in this country to fight for its ideals, which include nonviolent protests. It is a sign of love of country, a country with a promise that has to be for everyone regardless of the color of their skin.

I join so many now in the NFL and elsewhere in taking a knee for the America that we all aspire it to be.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President and to direct their remarks to the Chair.

□ 1015

APPLAUDING PRESIDENT TRUMP FOR HIS COMMENTS

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

Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to applaud President Trump for his comments last week which criticized the few NFL players who have chosen to kneel in protest during our national anthem. The President is right to publicly object to this disrespect to our flag and Nation. While we can disagree on politics and policies, we should not denigrate our flag and our national anthem.

I must mention that most NFL players stood in respect for the flag. It is just a few who didn't, who gave them a bad name and the sport a bad name.

In response to President Trump's criticism, NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell called the President's remarks divisive. I would respond to Mr. Goodell that it is you and your players who disrespect our flag and our national anthem who are being divisive. The President defending our flag is not divisive.

My father and thousands of other Americans fought under our flag in the jungles of Vietnam. Young men and women have died recently in service to our flag in Iraq and Afghanistan. In my house, we honored our flag not only because of my father's service, but because of the deep sense of patriotism my parents instilled in me.

My mother, Lala Suarez Mooney, was born and raised in Fidel Castro's Cuba, where she and other members of her family were thrown into jail for opposing Castro's Communist regime. When she was 20, my mother escaped Cuba

and fled to America with barely a penny to her name. My mom and millions of other immigrants leave the flags of these other countries—brutal dictatorships, Communist regimes, and other oppressive regimes—to come to America to live under our flag.

All Americans, whether you came as an immigrant or you were born here, you stay to live under this flag. If you don't like it, you don't have to stay. You can go. No one is making you stay. We love this flag.

Listening to my parents' inspiring stories, I knew from a young age that I absolutely believed in the American ideals of liberty as set forth by our Founding Fathers. It is with this same sense of honor and patriotism that I support President Trump in calling for all NFL players to honor our flag and remember what has made our country great.

For a few hours many Sundays, I usually enjoy time with our son watching our favorite football teams battle on the gridiron. We root for different teams. As a nation, we forget about our political and other differences and come together to enjoy the sport of football. By these few players wrongly deciding to turn the game into a political statement, we lose that moment of national unity and respect for our country.

Sports have always been a unifying factor and a chance for the Nation to come together. NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell, owners, coaches, and a few players are showing a lack of respect for our Nation and her military who gives them the freedom to play football. As the men and women of our armed services face challenges at home or abroad, we should put our differences aside and unite around our flag as a beacon of hope and understanding. I certainly respect anyone's right to protest peacefully and the right of an NFL team owner to discipline disorderly conduct or rude behavior.

Sadly, three NFL teams did not even leave the locker room to hear the playing of our national anthem. Just one person on those three teams, Pittsburgh Steeler Alejandro Villanueva, came out of the tunnel of the locker room. You can see other people standing back there in the tunnel. He came out of the tunnel of the locker room to honor our country.

Villanueva is a West Point graduate, former Army Ranger, and Bronze Star recipient. He knows the value of our flag. Sadly, instead of receiving the praise he deserved, many in the media attacked him. Even his coach, Mike Tomlin, said that when Alejandro Villanueva came out of that tunnel, he was "not respectful of our football team."

Not respectful of the team? Really, Coach? How about respect for the flag? How about our country which soldiers die for and the flag that allows you to play that football game? Unbelievable.

I hope all the young people out there look at Alejandro Villanueva as a bea-

con of honor and duty to his country above himself.

Professional athletes in this Nation, whether they like it or not, are an example for our young people. They should stop injecting anti-American politics into sports.

I applaud, again, President Trump for standing up for our flag and our national anthem. All NFL athletes should stand together and do the same.

PRIORITIZING PUERTO RICO

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

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. No, Mr. President, Puerto Rico is not doing well. We don't need to be reminded of the debt. We should remind ourselves of our responsibility to the 3.4 million people of the island nation of Puerto Rico. They are suffering greatly. Mr. Speaker, the people of Puerto Rico need our immediate and sustained help.

We all know that flooding, destruction, and complete elimination of the power grid for the whole island are among the consequences of Hurricane Maria, but this is no ordinary hurricane, and it hit at no ordinary time. Mr. Speaker, we need all hands on deck to make sure rescuing Puerto Rico becomes our number one priority.

Immediate needs must be met—fresh water, food, medicine, shelter, and fuel—but we need sustained investment and cooperation with the island's government and its people to make Puerto Rico livable again. Like a lot of Americans, I have watched with increasing horror and panic as the Governor of Puerto Rico, the mayor of San Juan, and ordinary Puerto Ricans have pleaded for more help.

The work of first responders and our military has been heroic, but the island needs more. One-third of the doctors—over 5,000—have left the island of Puerto Rico in the last 10 years. Hospitals have no doctors in some cases. Nurses, fuel, and medicine are running out at the hospitals that remain open. This is a public health crisis and should be declared a health emergency by the Federal Government.

Puerto Rico has been in an economic crisis for years. Five thousand people flee Puerto Rico every month—before two hurricanes hit—leaving behind many old, many young, the very poor, the very sick, and the very vulnerable. There is no food in supermarkets.

We need an airlift. We need an effort the scale of Dunkirk. We know the U.S. is capable. We can invade foreign countries with hundreds of thousands of troops, flawless communications, food, and security. We need the same effort now. We need the Federal Government to go all in to rescue Puerto Rico from a humanitarian crisis which is developing.

Welcome other nations if they want to help, Mr. President, like Cuba, that has offered doctors and other emergency assistance. But what I fear is

that the Federal Government is not stepping up as fully and as quickly as we must.

I remember, in this body, when the legislation to take over the Puerto Rican government and put in place a junta or control board was working its way through Congress—the PROMESA bill. What was the main selling point for the bill? Vote for PROMESA because it will not cost us a penny. So that is where this Congress and the Federal Government start from: not wanting to spend what needs to be spent or do what needs to be done.

We need to waive cost sharing that could charge—would charge—Puerto Rico for a percentage of the relief and rescue help they are receiving today. Puerto Rico is broke, and they cannot borrow because the government—our Federal Government—has said it cannot. This Congress has said it cannot. So they can't set their own budget and spending priorities, which have all been taken away from them.

So the U.S. Government should start by waiving those cost-sharing requirements and suspend the Jones Act permanently or for a substantial period—at least a decade—to help in the recovery. Since it was imposed on Puerto Rico, the Jones Act has cost the Puerto Rican consumers more than all the money owed to Wall Street and the debt, yet the President reminds us of the debt.

Let the ships flow as quickly and as cheaply from wherever they may come because this is an emergency. Let's be clear: with or without hurricanes, the electrical grid, the roads, ports, public safety, and public health system are close to collapsing. So this emergency can not just be treated by Congress, the President, FEMA, and other agencies as just another storm.

Mr. Speaker, I have asked the Speaker of the House and the Democratic leader to form a delegation and send Members to Puerto Rico so they can see for themselves how dire things are. I am leaving on Friday to go there, and I am hoping other Members will join me. I have family who needs help, so I am headed there to do what I can do. But, most importantly, I am committed to shining a spotlight on the people of Puerto Rico so that they are neither out of sight nor out of our minds. We need to make them the priority in this moment of great need and in this moment of national disaster.

MAKING CLEAN WATER A TOP PRIORITY

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

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the city of St. Cloud for taking care of our community's drinking water.

St. Cloud's safe drinking water comes from the mighty Mississippi, and its pure form is thanks to projects like the Northwest Regional Treatment Sys-

tem, the Northeast Sump Manholes, as well as the Northeast St. Cloud Water Quality Project, the city's newest water purifying project. To put the effectiveness of these projects in perspective, the Northeast St. Cloud Water Quality Project stops 10,200 pounds of sediment and 20 pounds of phosphorus from entering the Mississippi every year.

Because of the commitment to the health and safety of the city's water supply, last month St. Cloud was awarded the Source Water Protection Award. It is an honor to represent a city that takes the health of its citizens so seriously. Congratulations to the city of St. Cloud and everyone responsible for the city's water supply.

A NATIONAL AWARD FOR A LOCAL BUS DRIVER

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate St. Cloud Metro Bus driver Todd DeZurik for his first place finish at the 2017 National Community Transit Rodeo, which was recently held in Detroit, Michigan. This competition gives drivers from all over the Nation the chance to take part in a little healthy competition and exhibit their talent by driving through a timed obstacle course that imitates real-life situations and difficult scenarios that can occur on the road.

Todd has participated in this competition before, taking third place last year and second place in 2012. This year was Todd's year, as he took first place against 82 other drivers.

Congratulations, Todd. I am glad to know we have skilled drivers like you on our roads safely transporting the members of our community. Keep up the great work.

A MINNESOTA SOLDIER, RETURNING HOME

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize one of Minnesota's finest military families who fought during our Nation's darkest hour. I would especially like to remember one family member who made the ultimate sacrifice and who, after more than a half century, will finally be returned and laid to rest in his beloved home State.

Quentin, Earl, and Harold Gifford all bravely served our Nation during World War II. While Earl and Harold made it home safely, Quentin, who served on the USS *Oklahoma*, died in the attack on Pearl Harbor.

For 75 years, Quentin remained in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, until this year, when his remains were finally identified. The identification of Quentin has brought relief and closure to his family, who never forgot the brother they lost. The Giffords are happy to have the chance to give Quentin the memorial he deserves.

Mr. Speaker, I speak for all Minnesotans when I say we are happy to finally welcome home a hero like Quentin.

2017 MINNESOTA FARM FAMILIES

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the hardworking folks from my district who have been selected as this year's Minnesota Farm Families.

The Minnesota Farm Families program is a longstanding tradition in our State, having taken place for the past 30 years. This program honors the families who have dedicated their lives to agriculture. They are chosen because of their exceptional contribution to advance Minnesota's agriculture industry.

This year, five families from my district were selected for their agricultural contributions to our State. They include Jim and Sally Myers from Anoka County, Rick and Marlene Schlichting from Benton County, Curt and Joni Hedtke from Carver County, the Bahnemann Family Stock Farm in Washington County, and the Kreitlow and Ford family from Wright County.

Farming is not just a profession for these families, it is a way of life. Their hard work and the hard work of families like them make agriculture one of the primary drivers of Minnesota's economy.

Congratulations to the 2017 Minnesota Farm Families. Thank you so much for everything you do.

□ 1030

DEFEND, DENOUNCE, AND ANNOUNCE

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

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today and stand at the podium designated for Republicans, but I rise not as a Democrat or a Republican. I rise today, Mr. Speaker, not as a Liberal or a Conservative.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a proud American: a person who believes in his country, who salutes the flag, says the Pledge of Allegiance, and sings the national anthem.

I rise today, Mr. Speaker, to make comments that I never thought I would have to make in the well of the House of Congress. I rise today to defend, denounce, and announce.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to defend any mother who has been called a dog because her son engaged in peaceful protest. I rise, Mr. Speaker.

I rise today, Mr. Speaker, to defend any son who is called the son of a dog because he engaged in peaceful protest. I rise, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to denounce these comments that have been made because they have brought discourse to a new low. Mr. Speaker, this is a level of indecency that is unbecoming of the Presidency.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to say to the world that this is not what America is all about: calling people SOBs. We know what a "B" is. It is a dog.

Mr. Speaker, I rise because my heart tells me that I must do something.

Mr. Speaker, I denounce the comments that were made, and I rise to announce that next week I will bring a privileged resolution before the Congress of the United States of America.

I will stand here in the well of the Congress, and I will call for the impeachment of the President of the United States of America.

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

ESCALATING THREAT FROM NORTH KOREA

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

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about an issue that my constituents in the First District of Kentucky are following closely: the escalating threat from North Korea.

The world has watched as the North Korean dictator, Kim Jong-un, has built up his country's nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles programs over the past several years.

Just this month, North Korea conducted its sixth nuclear test—the largest one yet. This followed a series of missile tests that led U.S. intelligence analysts to conclude that the Kim regime is on the verge of developing a reliable intercontinental missile capable of carrying a nuclear weapon, a feat that officials previously did not expect would be possible for several more years.

Clearly, this rogue state is moving full steam ahead toward its goal of becoming a nuclear power that cannot only threaten our allies and territories in the region, but also the American mainland.

I have the utmost confidence in our military leaders, and I trust Secretary Mattis when he says that our existing missile defense systems have what it takes to keep our country safe from the North Korean threat. The American people can feel safe and secure, knowing that our military is protecting them and that their Representatives in Congress, like myself, are ready to provide whatever funding is needed to support the development and deployment of missile defense technology, both now and in the future.

That being said, it is simply unacceptable to allow a leader like Kim Jong-un, who shows no regard for international norms or human rights, to gain valuable leverage and deterrent capability as a nuclear-armed state.

I was encouraged to hear our Commander in Chief speak out forcefully against the “forces of destruction” that are gathering power in our world in his address to the United Nations last week. President Trump has made it clear to North Korea that denuclearization is the only path forward, and he has successfully mobilized the international community to impose strong sanctions that will help deprive the Kim regime of the resources it needs to continue its rush to nuclear weapons.

This is a critical step forward, but make no mistake: the nuclear advance-

ments that North Korea has been allowed to achieve in recent years pose a very serious threat to our Nation, our allies, and the international community overall. That is why we must stand firm now and be prepared to do whatever is necessary to protect our national security and that of our allies, including military action.

I am proud that Congress is doing its part to support the Trump administration's efforts to counter the North Korean threat, including passing sanctions legislation that was enacted into law in August; and the North Korean Human Rights Reauthorization Act, which passed the House yesterday.

We must continue to stand united, both as a country and with our international partners, to send a clear message to North Korea that its hostile behavior must end and that it must never be allowed to threaten the world with nuclear weapons.

EVERY PERSON COUNTS

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

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, in this country, we do not retreat. We may stumble and we may struggle, but we press on. Time and again, our greatest challenges have delivered our crowning achievements: the New Deal, the 19th Amendment, the GI Bill, the Civil Rights Act, and marriage equality.

The tougher the moment, the more we demand of ourselves; the bigger and bolder we demand to dream for a fairer, more just nation, for an America where every person counts, where every voice matters, where we are all treated with a decency and a dignity that we deserve, where every American family has access to quality, affordable, accessible healthcare.

Right now, this week, we must fight harder than before to say: Not this bill, not this time. Not this cop-out, not this retreat, not this white flag.

The latest version of TrumpCare is an admission that the wealthiest Nation on Earth will not, by choice, care for all its citizens; that a child in Texas or Massachusetts with pediatric cancer deserves treatment, but not both; that a grandmother in Maine or Oklahoma deserves long-term care, but not both; that a young man in Georgia or West Virginia suffering from substance use disorder can be treated, but not both.

This version of TrumpCare, worse than those before it, pits State against State, American against American.

It is up to every single one of us here today to say: Not this—not in my country, not on our watch. In our Nation, every person counts.

HONORING LEWIS DONELSON

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

Mr. KUSTOFF of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a very good friend of mine, Lewis Donelson of Memphis, Tennessee.

This October, “Lewie,” as most call him, is turning 100 years old, and I cannot be more proud to celebrate with him.

Lewie is a brilliant lawyer who has practiced law for almost 70 years. He founded one of our Nation's largest law firms with Senator Howard Baker, now called Baker Donelson. But Lewie's impact extends far beyond his legal accomplishments.

Lewie was one of the founders of the Shelby Republican Party, and he was instrumental in building the party throughout the entire State of Tennessee. In 1968, Lewie helped establish the very first Memphis City Council at the height of the civil rights movement and played a significant role in resolving the sanitation strike led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. He led the charge for peaceful integration and legal equality in Memphis.

Lewie served as Tennessee's commissioner of finance for then-Governor LAMAR ALEXANDER. He was chairman of the Board of The Med in Memphis and served on the board of St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, also in Memphis. Amazingly, through all of this, Lewie taught his Sunday school class at Idlewild Presbyterian for more than 60 years.

Lewie is a visionary and a leader. He is bold and not afraid to do the right thing. Roberta and I are so glad to call Lewie our friend, and we cannot wait to celebrate his 100 remarkable years.

HEALTHCARE ON THE CHOPPING BLOCK

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

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, the Graham-Cassidy bill is the worst version of TrumpCare yet.

By block granting healthcare, this bill puts healthcare on the chopping block. In order to make ends meet, States will have to change their eligibility criteria, meaning millions more left uninsured. They will have to cut certain benefits and expensive coverage like perhaps cancer treatment or that extra stay in the hospital. They will have to reduce reimbursements for hospitals, clinics, and doctors.

That is a big, disproportionate cut to those healthcare providers, especially in rural and underserved communities. This means that millions more will be uninsured and hardworking families will be forced to pay more out of pocket for healthcare.

This also means that patients with preexisting conditions will be priced out of their healthcare and pay more out of pocket for higher premiums and higher deductibles. They will have to pay for needed care that will no longer be guaranteed coverage under essential healthcare benefits. Furthermore,

older Americans will be faced with paying higher premiums under the bill's age tax.

We cannot let this bill become law. We cannot allow patients, families, seniors, and those who have diabetes and chronic illnesses like asthma, COPD, or obesity to be left to fend for themselves. That is not the America that we know. That is not the values that we share.

We don't believe that healthcare is a commodity only for those that can afford it. Those who can't afford healthcare will have to fend for themselves, simply because they can't afford it. We believe that we all have a responsibility for health as a common good, with a social responsibility to make sure that our neighbors and our communities are well, that our neighbors' kids are free from infections that can spread to other kids. That is why we have strong vaccination programs.

Health is, fundamentally, a human right. The rest of the world sees it that way, so why not America, the leaders of our globe. We must and we can do better.

To my Republican colleagues, I know that passing a bill is important politically because you campaigned on this for the past 8 years. I understand that you have a lot of pressures from donors. Just think about patients. Do the right thing. Put politics aside.

Let's heed the words of Senator MCCAIN. Let's come back to regular order. Let's figure out what we can do together to fix and improve on the Affordable Care Act to bring down premiums and bring down the cost of healthcare and medicines and make sure that we expand coverage to more people and not take away coverage for millions of people.

Let's put people above partisanship. Let's put solutions above ideology. Let's do the right thing. Let's come together and help pragmatically improve healthcare for millions of Americans.

CONGRATULATING WAYNE MARSHFIELD ON HIS RETIREMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. FASO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. FASO. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize the commitment and dedication of Wayne Marshfield, who just recently retired after 50 years of hard work with the Delaware County Electric Cooperative.

Over the course of his career, Wayne has supported the Cooperative's central mission of providing reliable and affordable energy services to families throughout its entire service area.

□ 1045

Wayne's leadership and penchant for innovation have significantly enhanced the Cooperative's operations in our upstate communities. For example, Wayne developed the service location system, which greatly improved his company's service mapping, allowing

us to greater respond to emergencies and needs of the community. In addition, he implemented the smart meter to modernize the area's outage alerts.

We thank Wayne Marshfield for his indispensable 50 years of service at the Delaware County Electric Cooperative, and also his 20 years-plus service as Hamden's town supervisor. Wayne has always gone above and beyond to ensure affordable and reliable power to our local homes and businesses.

Mr. Speaker, I salute Wayne Marshfield.

NORTHERN COLUMBIA LIONS CLUB 70TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. FASO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Northern Columbia Lions Club, which will soon celebrate its 70th anniversary on September 30 of this year.

Based in Valatie, New York, this Lions Club International post has a long history of extending a helping hand to neighbors in need. Its members practice charitable leadership, living out the Lions Club motto: "Where there's a need, there's a Lion."

This year alone, the Northern Columbia Lions Club has hosted vision screening tests for preschoolers, held a successful eyeglass drive for people in underdeveloped countries, refurbished benches in Chatham's Callan Memorial Park, and awarded scholarships to local college-bound students.

I thank our past and present members of the Northern Columbia Lions Club for their 70 years of dedication to a better Columbia County and a better world.

KNEELING IN RECOGNITION OF THE GLORY OF OUR NATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, last evening, I took to kneeling on this floor in recognition, first of all, of the glory of this Nation, the pride that I have in representing the Nation in far-away places as a Member of Congress, and visiting heads of states, and visiting with the people of other countries who have such an admiration for the purity of our freedom.

I also take great pride in Texas being a State that is home to any number of military bases and reservists and Active Duty and veterans. We interact all the time. Our military liaison in my office is a veteran of the Iraq and Afghan wars.

There is no lacking in sense of pride, and not one of us remembers missing the national anthem and the Pledge of Allegiance as children growing up in our daily activities as we went to school. But I also have come to understand what those symbols mean. They are not just cloth or music. They, in fact, represent ideals and values, and many people interpret them in different ways.

I abhor spitting or burning or destroying of the flag. I have not done

any of those. Colin Kaepernick's kneeling in the early months past was no disrespect of his love of this country, but a recognition that people were hurting and people were losing their lives, and we needed to reform systems of justice to be able to respond to the grieving mothers who lost children, in many instances—I would say all the instances—that we can recall of the recent 2 years, unnecessarily.

It did not mean that we did not have, again, the greatest respect for our men and women in blue. I will take no backseat to my honoring them, fighting for them, working alongside them during Hurricane Harvey, thanking them for the first responders and enormous work they did, working alongside them as we rescued a group of individuals in a church who have fled for their lives during Hurricane Harvey.

We must understand each other as people, and it is unfortunate that the Commander in Chief has taken to a distraction that wants to peel away our unity and report in the news: They like it, don't they? He is really, working for his base.

I don't know anything about a base. I know about Americans. I see them all the time, and they don't look like me. They disagree with me. They have different opinions. I still respect that opinion, but I do believe that we can all come together.

That knee was in respect of Colin and the young men who have now successfully taken to their knees, and the owners. Yes, I know that what they have done does not feed people; does not work on your retirement; does not get us something better than the Graham-Cassidy bill, which will destroy and undermine healthcare for millions of Americans, those with preexisting diseases, those who suffer from the lack of income, and those who need good healthcare—the very promise that was made by the President and all of us as Members of Congress that there should be some structure.

There is no structure in the Graham-Cassidy bill. All it does is throw it over to the State and say: If you don't have the money, forget about it. Don't worry about them. Take the money and give tax cuts to the rich.

That is not the American way.

I rise today to say that I remain on bended knee in spirit with all of those young men. I look forward to working with the NFL and all the sports as we explain that these young men are vital parts of the community. Thank you to J.J. Watt and the Texans and all of those who have contributed.

HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN PUERTO RICO

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, now, what is the most important message?

My people are suffering—and my constituents—still in Texas. They are suffering in Florida. They are suffering now extraordinarily in the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico.

Your eyes should burn and your hearts should be struck by the absolute

humanitarian crisis in Puerto Rico. As I listened to my colleagues this morning as I was coming to this floor already on these issues, they pierced my heart even more because Puerto Rico is under water. The disease is rising. People with medicine are losing it because they do not have refrigeration, yet the idle talk and idle hands of the administration are, in fact, not doing anything sufficient enough to save those lives.

I, too, have people in my district who are unhoused, but I am here because we are unified, and we must be able to speak about the whole of America. I have been to Puerto Rico on a number of issues. I know the leadership of the former Congressperson, and I believe that it is high time—if this is water that Hurricane Harvey was, imagine the disease of being hit by 155 miles per hour. It is now time to put a military czar in Puerto Rico.

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Send the C-130s, send the ships, help these people be rescued. This is a disgrace. I am talking about foolishness. Be a leader and be the Commander in Chief and stop all of this.

When are we going to get the kind of leader that is deserving of the American people?

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I am sick and tired of it. I want a President. I do not want the person that fools around while people are dying.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman is no longer recognized.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. ***

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

REMOVE TAX-EXEMPT STATUS OF PROFESSIONAL SPORTS LEAGUES

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

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Speaker, I cannot believe what I just heard on this floor. Kneeling as a sign of respect?

I don't recall my Democratic colleagues kneeling when former President Obama would come to address this body. They stood as a sign of respect. That is what we do in this country, Republicans and Democrats, for our flag, for our anthem.

That is why I joined so many Americans in anger and disgust when I saw NFL players, multimillionaires, kneeling during the national anthem, and it is such an overgeneralized indictment. If people have a problem with police brutality or the criminal justice system, there are venues for discussion, even for protest that highlight and isolate those issues for an adult in a responsible discussion.

When people kneel during our national anthem, they don't simply indict the issue with which they take

some particular grievance. They indict our country, our servicemembers, our first responders, our Founding Fathers, and the principles that made this country great.

But, see, this freedom that we enjoy also includes the freedom of speech, the right of our citizens to express themselves even when we find that expression offensive. It is a fundamental constitutional right, yet nowhere in the Constitution does it say that hardworking Americans have to subsidize or create special carve-outs and exemptions for conduct that they find unpatriotic.

Unfortunately, today, the Tax Code gives special breaks to sports leagues. Some swamp creature of yesteryear cleverly defined sports leagues as tax-exempt trade organizations.

The public pays 70 percent of the cost of NFL stadiums. Tax-exempt sports leagues generate \$2 billion in revenue, yet the Tax Code gives them special treatment, gives them a special break that small businesses in my district don't get. That is unfair.

It is outrageous that we take money away from hardworking Americans to subsidize professional sports at all. The return on investment is negative. I have heard these arguments in my home State of Florida: Oh, these sports clubs create jobs and revenue and economic activity.

Look, every economic analysis showed that this is a negative return on investment, a loser for taxpayers, and corporate welfare at its worst.

The Internal Revenue Code must be amended to remove the tax-exempt status for professional sports leagues permanently. I am glad that the NFL voluntarily gave up their status, but we should make this change permanent and we should make it the law.

In the coming days and weeks, we will be discussing tax relief to lift up the middle class. I support whole-scale, bold, conservative tax reform; but we have an opportunity in this tax bill to send an even more profound message: In America, if you want to play sports, you are free to do so. You are also free to protest. You are welcome to do both, but you should do it on your own time and on your own dime.

DREAM ACT

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about three issues that are very important to my district and the Nation.

First, I want to talk about the immigration policy or the lack of an immigration policy that we have in this country; a, in essence, broken immigration system.

For years I have been saying that we need to fix it, and we need to do that in a bipartisan way because it is the only way we are going to be successful. I supported bipartisan efforts in 2013, the

legislation that came out of the Senate by a vote of 68–13. Prior to that, I supported President Bush's efforts and, more recently, President Obama's efforts; but, unfortunately, we have not been successful through these efforts.

That is why today I think we need to be focusing on at least one segment that would have been addressed if, in fact, we fix this broken immigration system. And that is those DREAMers, those young people covered under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program that was initiated by President Obama that is now going to expire.

These people came here at the average age of 6 years. Most of them don't know the country they came from. Most of them consider themselves, in essence, Americans. They are going to school. They are in our military service. They are serving in many different ways. They have jobs. They are part of families in which some are here legally and some are not. You are talking about breaking up families.

Yesterday I signed a discharge petition to bring to the House floor the bipartisan, bicameral Dream Act, which will permanently protect these DREAMers by offering them a path to earned citizenship, not amnesty.

I will continue to do everything in my power to bring the Dream Act to the House floor for a vote and to work then, after that, for comprehensive immigration reform, which is what we really need to do so that we don't keep up ending back here like a continued broken record.

I want our DREAMers to know that many of us in Washington and across the Nation stand with them. The overwhelming majority of Americans believe that we ought to fix this. And I hope, before the end of this year, in a bipartisan fashion, we will do just that.

CONGRATULATING SLOANE STEPHENS WINNING
U.S. OPEN IN TENNIS

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, about a month ago, we had the United States tennis championship, and I would be remiss if I didn't congratulate Sloane Stephens on her winning the U.S. Open in tennis earlier.

□ 1100

Many of you may not realize, but she came from the San Joaquin Valley, from the area that I represent in California, and we are proud of her. She did, after all, start playing her tennis in Fresno, where she lived until she was 10 years old.

But her win makes many of us in America proud, as she showed the world a level of hard work, determination, and grit rarely seen on the tennis court. Ms. Stephens had to fight her way back to the court after a stress fracture and surgery in January that took her out of training and completely off of her feet and off of the tennis court.

And then she came back—and, wow, did she come back—to beat the world's best, including one of her heroines,

Venus Williams, to become the Women's Singles U.S. Open champion. We are so proud of you.

I also want to thank Ms. Stephens for all that she has done in the valley because she has never forgotten where she came from, where her mother raised her, contributing to the tennis programs at Edison-Bethune Charter Academy in Fresno, which introduces young children to the sport of tennis, and also to help expand tennis programs at other local elementary and middle schools throughout the Fresno County Office of Education. A real shout-out for Sloane Stephens and the incredible accomplishment at this year's United States tennis championship for the United States Open. Congratulations.

CELEBRATING CALIFORNIA'S WINE INDUSTRY

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, lastly, I would like to turn to something that has been important not only in California, but across the country and around the world, and it also puts smiles on people's faces.

For over 250 years, California has been producing the best wine, I think, in the world. California is the fourth largest producer of wine. This is, in large part, due to a lot of hard work, innovation, and craftsmanship of the State's 4,700 vintners and almost 6,000 growers. They make a difference every day, and they do it not before its time.

Roughly 24 million people visit California's wine regions each year, making our State the most visited State for food- and wine-related activities. We are, after all, the number one agricultural State in the Nation, not only in wine production, but half of the Nation's fruits and vegetables, number one in citrus production, number one in milk production, number one in almonds and pistachios, and the list goes on and on and on.

So as we near the end of California Wine Month this year, I would like to take a moment to celebrate our vintners, growers, farm workers—without the farm workers, we couldn't make this wine possible—and all those who contribute to this industry that provides healthy food as a part of a healthy diet that we all deserve and enjoy.

TERM LIMITS

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

Mr. HOLLINGSWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of legislation that an overwhelming number of Americans—75 percent, in fact—not only support but demand of this body. The issue is term limits. The time is now.

It has become more and more transparent to Hoosiers back home that this city, and even sometimes this building, no longer reflects the ideals, the morals, and the values that they share in their communities. The people demanded representation that truly rep-

resents their interests. They are tired of elected officials being seduced by the trappings of their office, forgetting the reason they were sent to this hallowed Chamber. Ultimately, the American people have seen that many Members vote in consideration of sometimes interests that are divergent from theirs back home.

Since I first entered public life, I have been a vocal proponent of term limits. I believe that in order for this body to truly serve the people back home, the hardworking Hoosiers every day trying to make ends meet, that they need to be responsive to those people, they need to listen to those people, and, ultimately, they need to relate to those people.

Yet, the American people are not the only ones calling for term limits. As we all can remember, President Trump crisscrossed this great Nation, sharing his vision on how he could make America great again. He agreed with the chorus of American voices that were calling for term limit legislation for the United States Congress. I support President Trump's agenda in term limits.

Mr. Speaker, I have heard the voices of Hoosiers back home who desperately wish to see this legislation passed, who desperately want to see their Representatives representing their interests and their values. That is why, as one of my first actions as a Member of this body, I wrote legislation that would sponsor a constitutional amendment levying term limits on Members of Congress.

Additionally, I have cosponsored every piece of term limits legislation that reflects actual term limits that is available in this body.

Furthermore, I so strongly believe in this issue that I went door to door during the course of my campaign handing out term limits pledges that I would sign personally at the over 15,000 doors that I have knocked on during the course of my elected official office. I have continued to sign those term limits, talking to each one about how we can ensure that their interests and their values are fully represented here.

Now, the positions that we hold here in this Chamber are not bequeathed to us by status, by lineage, or by heritage, but, rather, the positions we hold—every single one of us—are based on the ideas that we presented to the American public and based on the values that the American public said they wanted represented.

I want to make sure that we continue year in and year out to be responsive to those ideas and to be responsive to those values. Too frequently, I hear in my district that they feel like Washington, D.C., has values that are inconsistent with theirs. That the toxic environment they sometimes believe that exists in Washington, D.C., hasn't gotten them the results that they have demanded election after election.

Now, I am an old business guy, a manufacturing guy by trade, so I al-

ways think about how the process of creating policy could be better, not just fixing the policies at the end of the line, because no one would run a manufacturing business where you have a process and then you just fix the widgets at the end of the line. But, instead, they would focus on how we manufacture policy in a better way.

The American people and Hoosiers back home have said how they think we could manufacture policy in a better way. They have said that they want to see terms limits legislation passed so that the manufacturers of policy will reflect their values, will reflect their concerns, and will reflect what they live, breathe, and feel every single day.

What I hear, when I go back home and travel my district every single weekend, is that Washington, D.C., has become flooded with self-interests—self-interests that drive the boat forward instead of American interests propelling us forward into better and better policy.

I think the quickest way to correct that failure here in D.C. is to consider and pass term limits. When 74 percent of Americans agree—that is not 74 percent of one side of the aisle or 74 percent of the other side of the aisle, but that is 74 percent of Americans agree on something—then I think in a democracy that something should get done.

The Framers of our Constitution did not intend for Members of this body to remain seated for 20, 30, 40, or even 50 years, but rather they fundamentally believe that government should be designed, one of the people and for the people, to experience regular turnover. Ultimately, the greatness of this country has always rooted in the American people themselves, and I want to get more of those American people up here serving in elected office.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 8 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BOST) at noon.

PRAYER

Reverend William Lynn Nash, Glad Tidings Pentecostal Church, Mangham, Louisiana, offered the following prayer:

Our eternal God, may divine direction be upon the Members of the people's House.

The psalmist pleaded for Thy saving health among the nations. May the

Representatives from Chicago to San Francisco, from New York to New Orleans, O God, be granted the wisdom of Solomon and the strength of the great apostle Paul.

May the anointing of Thy Holy Ghost bless this body, from committee rooms where compromise is made, to this very floor, may grace and peace become our banner.

Forgive us, O Lord, of backsliding. Empty out our arrogance. Fill the Members of Congress with the very best of heavenly manna. Repair the breach, and may the House of Adams, Lincoln, and Rayburn become renewed with the best fruits of labor.

Lead this House to the mountaintop of victory today, so that 100 years from this very day, it may be said: It was good to have been here.

I pray in the name of Jesus.
Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

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

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. DAVIS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. DAVIS of California 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.

WELCOMING REVEREND WILLIAM LYNN NASH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. ABRAHAM) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce Brother Bill Nash, a great friend who delivered the opening prayer this morning, and what a prayer it was.

Brother Nash's wife founded Glad Tidings Pentecostal Church near my home in Mangham, Louisiana.

In the 15 years since he founded his church, Brother Nash has been active in the community. He is the deputy sheriff chaplain for Richland Sheriff's Department. He was named an honorary chaplain of the Louisiana Legislature in 2014.

Brother Nash is a true country evangelist and has been delivering sermons since he was 15 years old. Mr. Speaker, we appreciate the opportunity for him to offer the prayer this morning, and we thank him for all he has done for Louisiana.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

BOEING LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, this morning I was grateful to join my fellow South Carolinian colleagues at the Boeing Leaders for the Second Century program. This program is dedicated to discussing leadership capabilities and better understanding public policy.

Boeing has brought thousands of jobs to South Carolina, and we are grateful that they call us home.

Additionally, I am thankful for the inspiring leadership of Charleston Vice President and General Manager Joan Robinson-Berry; Chairman, President, and CEO Dennis Muilenburg; Vice Chairman Raymond Conner; Executive Vice President Leanne Caret, as well as all who have joined us this morning from worldwide operations.

I appreciate Boeing suppliers creating jobs in the Second Congressional District. This includes: Zeus, located in Orangeburg and Aiken; Prysmian of Lexington; Thermal Engineering of Columbia; and AGY of Aiken.

When I think Boeing, I think jobs, and I look forward to continuing to work to bring jobs to South Carolina. Best wishes to the Boeing Company for successfully creating more jobs in South Carolina.

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

ENDING WAR OF WORDS WITH NORTH KOREA

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

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call for an end to the dangerous war of words between President Trump and North Korean officials.

Provoking Kim will not make us any safer. It will only raise the tempera-

ture on an already volatile situation. As everyone in this Chamber knows, a conflict on the Korean Peninsula would be catastrophic.

Let me be clear: a war with North Korea would put millions of lives at risk, and the threat of nuclear weapons only heightens tensions. Diplomacy is the only answer. However, President Trump's rhetoric has destabilized us over our process and stopped it before it could even begin.

This administration needs to end the name calling and saber rattling. President Trump must deescalate his rhetoric before it is too late. Direct talks remain our best chance of resolving this conflict peacefully.

We must also remind the President that he does not possess the power to declare war without congressional approval. It is up to Congress, not the White House, to debate and vote on military action.

Congress must immediately vote on Representative LIEU's no first use bill, H.R. 669, to prevent the President from unilaterally authorizing a nuclear strike.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear to everyone that there is no military solution to this crisis.

HONORING ANGELA MCQUEEN, A TRUE HERO

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

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Angela McQueen, whose actions saved the lives of Mattoon High School students after a student gunman opened fire in the cafeteria. Angela tackled the student, eventually disarming and holding the assailant on the ground until police arrived.

Angela taught math and physical education in Mattoon, Illinois, for over a decade. She is an Illinois native and graduated from Marshall High School, where she was a standout high school basketball player. She then attended Eastern Illinois University, earning a bachelor's degree in mathematics and physical education and her master's in education administration.

Angela became a teacher because she wanted a platform to be able to make the world a better place. She is highly involved in the Mattoon community and is a member of B.I.O.N.I.C., Believe It Or Not I Care teacher's program, founded in 2014 and funded by the Rotary Club. She is also part of the school's grief support research team.

I honor Angela McQueen's dedication to her students' safety and her courageous actions in the face of adversity. If she had not selflessly acted, the situation could have been much worse.

Mr. Speaker, Angela McQueen is a true hero and deserves nothing less than our highest admiration.

PUERTO RICO AND THE VIRGIN ISLANDS ARE IN CRISIS

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

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, first, to the President: Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands are in crisis. People are dying, and the time for action is now.

Send our ships. Send our planes. Send our soldiers and our personnel over. We need water and food and medicine. These are Americans, and we can't turn our backs on them.

To Mr. Speaker: We need a FEMA supplemental package without delay, and include not only Texas and Florida, but the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico with the same funding per capita as the States. They need resources just like our great State of Florida.

To the Governors in many States from whom folks from Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands will seek refuge in the meantime: Be prepared—your schools, your hospitals, shelters. Families in these areas, open your homes to our friends and to your neighbors.

The United States Government must act with urgency beginning today.

PRESIDENT TAKES NEW DIRECTION

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the President is doing what he was elected to do—call it shaking up the system, putting the brakes on the bureaucracy, or creative deconstruction.

Our country simply cannot continue on the same course: where the government increases the debt by hundreds of billions of dollars every year; where hundreds of thousands of illegal immigrants cross our border annually, insulting those who play by the rules and wait their turn in line; where political correctness limits freedom of speech, especially for conservatives.

The liberal media is trying to shut down this Presidency because they oppose everything President Trump is trying to do. Mr. Speaker, in this great conflict, the American people and our democracy could be the casualties.

OPPOSE GRAHAM-CASSIDY

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

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the millions of Americans whose health coverage is once again being threatened by efforts to repeal the Affordable Care Act.

The American people have spoken. They do not want repeal. They certainly do not want the ACA replaced by Graham-Cassidy, the latest, cruelest version of TrumpCare.

Nearly every health organization in America, from the insurance providers to doctors, to hospitals, to patient advocacy groups, oppose Graham-Cassidy because it will result in skyrocketing premiums and copays and loss of coverage for millions of Americans, particularly older Americans who need the care most.

It is time to abandon the rhetoric of repeal and replace and to work together to stabilize our healthcare markets. Senators MURRAY and ALEXANDER were working together on a bipartisan bill to fix the ACA before the Republican majority abandoned their efforts for Graham-Cassidy.

Mr. Speaker, I hope we return to bipartisan efforts as soon as possible to stabilize markets and improve access to healthcare for all Americans.

PREPARE FOR FUTURE NATURAL DISASTERS

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

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank the first responders and utility workers, the linemen who have been vital in helping prepare for and recover from Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria.

The road to full recovery will be a long one for many of us, our neighbors as well, who experienced catastrophic losses, and we must continue to support those in need.

I encourage my constituents to visit my Facebook page to learn more about FEMA resources. I also believe now is the time to encourage all Americans to be properly prepared for future natural disasters.

I have introduced the SHELTER Act, which would provide individuals and businesses with a tax credit for 25 percent of qualified hurricane and tornado mitigation property expenditures. It is \$5,000 a year. So again, this tax credit, this bill will incentivize Americans to take action now in preparation for future disasters.

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage.

HELP THE DREAMERS

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

Mr. AGUILAR. Mr. Speaker, last week, when I was home in my district, I hosted an event called DREAMers Demand Answers. It was an opportunity for DREAMers in my community to come and have a conversation with me in the wake of the President's decision to rescind DACA, to let me know what questions and concerns they had so that I could come back here and pass those concerns along to my colleagues here in Congress.

Of all the questions, one really stood out to me: Can you help us? I was especially struck by this question because the answer is yes. Yes, I can help them;

and, yes, we in this body can help them.

By passing the bipartisan Dream Act, we can help these young people. We help them stay in their homes. We can help them keep their jobs. We can help them keep their families together. This is not a hard question to answer.

These are young people who grew up here that are as American as any one of us in this room, and they aren't asking for much. Mr. Speaker, I am on the floor today to ask my colleagues on the other side: Please help them. Join me in supporting the bipartisan Dream Act.

□ 1215

HIGHLIGHTING EFFECTIVE FOREST MANAGEMENT

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

Mr. GIANFORTE. Mr. Speaker, imagine if the entire State of Delaware burned. That is the scope of what has burned in Montana this year—1.25 million acres of our beautiful State.

I have been on the ground at five fires this summer and I have seen firsthand the result of failing to manage our forests—over 1 million acres have burned, livelihoods threatened, wildlife habitats destroyed, and dangerous air quality in our communities.

I have also seen effective forest management. Last week, I went into the field with BLM officials to see a forest they manage. When BLM treated a forest, an approaching fire dropped into the underbrush and was quickly extinguished. All trees in the treated forest lived, but trees in the untreated forest died and it won't recover in our lifetime.

We need to be proactive and start managing our forests again. Well-managed forests are healthier forests with more wildlife, more hunting, more good-paying jobs for Montanans, and, importantly, our wildfires are less severe.

On the heels of the catastrophic fires this summer, now is the time to enact real reform and start managing our forests again.

PUERTO RICO RELIEF

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

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I received a heartfelt letter from a constituent expressing her frustration with the dire crisis in Puerto Rico. She described the panic of not being able to reach her family on the island. She said: "It is becoming an island of chaos and sadness. I am helpless here in Chula Vista. I cannot contact my family. We need Congress to send more relief. We Puerto Ricans are American citizens, whether people remember it or not."

As we speak, Puerto Rico remains without power, communication lines are down, and a major dam could burst. We are proud of how Americans came together for Texas and Florida. Let's not abandon Puerto Rico. We must act now. We are seeing a major humanitarian crisis unfold on U.S. soil.

Mr. Speaker, is there any reason why U.S. citizens are being ignored in these times of desperate need?

We must help Puerto Rico now.

THE GREAT LAKES RESTORATION INITIATIVE

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

Mr. MOOLENAAR. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today to thank all of the Members who voted to support the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.

In the appropriations legislation the House passed 2 weeks ago, we included \$300 million in the fiscal year 2018 budget for protecting our Great Lakes.

The Great Lakes are a critical resource and an essential part of Michigan's outdoor heritage. They are enjoyed by millions of Americans from across the country, and they are a unique ecosystem with one-fifth of the world's freshwater. They are also a major trade route and they form an international border.

There is a Federal role for protecting the Great Lakes, and by working with public and private organizations like Michigan's universities and Ducks Unlimited, the GLRI does vital work to protect the Great Lakes and the streams, rivers, and wetlands that flow into them.

Again, I want to thank all of my colleagues for their support of this critical program.

NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

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

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize National Hispanic Heritage Month. Each year, Americans observe National Hispanic Heritage Month from September 15 to October 15 to celebrate the contributions of Americans of Hispanic descent to our Nation's diverse history and culture.

Our central Washington communities are blessed to include a growing number of Hispanic Americans, and I have witnessed firsthand the many ways Hispanic Americans strengthen our communities and our way of life. Hispanic Americans have greatly contributed to our country's history. These Americans have enhanced our economy through entrepreneurship, and many have served our Nation honorably in the U.S. Armed Forces.

America is truly the world's melting pot where people of diverse back-

grounds and cultures come together as one people united by shared values. We cherish our unity and diversity. In the upcoming month, we will celebrate Hispanic Americans' patriotism and the traditions they add to American culture.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring National Hispanic Heritage Month.

CENTRAL ARKANSAS VETERANS HEALTHCARE SYSTEM HELPS HOUSTON

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

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, over the past few weeks we have seen the unity, courage, and kindness the American people offered to those affected by the destruction caused by Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and now Maria.

Today I would like to take a minute and acknowledge the Central Arkansas Veterans Healthcare System in Little Rock, where employees extended help to assist with incoming calls from the VA in Houston, Texas. All calls were forwarded to Arkansas during the relief efforts.

While the Little Rock VA usually takes in 200 to 300 calls a day, in the days following the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey, our VA team in Little Rock averaged 2,900 calls a day from those seeking refuge and help. Employees worked 8-hour shifts to provide 24/7 service.

I thank these Arkansans in the Central Arkansas VA for helping our neighbors in Texas in their time of need.

TAX REFORM

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

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, over the past three decades, our Federal Tax Code has ballooned to 74,000 pages filled with loopholes for special interests. Moreover, the Federal tax system has become too complicated for hard-working taxpayers to navigate alone.

Since joining Congress, I have traveled all across my district meeting with people and businesses who have all made it clear that our current tax system needs change. Small businesses like Vaughan & Bushnell Manufacturing in Bushnell, Illinois, want a simpler Tax Code that lowers rates and closes loopholes so they can invest in innovation, higher wages, and more jobs.

Middle class families across Illinois have told me how a simpler Tax Code would mean more money in their pockets to save and spend. Earlier this year, it was estimated that our House blueprint for tax reform would save the median Illinois family over \$5,000 in taxes every year. We can all agree that our

system needs work, and this week we will take the necessary first steps towards fixing it.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to join in this effort to make our system work for everyday Americans, not special interests.

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 26, 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 26, 2017, at 11:43 a.m.:

That the Senate passed with an amendment H.R. 2810.

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2824, INCREASING OPPORTUNITY AND SUCCESS FOR CHILDREN AND PARENTS THROUGH EVIDENCE-BASED HOME VISITING ACT; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2792, CONTROL UNLAWFUL FUGITIVE FELONS ACT OF 2017; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 533 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 533

Resolved, That at any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2824) to amend title V of the Social Security Act to extend the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means now printed in the bill, it shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 115-33. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against that amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order

except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the amendment in the nature of a substitute made in order as original text. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. Upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 2792) to amend the Social Security Act to make certain revisions to provisions limiting payment of benefits to fugitive felons under titles II, VIII, and XVI of the Social Security Act. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means now printed in the bill shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto, to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means; and (2) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 3. In the engrossment of H.R. 2824 the Clerk shall—

(a) add the text of H.R. 2792, as passed by the House, as new matter at the end of H.R. 2824;

(b) conform the title of H.R. 2824 to reflect the addition of H.R. 2792, as passed by the House, to the engrossment;

(c) assign appropriate designations to provisions within the engrossment; and

(d) conform cross-references and provisions for short titles within the engrossment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 1 hour.

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

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 533 provides for the consideration of two bills which were reported by the House Ways and Means Committee.

For the first bill, H.R. 2792, the Control Unlawful Fugitive Felons Act of 2017, the rule provides for 1 hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking member of the Committee on Ways and Means. The rule waives all points of order and makes in order no further amendments to the legislation. However, the minority is afforded the customary motion to recommit.

For H.R. 2824, the Increasing Opportunity and Success for Children and Parents through Evidence-Based Home Visiting Act, the rule provides for 1 hour of debate equally divided between the chair and ranking member of the Committee on Ways and Means. The Rules Committee made in order four amendments to H.R. 2824, one Republican amendment, two Democratic amendments, and one bipartisan amendment. Finally, the rule provides for the customary motion to recommit with or without instructions.

H.R. 2792, the Control Unlawful Fugitive Felons Act of 2017, amends the Social Security Act to give the Social Security Administration the necessary tools to prevent Federal benefits and payments from being made to persons who are actually on the run from the law.

Many people might hear this and think: Why would the government ever continue to pay someone who is actively fleeing from law enforcement?

It is a legitimate question, and it has an unfortunate answer.

In 1996, President Clinton signed the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act into law. One major provision of this reform bill was a restriction on the ability of fugitive felons and probation and parole violators from receiving Social Security benefits.

□ 1230

Similar provisions have been included in other Federal entitlement programs, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program. This policy was expanded in 2004, with the passage of the Social Security Protection Act.

However, subsequent to the passage of these commonsense reforms, several judges in cases from the mid-2000s ruled that the Social Security Administration's interpretation of these provisions was too broad and limited the Social Security Administration's ability to curtail payments to three narrow categories of fugitives, namely: escape, flight to avoid prosecution or confinement, and flight escape.

The bill before the House today, H.R. 2792, would restore Congress' original intent to the reforms passed under both Presidents Clinton and George W. Bush. Specifically, H.R. 2792 would prohibit an individual who is the subject of an outstanding arrest warrant for a felony or parole violation from receiving monthly Social Security income payments. This applies only to felony charges or a crime carrying a minimum term of 1 year or more in prison.

This legislation would not punish individuals convicted of a misdemeanor, such as outstanding parking tickets. In fact, some people have falsely claimed that.

Individuals who have potentially committed a felony or a parole violation should not be able to use taxpayer dollars to evade capture. Providing the Social Security Administration with the tools in H.R. 2792 is a commonsense way to show that the Federal Government is sincere in its commitment to being a good steward of Federal taxpayer dollars. The Social Security benefits can be restored once the individual resolves the outstanding issues related to his or her warrant or parole violation.

I want to thank the gentlewoman from South Dakota, KRISTI NOEM, for her work on this legislation, and I urge Members of the House to support this worthy bill.

The second bill in today's rule, H.R. 2824, the Increasing Opportunity Through Evidence-Based Home Visiting Act, extends funding for the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, which is more commonly referred to as MIECHV.

The Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program is an important program that provides low-income families with opportunities to receive home-visiting services to help support a child's first years. These services range from prenatal care to early childhood services and allow for children to grow up in healthy homes.

As not only a physician but a physician who specialized in obstetrics and gynecology, I did spend 25 years working with pregnant women and families to help ensure that all mothers could deliver and raise healthy children. As an OB/GYN, I know the best way to ensure that a child succeeds is to invest in long-term services and to ensure that the child receives access to appropriate care.

Because of the Nurse-Family Partnership's work, 90 percent of all babies who are supported by the organization are born full term, 95 percent of those babies receive all their immunizations by 24 months, and nearly 89 percent of those mothers breastfeed their newborns.

These are important milestones for newborn children that can have lasting impacts on their health for the rest of their lives, and it is important that we support initiatives that support vital, lifesaving programs like these.

Furthermore, the program succeeds by not only supporting the health and well-being of children, but by supporting pregnant women and mothers as well. In my home State of Texas, the reported incidence of maternal mortality has increased in recent years, in part, as the State has collected more comprehensive data on causes of death up to a year after childbirth.

While no amount of maternal mortality is ever acceptable, the new data has shown us that the causes for maternal mortality in the State have shifted away from those traditional acute cases that I was familiar with during my residency back in the 1970s. There were illnesses such as pregnancy-induced hypertension, hemorrhage, and infection during pregnancy. Now it is different. We have cardiac disease, suicide, and opioid overdose, which oftentimes occurs in the months after childbirth.

By supporting children in their first years, MIECHV can not only help children live healthy lives, but help mothers live healthy lives as well, so that they can continue to be there for their children.

The MIECHV Program and organizations like the Nurse-Family Partnership succeed because they identify families in need that do not have readily available care and work to provide services in home settings.

Families cannot raise healthy children without access to care. When families cannot find providers in their area, MIECHV grant recipients are there to provide that support.

H.R. 2824 builds upon the successes of the MIECHV Program by tailoring the program to ensure that it can continue to help families that truly need the help.

For example, H.R. 2824 requires for States receiving MIECHV grants to conduct statewide needs assessments by 2020, in order to reaffirm which populations and communities should receive these services. The last time such an assessment was required was in 2010.

As the needs of populations of States have evolved over these past 10 years, so should the program as well. It is important to ensure that tax dollars continue to be invested efficiently, and this bill ensures that MIECHV can continue to do so.

Additionally, H.R. 2824 provides additional opportunities for States to promote quality and enhanced outcomes. The bill updates the program by allowing for States to promote models that will have greater impact on multiple sites and locations, thus expanding the reach of grants and providing States with the opportunity to reimburse grant recipients based on the quality and outcomes associated with their programs.

I certainly want to thank members of the Ways and Means Committee for the work they have put into this bill. It is a smart bill that continues a Federal program for low-income families that actually has evidence of its effectiveness and, furthermore, links future funding to the assurance of greater cost-effectiveness.

This program serves as a model for Federal programs to help low-income families and children. I want to thank Chairman SMITH and Chairman BRADY for their efforts on this bill.

For these reasons, I encourage everyone in this body to support this rule and the underlying bill today.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding me the customary 30 minutes for debate.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to debate the rule for consideration of H.R. 2824, the Increasing Opportunity Through Evidence-Based Home Visiting Act; and H.R. 2792, the Control Unlawful Fugitive Felons Act of 2017.

The first measure, H.R. 2824, reauthorizes the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, or MIECHV, and provides pregnant women and families access to resources to improve maternal and child health and promotes child development.

I am glad to see this bill getting the attention that I think we all agree it deserves, considering the important role the program plays in all of our communities. However, my concern is that, once again, we are witnessing my Republican friends take a policy that should garner broad, bipartisan support and instead scuttle the effort by playing politics.

H.R. 2824's State matching provision is a threat to the core existence of this program. Because of this change from the past authorization, I fear that many States will lose Federal funding and will be forced to cut off home visiting services altogether.

Where do you propose poorer States with lower investments in home visiting get the money to meet the matching requirements?

Then, Mr. Speaker, what about Tribal programs? They are especially vulnerable to the devastation that will be wrought by making them come up with a 30 percent match. Native American communities struggle enough, as it is, without having to put up with these absurd requirements.

I do compliment Mrs. NOEM for fighting along with our colleague on the Rules Committee, TOM COLE, for a 5-year hiatus before they would have to make the match. But as one who represents two Tribes, the Seminoles and the Miccosukees, I don't even think, after 5 years, their vulnerability to devastation is going to be avoided.

Mr. Speaker, I ask: Why are my Republican colleagues again choosing to abandon bipartisanship in favor of partisan politics?

Our goals should be to reauthorize the vital program, not change long-established and successful policies that will hurt the most vulnerable in our country.

This program, as traditionally reauthorized, puts families first in order to strengthen communities and improve outcomes for kids and their families. Without the MIECHV Program, at-risk families will suffer.

I strongly support moving quickly to reauthorize this program before it expires on September 30, 2017. But adding a provision that will make it impos-

sible for many States to fully participate in this program is not only not the way forward, it is downright dangerous.

The second measure is H.R. 2792. It is a sidecar bill, as its only purpose in being considered is to offset the cost of the MIECHV Program.

H.R. 2792 would reinstate an old, failed policy that had damaging effects for many seniors and people with disabilities by taking away Supplemental Security Income benefits from every individual who has an outstanding felony warrant, regardless of the seriousness of the alleged violation, the age of the warrant, or the condition of the recipient.

Mr. Speaker, over 110 national, State, and local organizations have warned that H.R. 2792 is a cruel bill that could have catastrophic consequences for some of our most vulnerable citizens.

Everyone can agree that dangerous criminals should not receive public benefits while fleeing justice. In fact, the Social Security Administration already provides regular notification to law enforcement of any beneficiary who has an outstanding warrant. This bill, on the other hand, despite its title, would harm seniors and people with severe disabilities, not felons.

Mr. Speaker, a larger issue at hand is not simply the dangerous policy changes in the first bill, nor the failed unnecessary policy found in the second, but rather the partisan manner in which these bills are being considered, especially in the face of the laundry list of items that this body needs to urgently address in a bipartisan manner.

We do not have the luxury of time to debate the majority's attempts to legislate failed and dangerous policies that will threaten families.

We should be acting in the most exigent fashion to address issues such as ascertaining the full scope of Hurricane Maria's devastation on Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands and what we need to do to make our brothers and sisters in those areas whole again.

We should not be spending our time taking a partisan approach to a program that provides pregnant women and families access to resources to improve maternal and child health. Rather, we should be working across the aisle to address the real pressing issues facing our country.

□ 1245

Congress should be addressing the plight of the millions of American citizens living in total devastation in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Five days after Hurricane Maria decimated what Hurricane Irma had spared, 15,000 people remain in government shelters, thousands of homes are destroyed, roads are blocked, bridges buckled, and a dam in Puerto Rico is on the edge of collapse, threatening the lives of nearly 70,000 people with flash flooding. Two hospitals in the Virgin Islands have been destroyed, and lest I

not mention that we have not dealt adequately with what is required in Texas and in southwest Louisiana and in Florida.

Today, in my office, numerous representatives of government officials and organizations came to present issues concerning ongoing matters having to do with their concerns in our area. The Speaker of the House and the chairman of appropriations were with several of us in the Florida delegation last week to review and view the damage that has occurred in the Keys. And here we are, rather than dealing with a humanitarian crisis as towns are left without fresh water, power, and fuel, we are dealing with a dangerous bill that will address vulnerable people in a negative way.

Officials reported that 1,360 of Puerto Rico's 1,600 telephone cell towers are down. The same holds in the Virgin Islands. With 85 percent of aboveground and underground phone and internet cables knocked out—the same in the Virgin Islands—officials still had not had communication with 9 of the 78 municipalities. It has been difficult or nearly impossible for individuals to reach or connect with their loved ones.

Let me make something very clear that many Members of the House do not understand. Everybody cries that FEMA should do all of the things that we would want it to do as the Federal Emergency Management Agency, but FEMA today is dealing with 30 disasters in this country.

I sat here a moment ago and heard our colleague from Montana describe over a million acres of fire ongoing there. In southern California, there is an extraordinary fire that is taking place in that particular area.

This devastation, these disasters as in Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and elsewhere are only cracks of the service of the long to-do list that Congress is confronted with. The list is long and time is short.

In addition to the MIECHV program, which the majority has decided to undermine here today, at the end of the week, the Children's Health and Insurance Program—CHIP, the Children's Health and Insurance Program—Medicare provisions, and the Community Health Centers Fund all expire without any discussion at all in this House. We are leaving not only our constituents, young and old, and the American people in a quandary about their health insurance or treatment facilities, but adding unnecessary anxiety to their lives.

Mr. Speaker, I would argue that the snowball is only going to grow with the end of the calendar year looming right around the corner.

Let me just remind my colleagues in the majority what needs to be addressed by December 8: reauthorizing the National Flood Insurance Program—I don't know what that was yesterday that they were trying to do with the FAA authorization—an absolute necessity in the wake of these dev-

astating storms; keeping the government open and EPA pesticide registration fees. And by the end of the year, we must also act to reauthorize the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, FISA, which we now know plays a critical role in the fundamental aspects of our democracy.

The Affordable Care Act's annual fee on health insurance providers needs to be addressed, important for the health of the marketplace, and the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund financing rate.

Now, Democrats stand ready to work in a bipartisan fashion to address each and every one of the matters that I just talked about, and all of them must pass pieces of legislation. What we are witnessing today is a clear indication that my Republican friends do not share the same spirit, but would rather play politics.

Let me just add one little bit about that. In the other body, the United States Senate, we saw an example of partisan politics play out to its extreme, and it is not likely that there is going to be an important measure dealing with the healthcare of Americans coming from the United States Senate back to this body that passed something that was an awful bill earlier in the year.

But what did it do?

It caused LAMAR ALEXANDER and PATTY MURRAY, who were working on bipartisan measures, to stop their bipartisan efforts so that we could go forward in the Senate on a partisan measure that is going nowhere. People sent us here to work together. They did not send us here to be partisan in every one of our moves. What we are witnessing here today is another example of partisanship.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I want to talk again just for a minute about the second bill in today's rule, H.R. 2824, the Increasing Opportunity and Success for Children and Parents through Evidence-Based Home Visiting Act, that does extend funding for the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program.

I just wanted to talk for a minute about some of the results that we have seen in these program grants and, at this point, reference my home State of Texas to see how they have performed.

The Nurse-Family Partnership is a community-based home services group that supports pregnant women and new mothers in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. They have used grants from this program to support women through both the promotion of preventive and prenatal services for pregnant women, like connecting women to physicians, helping them get medications, and through the utilization of risk reduction services such as smoking cessation.

Again, I tell you this to reiterate that these are good programs. This is a good program that we are reauthor-

izing today and it is worthy of our attention and support.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I hope my colleague will support the DeBene amendment, which will eliminate the matching funds for Tribes altogether. I mentioned that earlier.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Colorado (Ms. DEGETTE), my good friend.

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I associate myself with his remarks about everything we need to do by the end of the fiscal year, which is the end of this week; in particular, reauthorization of CHIP that has helped so many millions of kids get health insurance and get the care that they need.

I rise today, though, to talk about the MIECHV bill, which is up today, and to express my deep disappointment that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have chosen to walk away from yet another opportunity to work on a bipartisan basis. We could extend this program on a bipartisan basis just the way we started it. It is really a success story.

The evidence-based models are proven to deliver results for kids and families in every single State. Investments in MIECHV are investments in the success of America's children and their futures. Peer-reviewed evidence proves that MIECHV leads to improvements in health outcomes for mothers and babies, school achievement, parenting practices, and overall early childhood development.

On top of all that, MIECHV is a great return on investment for Federal dollars. For example, for every Federal dollar in the Nurse-Family Partnership, we get \$5.70 in return. Sadly, this bill that the House is considering today would set MIECHV back. The partisan proposal would make it more difficult for MIECHV models in all of our States to continue their success stories.

Under current law, MIECHV only has enough funding to reach 6 percent of eligible families. But instead of working together to help the program reach more children, this bill curtails the reach. It cuts the funding and, as my ranking member said, it imposes a harmful State-matching requirement that could force some of these home health visit programs to shut down altogether.

It is really a shame that when you are talking about healthy starts for kids, we can't work together on both sides of the aisle. I would hope we would defeat this legislation and come back and do what we have done before on this program, work together to have a robust piece of legislation.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

It is shameful that President Trump would end the DACA program without a single thought to the consequences

this decision would have on the 800,000 young lives this program protects.

Do the American people even want DACA to end?

The answer is clearly no.

According to a Politico/Morning Consult poll: "Support for allowing these immigrants to remain in the United States spans across party lines: 84 percent of Democrats, 74 percent of Independents, and 69 percent of Republicans think they should stay."

Congress must act to protect our DREAMers.

Well, Mr. Speaker, here is our chance to rectify President Trump's heartless decision and restore the American people's faith in us. If we defeat the previous question, I am going to offer an amendment to the rule to bring up H.R. 3440, the Dream Act. This bipartisan, bicameral legislation would help thousands of young people who are Americans in every way except on paper.

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, through the Chair, I would advise my friend from Texas that I have no further speakers and that I am prepared to close.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

We stand here today with a to-do list a mile long, and we don't have much time to cross items off that list. By kicking the can down the road on nearly every past piece of legislation, this Republican majority has shown itself completely unable to govern. They have abdicated their duty to the American people to accomplish even the most basic of legislative tasks: passing a budget. Without Democratic help, they wouldn't be able to even keep the lights on.

My sincere hope is that the next time we meet we will take up legislation that provides some much-needed relief to our brothers and sisters in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, as well as my home State of Florida and Texas and southwest Louisiana; and address the other disasters that are occurring throughout our country, more specifically having to do with wildfires in Montana, in Oregon, and in California; and that we will begin the process of addressing every single one of the needs of this Nation, particularly its health and its healthcare in a bipartisan way.

My colleagues on this side of the aisle stand ready to do so. I urge a "no" vote on the rule.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from en-

gaging in personalities toward the President.

□ 1300

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

Mr. Speaker, today's rule provides for consideration of two important pieces of legislation to restore sanity to the administration of the Social Security program and to provide critical tools for disadvantaged homes in helping families raise their children with the best possible practices.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman BRADY, Mrs. NOEM, and Mr. SMITH for the work on each of their respective pieces of legislation, and I urge Members of this body to support both bills and the rule which will provide for their consideration.

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

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 533 OFFERED BY
MR. HASTINGS

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

SEC. 4. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3440) to authorize the cancellation of removal and adjustment of status of certain individuals who are long-term United States residents and who entered the United States as children and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

SEC. 5. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 3440.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT
IT REALLY MEANS

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

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives (VI, 308-311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as "a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge." To defeat the previous question is to give the

opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that "the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition" in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R-Illinois) said: "The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition."

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

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

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

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

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

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

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

—
HOUR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 4 of rule XVI, I move that

when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 3 p.m. tomorrow.

The motion was agreed to.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

Ordering the previous question on House Resolution 533;

Adopting House Resolution 533, if ordered; and

Agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2824, INCREASING OPPORTUNITY AND SUCCESS FOR CHILDREN AND PARENTS THROUGH EVIDENCE-BASED HOME VISITING ACT; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2792, CONTROL UNLAWFUL FUGITIVE FELONS ACT OF 2017; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on ordering the previous question on the resolution (H. Res. 533) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2824) to amend title V of the Social Security Act to extend the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2792) to amend the Social Security Act to make certain revisions to provisions limiting payment of benefits to fugitive felons under titles II, VIII, and XVI of the Social Security Act; and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

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

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 230, nays 189, not voting 14, as follows:

[Roll No. 532]

YEAS—230

Abraham	Bost	Comer
Aderholt	Brady (TX)	Comstock
Allen	Brat	Conaway
Amash	Brooks (AL)	Cook
Amodel	Brooks (IN)	Costello (PA)
Arrington	Buchanan	Cramer
Babin	Buck	Crawford
Bacon	Bucshon	Culberson
Banks (IN)	Budd	Curbelo (FL)
Barletta	Burgess	Davidson
Barr	Byrne	Davis, Rodney
Barton	Calvert	Denham
Bergman	Carter (GA)	Dent
Biggs	Carter (TX)	DeSantis
Bilirakis	Chabot	DesJarlais
Bishop (MI)	Cheney	Diaz-Balart
Bishop (UT)	Coffman	Donovan
Black	Cole	Duffy
Blackburn	Collins (GA)	Duncan (SC)
Blum	Collins (NY)	Duncan (TN)

Dunn	Knight	Rokita
Emmer	Kustoff (TN)	Rooney, Francis
Estes (KS)	Labrador	Rooney, Thomas J.
Farenthold	LaHood	Roskam
Faso	LaMalfa	Ross
Ferguson	Lamborn	Rothfus
Fitzpatrick	Lance	Rouzer
Fleischmann	Latta	Royce (CA)
Flores	Lewis (MN)	Russell
Fortenberry	LoBiondo	Rutherford
Fox	Loudermilk	Sanford
Franks (AZ)	Love	Schweikert
Frelinghuysen	Lucas	Scott, Austin
Gaetz	Luetkemeyer	Sensenbrenner
Gallagher	MacArthur	Sessions
Garrett	Marchant	Shimkus
Gianforte	Marino	Shuster
Gibbs	Marshall	Simpson
Gohmert	Massie	Smith (MO)
Goodlatte	Mast	Smith (NE)
Gosar	McCarthy	Smith (NJ)
Gowdy	McCaul	Smith (TX)
Graves (GA)	McClintock	Smucker
Graves (LA)	McHenry	Stefanik
Graves (MO)	McKinley	Stewart
Griffith	McMorris	Stivers
Grothman	Rodgers	Taylor
Guthrie	McSally	Tenney
Handel	Meehan	Thompson (PA)
Harper	Mitchell	Thornberry
Harris	Moelenaar	Tipton
Hartzler	Mooney (WV)	Trott
Hensarling	Mullin	Turner
Herrera Beutler	Murphy (PA)	Upton
Hice, Jody B.	Newhouse	Valadao
Higgins (LA)	Noem	Wagner
Hill	Norman	Walberg
Holding	Nunes	Walden
Hollingsworth	Olson	Walker
Hudson	Palazzo	Walorski
Huizenga	Palmer	Walters, Mimi
Hultgren	Paulsen	Weber (TX)
Hunter	Pearce	Webster (FL)
Hurd	Perry	Wenstrup
Issa	Pittenger	Westerman
Jenkins (KS)	Poe (TX)	Williams
Jenkins (WV)	Poliquin	Wilson (SC)
Johnson (LA)	Posey	Wittman
Johnson (OH)	Ratcliffe	Womack
Jones	Reed	Woodall
Jordan	Reichert	Yoder
Joyce (OH)	Renacci	Yoho
Katko	Rice (SC)	Young (AK)
Kelly (MS)	Roby	Young (IA)
Kelly (PA)	Roe (TN)	Zeldin
King (IA)	Rogers (AL)	
King (NY)	Rogers (KY)	
Kinzinger	Rohrabacher	

NAYS—189

Adams	Crist	Himes
Aguilar	Crowley	Hoyer
Barragán	Cuellar	Huffman
Bass	Cummings	Jackson Lee
Beatty	Davis (CA)	Jayapal
Bera	Davis, Danny	Jeffries
Beyer	DeFazio	Johnson (GA)
Bishop (GA)	DeGette	Kaptur
Blumenauer	Delaney	Keating
Blunt Rochester	DeLauro	Kelly (IL)
Bonamici	DelBene	Kennedy
Boyle, Brendan F.	Demings	Khanna
Brady (PA)	DeSaulnier	Kihuen
Brown (MD)	Deutch	Kildee
Brownley (CA)	Doggett	Kilmer
Bustos	Doyle, Michael F.	Kind
Butterfield	Ellison	Krishnamoorthi
Capuano	Engel	Kuster (NH)
Carbajal	Eshoo	Langevin
Cárdenas	Españillat	Larsen (WA)
Carson (IN)	Esty (CT)	Larson (CT)
Cartwright	Evans	Lawrence
Castor (FL)	Foster	Lawson (FL)
Castro (TX)	Frankel (FL)	Lee
Chu, Judy	Fudge	Levin
Cialline	Gabbard	Lewis (GA)
Clark (MA)	Gallago	Lieu, Ted
Clarke (NY)	Garamendi	Lipinski
Clay	Gomez	Loeb
Cleaver	Gonzalez (TX)	Loeb
Clyburn	Gotthelmer	Lowenthal
Cohen	Green, Al	Lowey
Connolly	Green, Gene	Lujan Grisham,
Conyers	Grijalva	M.
Cooper	Gutiérrez	Luján, Ben Ray
Correa	Hastings	Lynch
Costa	Heck	Maloney,
Courtney	Higgins (NY)	Carolyn B.
		Maloney, Sean

Matsui	Polis	Slaughter
McCollum	Price (NC)	Smith (WA)
McEachin	Quigley	Soto
McGovern	Raskin	Speier
McNerney	Rice (NY)	Suozi
Meeks	Richmond	Swalwell (CA)
Meng	Rosen	Takano
Moore	Roybal-Allard	Thompson (CA)
Moulton	Ruiz	Thompson (MS)
Murphy (FL)	Ruppersberger	Titus
Nadler	Rush	Tonko
Napolitano	Ryan (OH)	Torres
Neal	Sánchez	Tsongas
Nolan	Sarbanes	Vargas
Norcross	Schakowsky	Veasey
O'Halleran	Schiff	Vela
O'Rourke	Schneider	Velázquez
Pallone	Schrader	Visclosky
Panetta	Scott (VA)	Walz
Pascarella	Scott, David	Wasserman
Pelosi	Serrano	Schultz
Perlmutter	Sewell (AL)	Waters, Maxine
Peters	Shea-Porter	Watson Coleman
Peterson	Sherman	Welch
Pingree	Sinema	Wilson (FL)
Pocan	Sires	

NOT VOTING—14

Bridenstine	Johnson, Sam	Ros-Lehtinen
Dingell	Long	Scalise
Granger	Meadows	Tiberi
Hanabusa	Messer	Yarmuth
Johnson, E. B.	Payne	

□ 1327

Messrs. PETERS, BRADY of Pennsylvania, CÁRDENAS, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, BROWNLEY of California, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, and Mrs. LOWEY changed their vote from "yea" to "nay."

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on rollcall No. 532.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

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

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

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

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—aye 230, noes 190, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 533]

AYES—230

Abraham	Brat	Cook
Aderholt	Brooks (AL)	Costello (PA)
Allen	Brooks (IN)	Cramer
Amash	Buchanan	Crawford
Amodel	Buck	Culberson
Arrington	Bucshon	Curbelo (FL)
Babin	Budd	Davidson
Bacon	Burgess	Davis, Rodney
Banks (IN)	Byrne	Denham
Barletta	Calvert	Dent
Barr	Carter (GA)	DeSantis
Barton	Carter (TX)	DesJarlais
Bergman	Chabot	Diaz-Balart
Biggs	Cheney	Donovan
Bilirakis	Coffman	Duffy
Bishop (MI)	Cole	Duncan (SC)
Bishop (UT)	Collins (GA)	Duncan (TN)
Black	Collins (NY)	Dunn
Blackburn	Comer	Emmer
Blum	Comstock	Estes (KS)
	Conaway	Farenthold

Faso
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flores
Fortenberry
Foss
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garrett
Gianforte
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guthrie
Handel
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Holding
Hollingsworth
Hudson
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Jones
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger
Knight
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador

LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Lewis (MN)
LoBiondo
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Marshall
Massie
Mast
McCarthy
McCauley
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
McSally
Meehan
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Murphy (PA)
Newhouse
Noem
Norman
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Posey
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (SC)
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita

Rooney, Francis
Rooney, Thomas J.
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce (CA)
Russell
Rutherford
Sanford
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smucker
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NOES—190

Adams
Aguilar
Barragán
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (MD)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capuano
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Crist

Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Español
Esty (CT)
Evans
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Gomez
Gonzalez (TX)
Gottheimer
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hastings
Heck
Higgins (NY)
Himes

Hoyer
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowe
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum

McEachin
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Halleran
O'Rourke
Pallone
Panetta
Pascarella
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis

Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Rosen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schradner
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires

Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Soto
Speier
Suozi
Swallow (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)

Kildee
King (IA)
King (NY)
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Larsen (WA)
Latta
Lewis (MN)
Lipinski
Loudermilk
Love
Lowenthal
Lowe
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Marchant
Marino
Marshall
Massie
McCarthy
McClintock
McCollum
McHenry
McMorris
Rodgers
McNerney
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mitchell

Mooney (WV)
Moore
Moulton
Mullin
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Newhouse
Noem
Norman
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Posey
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Roby
Rogers (KY)
Rooney, Francis
Rooney, Thomas J.
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce (CA)
Ruppersberger
Russell
Rutherford
Sanford
Schneider
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David

Serrano
Sessions
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Stefanik
Stewart
Takano
Taylor
Thornberry
Titus
Trott
Tsongas
Velázquez
Wagner
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Webster (FL)
Welch
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Yoho
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NOT VOTING—13

Black
Bridenstine
Granger
Hanabusa
Johnson, E. B.

Johnson, Sam
Long
Meadows
Payne
Ros-Lehtinen

□ 1337

Mr. MAST changed his vote from “no” to “aye.”

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 214, nays 199, answered “present” 1, not voting 19, as follows:

[Roll No. 534]

YEAS—214

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amodei
Arrington
Bacon
Banks (IN)
Barletta
Barton
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Brady (TX)
Brat
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (MD)
Buchanan
Budd
Bustos
Byrne
Calvert
Cartwright
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clay
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (NY)

Comstock
Conyers
Cook
Cooper
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
Dent
DesJarlais
Deutch
Doggett
Donovan
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellison
Emmer
Engel
Estes (KS)
Farenthold
Ferguson
Fleischmann

Fortenberry
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Frelinghuysen
Gabbard
Garamendi
Gianforte
Goodlatte
Gowdy
Griffith
Guthrie
Harper
Harris
Heck
Hensarling
Higgins (LA)
Higgins (NY)
Hill
Himes
Hollingsworth
Huffman
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd
Issa
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (LA)
Jones
Kaptur
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)

Adams
Aguilar
Amash
Babin
Barr
Barragán
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Bergman
Beyer
Biggs
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Blackburn
Blum
Blunt Rochester
Bost
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brownley (CA)
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Capuano
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Castor (FL)
Cheney
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Cleaver
Clyburn
Collins (GA)
Comer
Conaway
Connolly
Correa
Costa
Crist
Crowley
Curbelo (FL)
Davidson
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
Denham
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doyle, Michael F.
Duffy

Eshoo
Español
Esty (CT)
Evans
Fitzpatrick
Flores
Foss
Franks (AZ)
Fudge
Gallagher
Gallego
Garrett
Gibbs
Gomez
Gonzalez (TX)
Gosar
Gottheimer
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Grothman
Gutiérrez
Hartzler
Hastings
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Holding
Hoyer
Hudson
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Katko
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kihuen
Kilmer
Kind
Kinzinger
Knight
LaHood
Lance
Langevin
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)

Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lieu, Ted
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Sean
Mast
Matsui
McEachin
McGovern
McKinley
McSally
Moolenaar
Murphy (PA)
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Halleran
Pallone
Palmer
Panetta
Pascarella
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pittenger
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Price (NC)
Raskin
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (NY)
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rosen
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schradner
Sensenbrenner

Sewell (AL)	Swalwell (CA)	Veasey
Sinema	Tenney	Vela
Sires	Thompson (CA)	Visclosky
Slaughter	Thompson (MS)	Walberg
Smith (MO)	Thompson (PA)	Waters, Maxine
Smucker	Tipton	Watson Coleman
Soto	Turner	Weber (TX)
Speier	Upton	Woodall
Stivers	Valadao	Yoder
Suozi	Vargas	Young (AK)

ANSWERED "PRESENT"—1

Tonko

NOT VOTING—19

Black	Johnson, E. B.	Ros-Lehtinen
Bridenstine	Johnson, Sam	Scalise
Butterfield	Long	Tiberi
Dunn	McCaull	Torres
Gohmert	Meadows	Yarmuth
Granger	Payne	
Hanabusa	Quigley	

□ 1344

Mr. RUTHERFORD changed his vote from "nay" to "yea."

So the Journal was approved.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

PERMISSION FOR MEMBER TO BE CONSIDERED AS FIRST SPONSOR OF H.R. 296

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that I may hereafter be considered to be the first sponsor of H.R. 296, a bill originally introduced by Representative Chaffetz of Utah, for the purposes of adding cosponsors and requesting reprintings pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII.

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

There was no objection.

INCREASING OPPORTUNITY AND SUCCESS FOR CHILDREN AND PARENTS THROUGH EVIDENCE-BASED HOME VISITING ACT

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 2824.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 533 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 2824.

The Chair appoints the gentlewoman from Alabama (Mrs. ROBY) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1347

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 2824) to amend title V of the Social Security Act to extend the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, with Mrs. ROBY in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nebraska.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Chair, I rise in support of H.R. 2824, the Increasing Opportunity and Success for Children and Parents Through Evidence-Based Home Visiting Act. This bill would reauthorize the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, known as MIECHV, for 5 years and make sure the program continues to focus on results.

I would like to note, this bill represents the first full reauthorization proposal Congress has considered for this program.

The Ways and Means Human Resources Subcommittee, which I chair, held a hearing on the program earlier this year. We solicited feedback from stakeholders, marked up a bill in committee, and today we are debating this bill on the floor. This is how Congress is supposed to work, and this bill is an example of Congress getting its work done.

The MIECHV Program helps support State and local efforts to provide voluntary, evidence-based home visiting services to parents and children living in communities that put them at risk of poor social and health outcomes, including in rural areas like those I represent.

Unlike many other programs that focus on money spent or people served, this program focuses on achieving real results for families. Specifically, this program promotes school readiness of young children, increases economic self-sufficiency of families, improves prenatal health and birth outcomes, and prevents childhood abuse and neglect.

Madam Chair, I have had the opportunity to see firsthand what home visiting looks like. In March, I spent time in Nebraska with the Panhandle Public Health District's Healthy Families America program in western Nebraska. The program focuses on improving the economic success and school readiness of vulnerable children and families in three Nebraska counties: Scotts Bluff, Morrill, and Box Butte.

During my visit, I met with Dawn, one of the program participants, who told me what it was like for her to work with a home visitor. Her home visitor helped her find a stable home and a steady income to provide for her growing family. These are the types of outcomes we should be expecting when we have programs to help those who are struggling to get ahead.

MIECHV works because funding is tied to evidence. Unfortunately, MIECHV is the exception, as few Fed-

eral social programs have been evaluated at all, and almost none condition funding on evidence of whether the program actually works.

In the Better Way agenda put forward by House Republicans last year, we proposed doing more of what MIECHV does: measuring how well programs are working to focus funding on those which produce real results. When we spend limited taxpayer dollars to help those in need, we must make sure we are spending money on effective programs. To do otherwise is a disservice to both taxpayers as well as those we are seeking to help.

On March 15 of this year, the Human Resources Subcommittee held a hearing on MIECHV. In the hearing, we heard from those with firsthand experience with home visiting programs, and their input was invaluable as we developed this proposal.

Both before and after the hearing, we sought input from States and others about how the program was working and how it could be improved and strengthened. These conversations also informed the bill before us today.

I should also note, there is broad bipartisan support for MIECHV, including from dozens of national organizations and hundreds of State and local organizations, including business leaders, law enforcement officers, faith-based groups, healthcare providers, child welfare advocacy organizations, and early education providers.

While I understand some of my colleagues would like to continue this program or even increase its funding without an offset, under the rules that govern this Chamber and our current deficits, it would be irresponsible and against the rules of this Chamber to fund this program without finding ways to reduce spending elsewhere. That is why we are considering this as part of a package of two bills today: this bill and the Control Unlawful Fugitive Felons Act of 2017, which will be considered later this week during its own debate.

Instead of increasing our Nation's debt, we should be doing more of what we are doing here today: prioritizing Federal spending and focusing on what works by improving the integrity of one program to provide funding for another.

Madam Chair, I am grateful for the time we are spending here today to consider the reauthorization of this important program, and I appreciate the opportunity to stand in support of this bill today.

I reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE,

Washington, DC, September 18, 2017.

Hon. KEVIN BRADY,
Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN BRADY: I write concerning H.R. 2824, Increasing Opportunity through

Evidence-Based Home Visiting Act, which was additionally referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

I wanted to notify you that the Committee will forgo action on H.R. 2824 so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House floor for consideration. This is done with the understanding that the Committee's jurisdictional interests over this and similar legislation are in no way diminished or altered. In addition, the Committee reserves the right to seek conferees on H.R. 2824 and requests your support when such a request is made.

I would appreciate your response confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 2824 and ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during consideration of the bill on the House floor.

Sincerely,

GREG WALDEN,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS,
Washington, DC, September 18, 2017.

Hon. GREG WALDEN,
Chairman, Committee on Energy and Commerce,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN WALDEN: Thank you for your letter concerning H.R. 2824, the "Increasing Opportunity through Evidence-Based Home Visiting Act," on which the Energy and Commerce Committee was granted an additional referral.

I am most appreciative of your decision to waive formal consideration of H.R. 2824 so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House floor. I acknowledge that although you waived formal consideration of the bill, the Energy and Commerce Committee is in no way waiving its jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in those provisions of the bill that fall within your Rule X jurisdiction. I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees on any House-Senate conference involving this legislation.

I will include a copy of our letters in our committee report and in the Congressional Record during consideration of this legislation on the House floor.

Sincerely,

KEVIN BRADY,
Chairman.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois.
Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Chair, following the wisdom of Frederick Douglass, who said it is easier to build strong families, strong children, than to repair broken men, I introduced my first bipartisan home visiting bill over a decade ago, in 2005. Since 2005, home visiting has been uniquely bipartisan—until today.

Research is clear. Home visiting makes kids and families stronger, healthier, and safer. In my home State of Illinois, MIECHV improved program coordination, reinforced the emphasis on proven models, and expanded availability of services. Unfortunately, the majority's approach has rejected bipartisanship and made timely reauthorization of home visiting less likely.

H.R. 2824 presents substantial cuts to home visiting and threatens the effectiveness of services for vulnerable children and families. Equally bad, the rule under which we are considering this bill conditions home visiting help to vulnerable families on harming seniors and persons with disabilities. Although

we are not voting on that provision today, the rule we are considering this bill under makes it an inescapable part of it.

I join with over 110 civil rights, disability, and aging agencies to strongly oppose the Republican effort to pay for home visiting services that strengthen vulnerable children by stripping certain low-income seniors and those with severe disabilities of basic income they need to survive.

H.R. 2824 also is inconsistent with bipartisan Senate legislation introduced last week, which rejected the most controversial and problematic changes in H.R. 2824 in order to keep what works.

So what should the House have done instead of H.R. 2824?

826 organizations urged the House and Senate leaders to "reauthorize this important program for 5 years, with a doubling of funding from \$400 million, annually, to \$800 million, annually, to allow States, territories, and Tribes to expand these services to more children and families." Yet H.R. 2824 fails to increase funding by even one penny.

Currently, MIECHV dollars serve only about 6 percent of eligible families and less than 50 percent of eligible Tribes. I tried to offer a fully paid-for alternative to double funding for home visiting over 5 years without harmful policy changes but was not allowed a vote in committee or on the floor.

One of the most harmful policy changes is a new "State match" requirement, which would be in addition to the "maintenance of effort" requirement already in law. Just as with their failed healthcare bill, this Republican bill pushes their fight to make States pay more for services, while harming vulnerable children and families as collateral damage. There is no doubt that the State match in this bill will reduce home visiting in many States and Tribes, cut services, and harm families.

The Republican bill further undermines successful home visiting by changing it from a program to improve child development and parent-child relationships to a failed jobs program. Defining a core outcome of MIECHV as increased employment and earnings will gut Federal home visiting. Not one—not one—of the evidence-based models is a job training program. Not one.

This bill says, if any program wants to improve economic self-sufficiency, it shall include employment and earnings. Further, the bill applies stringent, unrealistic outcome standards.

H.R. 2824 is failure by design for home visiting. Later today, I urge my colleagues to support Congressman PASCRELL's amendment to strike this change.

After a decade of bipartisan efforts to increase Federal funds for home visiting, I am deeply saddened that H.R. 2824 now is the House Republican priority list for cutting funding, reducing services, and undermining the infrastructure that so many have worked to build. I unequivocally oppose this

harmful bill and its discriminatory pay-for, joining the good company of the NAACP, the American Academy of Pediatrics, Justice in Aging, National Women's Law Center, and the Arc of the United States, to name just a few.

I urge my colleagues to oppose H.R. 2824 so that we can move quickly on to a bipartisan approach which builds on home visiting's considerable strength.

Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1400

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Chair, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MEEHAN).

Mr. MEEHAN. Madam Chair, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I want to express my deep appreciation for the opportunity to join in this advocacy for this very important bill.

One of the great frustrations I know I share is when we have to make choices, and I see people come to me and they want us to increase the funding for those who are on the front lines fighting for our country, to increase the funding for those who are suffering from diseases, to increase the funding to protect senior citizens in various capacities, and every one of them tears at your heartstrings.

That is why, to me, it is such an incredible accomplishment when you are able, at this particular period of time, with huge deficits, to be able to fight to make sure that we can retain the funding to drive a fundamental program. The chairman has done that in this case, and I find the arguments to double that to be just a Trojan horse, an impediment to helping us take a meaningful program and make sure that it is authorized and supported.

In April, I visited the Crozer-Keystone Community Foundation in my own district. The foundation operates MIECHV and uses the Nurse-Family Partnership model to serve women and families in Delaware County. The model enables nurses to conduct regular home visits for first-time mothers and their children who are less than 2-years-old. It is designed to improve prenatal health and outcomes, improve child health and development, and improve families' economic self-sufficiency.

The success is evident to the experience of the women and families in the programs. In fact, the Nurse-Family Partnership model has been shown to reduce child abuse by 48 percent, reduce emergency room visits for accidents and poisonings by 58 percent, and reduce behavioral and intellectual problems by age 6 by 67 percent.

A study found that \$6 is returned to the community for every dollar it invests in the program. Did you hear that? For every dollar the community invests, they will get \$6; so it is not wrong to ask our partners in the States to match this commitment. In fact, my own State of Pennsylvania, I am proud to say it has actually exceeded the

matching because they know it works and it makes a true partnership with the States.

So I want to, once again, conclude by applauding the efforts of the chairman to position this in such a way for us to be able to move forward, to create the opportunity for this genuine partnership, to move on, on behalf of the—not programs just like the Nurse-Family Partnership, but the broad spectrum that are supported.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN).

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

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Chair, I am disappointed that this bill, H.R. 2824, injects needless controversy into reauthorizing the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program.

Home visiting is an evidence-based approach that connects pregnant women and families with young children to nurses, social workers, and other professionals. Through these programs, parents learn skills that help reduce abuse and neglect and improve child development during the crucial early years of life.

Most importantly, home visiting is backed by strong evidence that shows these programs are an effective way to improve outcomes for at-risk families. Unfortunately, H.R. 2824 ignores the proven successes of home visiting in favor of harmful, partisan changes to the law. In particular, I am troubled by language in this bill that would cut off funding to States and Tribal organizations that are unable to match Federal spending on home visiting. The bipartisan bill in the Senate does not do that; you do.

Advocates are concerned that this could cause States to scale back or even end their programs altogether. In addition, this bill makes a number of ill-advised changes that have little or no apparent justification. Research shows that home visiting programs are working well, yet only 6 percent of eligible individuals currently participate. We should be looking at expanding, not undermining, access to home visiting.

We need, at the very least, a clean bill that reauthorizes the home visiting program in a bipartisan way. Unfortunately, H.R. 2824 is not that bill, and, for that reason, I urge that we vote “no.”

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Chair, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BISHOP).

Mr. BISHOP of Michigan. Madam Chair, I thank Chairman SMITH for yielding and for his hard work and leadership on this matter.

Madam Chair, I rise today to support H.R. 2824, which would reauthorize the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program. At its core, MIECHV improve the lives of families in at-risk communities, focusing on the first years of a child's life.

Like the chairman, I, too, have seen firsthand its successes. I recently traveled to a Nurse-Family Partnership facility, which is a nonprofit that arranges home visits from registered nurses to low-income, first-time mothers.

I had the opportunity to meet the nurses and the women who currently are enrolled in the program. NFP facilities transform the lives of vulnerable first-time moms and their babies, empowering them to build brighter futures and stronger families, none of which would be possible without MIECHV funding.

I am proud to note that, like my previous speaker, my home State of Michigan has already taken the initiative to invest significant funding for the NFP facilities and other organizations, in addition to MIECHV funds, to the extent that Michigan would now already meet the requirement proposed in the bill.

I am particularly thankful for the chairman's transparent engagement process within the committee, specifically, early on. I raised the concern that the addition of new evidence standards, along with substantial evidence standards already in place, might be problematic, and I wanted to ensure that home visitors were not overly burdened by data collecting so that they can care for the mothers and the babies.

Both of these concerns were addressed with the amendments contained in the chairman's amendment, and I want to thank Chairman SMITH and Chairman BRADY for their leadership in addressing these concerns and other concerns.

I want to thank the chairman for all of his hard work, and I want to join him and my colleagues in supporting H.R. 2824.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Chair, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT), who has long been a champion on these issues.

Mr. DOGGETT. Madam Chair, across our country, there are thousands of children, thousands of families, that have a really big stake in what happens with this bill.

I support evidence-based home visiting programs, and I support them not just by talking about them, but by providing them the resources they need to reach more children and make a difference in their lives.

This whole program, “home visiting,” is a little bit of a misnomer. This is not about going out to pay a social visit, to join a club or something. This is about skilled professionals working with young parents to help them be the parents they want to be. It is about family values. It is about strengthening and protecting families, particularly disadvantaged families.

Our home visiting programs give these families the tools that they need. I have seen how successful they have been in San Antonio, in San Marcos, in Austin, and across Texas.

A story was shared with me recently when I met with Alaska and Jimmy Martinez from San Antonio. During their first year in college, Alaska became pregnant. She felt she was going to have to drop out of school, and then they met with Susan, with the Nurse-Family Partnership there in San Antonio, and she gave them some referrals and some assistance. They were able to learn more about the development of their child and how they could prepare their family for that child's arrival.

Now, Alaska is about to finish her associate's degree. Jimmy is pursuing his business degree, and they are happy to have a beautiful 2-year-old son.

That is the way this program is supposed to work so people don't sink into poverty. They are lifted up and so are their children. This is just one of thousands of success stories from across the country—the family that unexpectedly finds they have a child with severe disabilities, or maybe just the more common experience of the family that has a baby who cries all night long, and they don't know what to do about it.

Too often, that is the kind of thing that ends up in a slap here, a slap there, and child abuse. Too often, it ends up with that child just being put in front of the television set instead of working with the child to deal with these real-life problems.

Some reforms were mentioned, alleged reforms, in this bill. I have served on this subcommittee through a number of terms of Congress. We have had some excellent witnesses, Republican and Democratic, and I have yet to hear a single witness call for a single one of the changes that they are proposing to impose on this program as obstacles to its success.

We haven't had an academic expert. We haven't had a stakeholder. We haven't had a single witness come forward and say: Please change this program so it cannot achieve the success that it is having today.

This is an evidence-based program. What does that mean? It means it is based on fact, not just on hope or good intention, as a number of our programs are. It means there is peer-reviewed data showing that this program works to reduce child abuse and to solve other problems.

The chairman, the advocate for this bill, tells me that they recognize this in the great Republican blueprint, and they want to do more of this. Well, if they want to do more of this, why are they creating one obstacle after another and causing one group after another to oppose those changes?

What about the resources to get the job done? As so many of the Republican witnesses before our subcommittee have acknowledged, we are helping a fraction of the children who are eligible for these kind of services.

I think you could call this bill the Republican 6 percent solution, because about 94 percent of eligible families in America don't get a penny of assistance out of this program. This program

that they say is so good, they want to praise it as an evidence-based program—and well they should, and well they have in the course of the several years I have served on the committee—this program is frozen at the same amount of funds that it had 5 years ago.

Though the need has grown, though the fraction of children who are served is minuscule compared with the need, they refuse to provide the resources to help other families like Alaska and Jimmy's.

It is clear, we can't just throw money at this problem or any other, but sometimes the only substitute that I hear from my Republican colleagues is to throw words at the problem like we have heard today: caring, soothing, empathetic words, but words that are no substitute for meaningful action.

Indeed, it is great to hear about support for an evidence-based program. Where is the evidence for these changes?

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Chair, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. DOGGETT. Madam Chair, where is the evidence today? It couldn't be produced in committee. Where is the evidence for one of these changes? Where is the evidence for freezing this funding?

We proposed to fully fund it, and I proposed to do it with a simple tax compliance measure that wouldn't have raised taxes on anyone, but it would have provided the resources for this home visiting program to do its intended purpose.

This measure, as proposed, should be rejected, and we ought to support genuine home visiting that reaches more American families and protects them, just as it has for so many families in Texas.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. ESTES).

Mr. ESTES of Kansas. Madam Chair, I rise today in support of H.R. 2824, the Increasing Opportunity and Success for Children and Parents through Evidence-Based Home Visiting Act.

We need more support for early childhood, and to support families in that effort. They need to be evidence-based programs to ensure that we get more of the right beneficial programs implemented.

This bill seeks to strengthen the home visiting services to families in at-risk communities, and that is important because it will help reduce infant abuse and neglect across America.

The law's six benchmark areas will improve maternal and newborn health and will increase families' economic self-sufficiency. It also looks to better the coordination between community resources.

I would like to thank Chairman BRADY and Chairman SMITH for putting forth this piece of legislation.

□ 1415

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Chair, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON).

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Madam Chair, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I thank Mr. DAVIS for his great leadership on this issue.

Madam Chair, I rise today in opposition to this bill.

Since its inception, MIECHV has been universally hailed as a tremendous success. It works, and it is cost effective. Participants like it; State and local governments like it; Democrats like it; and Republicans like it. It helps young families get off to a running start and makes sure that kids get the hand they need to stay on track.

I have seen this program work. The Nurse-Family Partnership program in Solano County, in my district, helps moms get the care and the support they need to have a healthy pregnancy and to learn to care for their babies. Home visits teach these new young moms the basics of raising healthy kids, helping them become more self-sufficient.

But instead of building on these successes and giving community programs the support they have been asking for, today the Republicans are focusing on undermining a great record of progress. Take, for instance, the new matching requirements in this bill.

When Congress created MIECHV, we authorized money for Tribes that don't have the resources to build home visiting programs on their own. This bill would force those Tribes to attribute matching money—which they don't have—to keep their program going. That is a death sentence to Tribal programs like the one in my district in Lake County, California.

With the passage of this bill, we are shortchanging hundreds of vulnerable families that rely on these programs. In addition, poor communities—not just Tribal communities, but poor communities across the country—have the same funding challenges, and these are most often the areas that benefit the most from MIECHV. This bill hurts people in those communities.

With this bill, we are not empowering communities to raise healthy children; we are undermining a great bipartisan program, and for that I stand in opposition to this piece of legislation.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Chair, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mrs. WALORSKI).

Mrs. WALORSKI. Madam Chair, I appreciate Chairman SMITH's support and the work he has done on this bill.

Madam Chair, I rise in strong support of the Increasing Opportunity and Success for Children and Parents Through Evidence-Based Home Visiting Act. In my home State of Indiana, three of the nine counties eligible for MIECHV funds are in my district.

In April, I had the pleasure of visiting with Healthy Families St. Joseph County to hear firsthand the good

work they are doing in Indiana's Second District. I heard from a single mom who had no job, no place to live, and very little money when she gave birth to her son; but with the help of Healthy Families, she turned long odds into success. The mother gained confidence to raise her son, and her son gained a shot at a thriving life that he may not have had without this program.

Home visitors helped over 2,600 Hoosier families in situations like this in Indiana last year.

MIECHV is a program that gets results. It works. We know this because of the statistics, but we hear it in the stories that they share with us. Parents get the tools and the confidence they need to raise their children. This improves outcomes for their children in the really early critical years and sets them on a better path as they grow up. The program helps to root out deeper issues like drug abuse and domestic violence that destroy families and hinder a child's development.

If there is one thing I have learned as I have heard from people in my district who successfully broke the cycle of poverty, it is this: It is one thing to provide money, but if that money comes on a one-size-fits-all basis, people cannot break the cycle. Checking a box doesn't break the cycle. Human interaction, looking at each person as an individual and not just a number, resolving underlying issues unique to each person's situation, and having a person coming alongside, saying, "I am with you; let's do this together" breaks the cycle. MIECHV is a great example of a program that does this.

Madam Chair, I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Ms. CASTOR).

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Madam Chair, I thank Mr. DAVIS for his outstanding advocacy on behalf of families all across America.

Madam Chair, I rise in opposition to H.R. 2824 because this Republican bill throws up unnecessary bureaucratic hoops and roadblocks to the progress we have made under the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting initiative.

It is smart policy to target resources and community experts to families who are most at risk back home. I have seen it in action back home in Tampa, Florida, where experts simply go to the home and explain to parents the importance of reading to your young child to get them ready for school, the importance of sleep, healthy habits, turning off the TV, and focusing on being a family unit. That is why it is so unfortunate that the Republicans are targeting the progress we have made.

We are smarter now. We understand what is successful, and, unfortunately, H.R. 2824 would undermine successful home visiting initiatives by making policy changes that no expert has

asked for. Indeed, I checked with my folks back home at the University of South Florida and on the ground there across the Tampa Bay area, and they say that, no, this bill will jeopardize the progress that we are making right now. In fact, they think that the match requirement will bring to an end the progress that we have been able to make because of the pressure on our State budget.

The way forward is through the bill that my colleagues—Mr. DAVIS, Mr. DOGGETT, Ms. DEGETTE—and I have charted under H.R. 3525, which is a fairly clean reauthorization that doubles down on what works and doesn't invest in the bureaucratic red tape that simply is not going to help a family succeed.

So, Madam Chair, I urge the House to defeat this bill and, instead, to work in a bipartisan fashion.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Chairwoman, I yield the gentlewoman an additional 15 seconds.

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Madam Chair, instead, I urge the House to defeat this bill that is not recommended by anyone in the field. Instead, let's work in a bipartisan way on what works, what saves taxpayers' money in the long run, and, most importantly, what truly boosts families.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Chair, I just want to add for the RECORD that the State of Florida matches their funds more than 2 to 1 already, so I am anxious to present the data here as it becomes necessary and is helpful to the exchange here.

Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Chair, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Madam Chair, we know that home visiting works. There is no doubt about it. It is evidence based. Nobody has spoken anything that one would say it was not needed. It works for families and children in communities across our country. We agree about that on a bipartisan basis.

So we should not be here today debating a partisan bill, a bill that home visiting experts say poses a risk to the program's survival. We should be moving forward on a bipartisan bill without policy changes that might shut down home visiting in some communities or set it up for failure.

I hope that my colleagues will vote for the amendments being offered today that will improve the bill, but I also have some concerns about the State match.

No matter what we say, think of States and territories that have just been devastated by the floods and hurricanes. It is going to be very difficult for them to come up with the match money to keep some programs alive.

So I hope that my colleagues will vote for the amendments being offered today that will improve the bill. I re-

gret that there will not be enough of them to make this the bill that we had hoped it would be.

Madam Chairwoman, I urge a "no" vote, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Again, I would like to take this time to thank my colleagues for taking the time to consider the reauthorization of this important program.

The MIECHV Program has bipartisan support due to its focus on achieving real results for families. This program works because its funding is tied to real evidence. It is imperative that we continue this program in a responsible way, partnering with States to increase the program's success.

I might repeat that for emphasis. It is imperative that we continue this program in a responsible way—a reasonable way, I will add—as we partner with States to increase the program's success. This bill shows how we can prioritize our Federal spending, focusing on programs with evidence that shows they actually work.

I look forward to moving this bill forward to reauthorize the MIECHV Program so more Americans can get the help they need to get ahead.

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

The CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule.

In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means, printed in the bill, it shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the 5-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 115-33. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read.

The text of the amendment in the nature of a substitute is as follows:

H.R. 2824

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 "Increasing Opportunity and Success for Children and Parents through Evidence-Based Home Visiting Act".

SEC. 2. TABLE OF CONTENTS.

The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short title.*
- Sec. 2. Table of contents.*
- Sec. 3. Continuing evidence-based home visiting program.*
- Sec. 4. Continuing to demonstrate results to help families.*
- Sec. 5. Reviewing statewide needs to target resources.*
- Sec. 6. Improving the likelihood of success in high-risk communities.*
- Sec. 7. Measuring improvements in family economic self-sufficiency.*
- Sec. 8. Option to fund evidence-based home visiting on a pay for outcome basis.*
- Sec. 9. Strengthening evidence-based home visiting through state, local, and private partnerships.*

Sec. 10. Data exchange standards for improved interoperability.

SEC. 3. CONTINUING EVIDENCE-BASED HOME VISITING PROGRAM.

Section 511(j)(1)(H) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 711(j)(1)(H)) is amended by striking "fiscal year 2017" and inserting "each of fiscal years 2017 through 2022".

SEC. 4. CONTINUING TO DEMONSTRATE RESULTS TO HELP FAMILIES.

(a) REQUIRE SERVICE DELIVERY MODELS TO DEMONSTRATE IMPROVEMENT IN APPLICABLE BENCHMARK AREAS.—Section 511 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 711) is amended in each of subsections (d)(1)(A) and (h)(4)(A) by striking "each of".

(b) DEMONSTRATION OF IMPROVEMENTS IN SUBSEQUENT YEARS.—Section 511(d)(1) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 711(d)(1)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(D) DEMONSTRATION OF IMPROVEMENTS IN SUBSEQUENT YEARS.—

"(i) CONTINUED MEASUREMENT OF IMPROVEMENT IN APPLICABLE BENCHMARK AREAS.—The eligible entity, after demonstrating improvements for eligible families as specified in subparagraphs (A) and (B), shall continue to track and report not later than 30 days after the end of fiscal year 2020 and every three years thereafter, information demonstrating that the program results in improvements for the eligible families participating in the program in at least 4 of the areas specified in subparagraph (A) that the service delivery model or models, selected by the entity, intend to improve.

"(ii) CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN.—If the eligible entity fails to demonstrate improvement in at least 4 of the areas specified in subparagraph (A), the entity shall develop and implement a plan to improve outcomes in each of the areas specified in subparagraph (A) that the service delivery model or models, selected by the entity, intend to improve, subject to approval by the Secretary. The plan shall include provisions for the Secretary to monitor implementation of the plan and conduct continued oversight of the program, including through submission by the entity of regular reports to the Secretary.

"(iii) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary shall provide an eligible entity required to develop and implement an improvement plan under clause (ii) with technical assistance to develop and implement the plan. The Secretary may provide the technical assistance directly or through grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements.

"(iv) NO IMPROVEMENT OR FAILURE TO SUBMIT REPORT.—If the Secretary determines after a period of time specified by the Secretary that an eligible entity implementing an improvement plan under clause (ii) has failed to demonstrate any improvement in at least 4 of the areas specified in subparagraph (A) that the service delivery model or models intend to improve, or if the Secretary determines that an eligible entity has failed to submit the report required by clause (i), the Secretary shall terminate the grant made to the entity under this section and may include any unexpended grant funds in grants made to nonprofit organizations under subsection (h)(2)(B)."

(c) INCLUDING INFORMATION ON APPLICABLE BENCHMARKS IN APPLICATION.—Section 511(e)(5) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 711(e)(5)) is amended by inserting "that the service delivery model or models, selected by the entity, intend to improve" before the period at the end.

SEC. 5. REVIEWING STATEWIDE NEEDS TO TARGET RESOURCES.

Section 511(b)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 711(b)(1)) is amended by striking "Not later than" and all that follows through "statewide" the 2nd place it appears and inserting "Each State shall, as a condition of receiving payments from an allotment for the State under section 502, review and update the statewide needs assessment not later than October 1, 2020

(which may be separate from but in coordination with the statewide”.

SEC. 6. IMPROVING THE LIKELIHOOD OF SUCCESS IN HIGH-RISK COMMUNITIES.

Section 511(d)(4)(A) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 711(d)(4)(A)) is amended by inserting “, taking into account the staffing, community resource, and other requirements of the service delivery model or models that the eligible entity may need to develop for the model to operate and demonstrate improvements for eligible families” before the period.

SEC. 7. MEASURING IMPROVEMENTS IN FAMILY ECONOMIC SELF-SUFFICIENCY.

Section 511(d)(1)(A)(v) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 711(d)(1)(A)(v)) is amended by inserting “(which shall include measures of employment and earnings)” before the period.

SEC. 8. OPTION TO FUND EVIDENCE-BASED HOME VISITING ON A PAY FOR OUTCOME BASIS.

(a) *IN GENERAL.*—Section 511(c) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 711(c)) is amended by redesignating paragraphs (3) and (4) as paragraphs (4) and (5), respectively, and by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

“(3) *AUTHORITY TO USE GRANT FOR A PAY FOR OUTCOMES INITIATIVE.*—An eligible entity to which a grant is made under paragraph (1) may use the grant to pay for the results of a pay for outcomes initiative that satisfies the requirements of subsection (d) and that will not result in a reduction of funding for services delivered under this section while an eligible entity develops or operates such an initiative.”.

(b) *DEFINITION OF PAY FOR OUTCOMES INITIATIVE.*—Section 511(k) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 711(k)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(4) *PAY FOR OUTCOMES INITIATIVE.*—The term ‘pay for outcomes initiative’ means a performance-based grant, contract, cooperative agreement, or other agreement awarded by a public entity in which a commitment is made to pay for improved outcomes that result in social benefit and direct cost savings or cost avoidance to the public sector. Such an initiative shall include—

“(A) a feasibility study that describes how the proposed intervention is based on evidence of effectiveness;

“(B) a rigorous, third-party evaluation that uses experimental or quasi-experimental design or other research methodologies that allow for the strongest possible causal inferences to determine whether the initiative has met its proposed outcomes;

“(C) an annual, publicly available report on the progress of the initiative; and

“(D) a requirement that payments are made to the recipient of a grant, contract, or cooperative agreement only when agreed upon outcomes are achieved, except that this requirement shall not apply with respect to payments to a third party conducting the evaluation described in subparagraph (B).”.

(c) *EXTENDED AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.*—Section 511(j)(3) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 711(j)(3)) is amended—

(1) by striking “(3) *AVAILABILITY.*—Funds” and inserting the following:

“(3) *AVAILABILITY.*—

“(A) *IN GENERAL.*—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), funds”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(B) *FUNDS FOR PAY FOR OUTCOMES INITIATIVES.*—Funds made available to an eligible entity under this section for a fiscal year (or portion of a fiscal year) for a pay for outcomes initiative shall remain available for expenditure by the eligible entity for not more than 10 years after the funds are so made available.”.

SEC. 9. STRENGTHENING EVIDENCE-BASED HOME VISITING THROUGH STATE, LOCAL, AND PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS.

(a) *IN GENERAL.*—Section 511 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 711) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(l) *MATCHING REQUIREMENT.*—

“(1) *PROGRAM HOME VISITING SHARE.*—

“(A) *IN GENERAL.*—An eligible entity to which a grant is made under this section for fiscal year 2020 or any succeeding fiscal year shall not use the grant to cover more than the applicable percentage of the costs of providing services or conducting activities under this section during the fiscal year.

“(B) *APPLICABLE PERCENTAGE.*—In subparagraph (A), the term ‘applicable percentage’ means, with respect to a fiscal year—

“(i) in the case of an eligible entity that is a State or nonprofit organization—

“(I) 70 percent, in the case of fiscal year 2020;

“(II) 60 percent, in the case of fiscal year 2021;

or

“(III) 50 percent, in the case of fiscal year 2022 or any succeeding fiscal year; or

“(ii) in the case of an eligible entity that is an Indian Tribe (or a consortium of Indian Tribes), a Tribal Organization, or an Urban Indian Organization—

“(I) 100 percent, in the case of fiscal year 2020 or 2021; or

“(II) 70 percent, in the case of fiscal year 2022 or any succeeding fiscal year.

“(2) *NON-PROGRAM HOME VISITING SHARE.*—The share of the costs of providing services or conducting activities under this section not covered by grant funds may include—

“(A) State expenditures of Federal funds made available other than under this section expended for activities under this section;

“(B) State expenditures of State funds expended for activities under this section as a condition of receiving Federal funds other than under this section; and

“(C) contributions made for activities under this section from any other source, paid in cash or in kind, valued at the fair market value of such contribution.”.

(b) *CONFORMING AMENDMENT.*—Section 511(h)(2)(A) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 711(h)(2)(A)) is amended in the 2nd sentence by striking “Such” and inserting “Except as provided in subsection (l)(1), such”.

SEC. 10. DATA EXCHANGE STANDARDS FOR IMPROVED INTEROPERABILITY.

(a) *IN GENERAL.*—Section 511(h) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 711(h)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(5) *DATA EXCHANGE STANDARDS FOR IMPROVED INTEROPERABILITY.*—

“(A) *DESIGNATION AND USE OF DATA EXCHANGE STANDARDS.*—

“(i) *DESIGNATION.*—The head of the department or agency responsible for administering a program funded under this section shall, in consultation with an interagency work group established by the Office of Management and Budget and considering State government perspectives, designate data exchange standards for necessary categories of information that a State agency operating the program is required to electronically exchange with another State agency under applicable Federal law.

“(ii) *DATA EXCHANGE STANDARDS MUST BE NONPROPRIETARY AND INTEROPERABLE.*—The data exchange standards designated under clause (i) shall, to the extent practicable, be nonproprietary and interoperable.

“(iii) *OTHER REQUIREMENTS.*—In designating data exchange standards under this paragraph, the Secretary shall, to the extent practicable, incorporate—

“(I) interoperable standards developed and maintained by an international voluntary consensus standards body, as defined by the Office of Management and Budget;

“(II) interoperable standards developed and maintained by intergovernmental partnerships, such as the National Information Exchange Model; and

“(III) interoperable standards developed and maintained by Federal entities with authority over contracting and financial assistance.

“(B) *DATA EXCHANGE STANDARDS FOR FEDERAL REPORTING.*—

“(i) *DESIGNATION.*—The head of the department or agency responsible for administering a program referred to in this section shall, in consultation with an interagency work group established by the Office of Management and Budget, and considering State government perspectives, designate data exchange standards to govern Federal reporting and exchange requirements under applicable Federal law.

“(ii) *REQUIREMENTS.*—The data exchange reporting standards required by clause (i) shall, to the extent practicable—

“(I) incorporate a widely accepted, nonproprietary, searchable, computer-readable format;

“(II) be consistent with and implement applicable accounting principles;

“(III) be implemented in a manner that is cost-effective and improves program efficiency and effectiveness; and

“(IV) be capable of being continually upgraded as necessary.

“(iii) *INCORPORATION OF NONPROPRIETARY STANDARDS.*—In designating data exchange standards under this paragraph, the Secretary shall, to the extent practicable, incorporate existing nonproprietary standards, such as the eXtensible Markup Language.

“(iv) *RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.*—Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to require a change to existing data exchange standards for Federal reporting about a program referred to in this section, if the head of the department or agency responsible for administering the program finds the standards to be effective and efficient.”.

(b) *EFFECTIVE DATE.*—The amendments made by this section shall take effect 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

The CHAIR. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in House Report 115-331. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. SMITH OF NEBRASKA

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in House Report 115-331.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 5, beginning on line 17, strike “of the service delivery model or models that the eligible entity may need to develop for the model to operate” and inserting “to operate at least 1 approved model of home visiting”.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 533, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. SMITH) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nebraska.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Chair, this amendment seeks to establish a careful balance between two competing views in regards to where and how home visiting programs

should be operated. The law requires States to operate home visiting programs in areas of highest need. However, some States expressed concern that they have been required to operate home visiting programs in areas where they were likely to fail, as they were not permitted to take into account staff and community resources and other requirements of a home visiting model when choosing where to operate.

In the bill I introduced with my colleagues, we allowed States to take these considerations into account, and States were generally pleased with this change. However, since the introduction of the bill, we have received additional feedback that some changes might be needed to make sure States could take into account these factors but not simply avoid serving actual areas with the highest need, including rural areas and remote areas that I represent, as well as others.

During the Ways and Means markup of this bill, Representative SEWELL offered an amendment to address this problem. Although we did not include her actual amendment in the reported bill, as we did not have enough time to review it and consider any unintended consequences, Representative SEWELL and I have been able to review her proposal since the markup and discuss its implications. I am pleased today to offer this bipartisan amendment to address the concerns she and others have raised.

Specifically, this amendment, combined with the language in the underlying bill, allows States to take into account staffing, community resources, and other requirements when determining how to operate their home visiting programs, while requiring that they operate at least one home visiting model in those communities with a high need for services. This ensures States do not shy away from some of the most difficult areas, which are often those that need home visiting services the most.

I am glad we have been able to work together on this bipartisan amendment, and I urge my colleagues to support the amendment as well as the underlying bill.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition, although I am not opposed to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. SIMPSON). Without objection, the gentlewoman is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. First, I would like to thank Chairman BRADY as well as Chairman SMITH for honoring their commitment to work with me to ensure that the most needy rural communities are not neglected in this bill.

I am glad to see that the language I proposed during the committee markup last week has been included in the Smith amendment.

□ 1430

Both my friend from Nebraska and I represent rural America, and we understand the obstacles that our rural constituents confront on a daily basis. Moreover, we both believe in the mission of the MIECHV Program, and we see how effective it has been in both rural and urban communities.

One of the reasons why the MIECHV Program is good policy is because of the program's flexibility. While models like the Nurse-Family Partnership can be successful in urban and suburban areas, other evidence-based models like HIPPO—*or* Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters—can be incredibly effective in rural areas that tend to have fewer resources.

This amendment language, which I offered during the committee markup, ensures that rural communities with little resources are not skipped over. This is a simple and commonsense fix that has bipartisan support as well as the support from the Home Visiting Coalition.

While I appreciate my colleagues on the other side of the aisle for working with me to fix this language, I have to say that I am disappointed that none of the other commonsense amendments offered by my Democratic colleagues were accepted during the markup.

For years, the MIECHV Program has enjoyed bipartisan support, but I am afraid that Republican changes in the underlying legislation we are considering today, I believe, will hurt the MIECHV recipients in the long-term viability of the program.

While I oppose the final passage of the underlying bill, I, again, want to thank my friend from Nebraska, as well as Chairman BRADY, for accepting my markup amendment language, and I urge my colleagues to support the Smith amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Chairman, again, I am grateful that Ms. SEWELL and I could work together to come up with this amendment. I certainly urge its adoption as we do move forward with the bill.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. SMITH).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. PASCRELL

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in House Report 115-331.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 5, strike lines 21 through 26.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 533, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chair, this amendment would strike the provision in the bill that would add increasing employment and earnings to the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, *or* MIECHV, as it is generally referred to.

I, obviously, share the goal of increasing employment and earnings across the country. However, home visiting is not an employment program. It is a program to strengthen families to make kids healthier, safer, and more ready to learn when they start school. Those are the outcomes home visiting models strive for, and those are the outcomes they achieve.

I mentioned the other day in the Ways and Means Committee that I know the good that these programs do firsthand. In Passaic County—because most of these programs are run through counties throughout America—our home visiting program worked with a pregnant mom expecting a child with a heart defect.

The baby required open heart surgery shortly after being born last July. After the surgery, the newborn continued to have health complications. At times, his mom felt depressed and hopeless and feared that her child was not going to survive.

The home visiting program's family support worker was able to assist the mom by connecting her to services, providing her with emotional support, and acting as a liaison with the hospital where her son was.

We know the negative impact that postpartum depression can have on new moms and their babies. The home visiting program was able to connect this mom to supportive services and resources and alleviate her depression so that she could be a healthy and pleasant mom. I am happy to report that, after nearly 3 months in the hospital, this little boy was finally able to go home, and his mother continues to work with the home visiting program in northern New Jersey.

I don't think anyone can hear that story and not see value in the services that were provided. The home visiting program helped a mom, like so many other mothers across America, navigate her newborn son's healthcare crisis and manage the mental health issues associated with it.

But under the provision that my amendment is seeking to strike from the bill, this outcome would not be measured as a success. There is something wrong with that.

Most home visiting models focus on families with newborns or very small children and focus on building a parent-child bond. That is a fact. Many home visiting programs focus on teen parents and young mothers, and the priority is to keep them in school and make sure they continue their education.

There are currently 18 evidence-based home visiting models. None of them

provide employment services, none of them measure employment and earnings.

Home visitors have raised concerns that having to ask families about employment and earnings would be intrusive when you know what the focus of the program is, and would undermine the relationship they are trying to build with families.

Even if the data is collected without specifically asking families for it, knowing their performance is being measured based on their client's labor force participation—here is the kernel of the issue—will likely make home visitors feel they have to press their clients to work even if, like in the case of the mom in Passaic County, that should not be the main object.

Additionally, this bill provides no new funding. We are not asking for any new money here. Any resources devoted to supporting work would have to be diverted from MIECHV's core purposes.

I urge my colleagues, Mr. Chairman, to support this amendment to make sure children and families served by this program get the support and service that they truly need.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Chairman, since the creation of the MIECHV Program, States have been required to demonstrate their home visiting programs result in measurable improvements in six benchmark areas specified in the law.

One of the benchmark areas States can choose to focus on is "improvements in family economic self-sufficiency." Yet, as the result of changes made last year under the prior Presidential administration, "economic self-sufficiency" no longer means what you think it means—increasing work and earnings. Instead, it was defined as whether you have health insurance or are in school.

Clearly, this is not what Congress meant when the program was created and included the concept of economic self-sufficiency. So this bill would make sure that States, if they choose to focus on family economic self-sufficiency as one of the four benchmarks of the six, would measure employment and earnings as a part of that metric.

Again, States can choose among six different benchmarks when they decide which home visiting programs to operate and what goals they would like to achieve within those previously established by Congress. They don't have to choose this metric, as I mentioned earlier. However, when they do explicitly set out to increase economic self-sufficiency—emphasis on the economic—information on work and earnings must be part of what is measured to determine whether they have achieved their

goal. I believe it is absolutely critical that this intent be restored in the law.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to oppose this amendment and support the underlying bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chairman, as I said, there are currently 18 evidence-based home visiting models. Also, there is nothing added to the budget; no extra currency I am asking for.

I would ask the sponsor of the bill what he would tell this woman from Passaic County, New Jersey, one of many examples that I have. I ask him what his answer would be to that woman.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Chairman, again, I urge my colleagues to oppose the amendment as well as support the underlying bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New Jersey will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MS. DELBENE

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 3 printed in House Report 115-331.

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 9, line 16, strike "Organization" and all that follows through line 21 and insert "Organization, 100 percent."

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 533, the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. DELBENE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Washington.

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Chairman, my amendment would eliminate the dangerous cuts to Tribes who don't meet the bill's match requirement. I urge all of my colleagues to support it.

I am proud to represent a number of Tribal communities in the Puget Sound region that each have a rich history, identity, and culture. But they face unique challenges.

The need for home visiting services is particularly high among American Indians and Alaska Natives. Young people who live on reservations are twice as likely to become teen parents. Nearly three-fourths of the parents served by Tribal home visiting services live below the Federal poverty level. And the majority of Tribal beneficiaries have less than a high school diploma.

The good news is that Tribes are already using home visiting resources to implement evidence-based models that have decreased depression, substance abuse, and stress among parents, while improving health among children.

Seventy-seven percent of Tribal home visiting programs have improved family outcomes in at least four different areas, such as improving maternal and newborn health, increasing school readiness, reducing domestic violence, and strengthening parents' economic self-sufficiency.

The bad news is the need for help in Indian Country has far exceeded the limited funding available through the home visiting program. In fact, less than half of qualified applications for Tribal home visiting can be granted under the current funding levels.

Some States have tried to address these shortages with State resources, like my home State of Washington, which has voluntarily used State funding to meet the needs of Tribal families. But it is not enough.

The underlying bill provides no new resources to address the nationwide shortfall in Tribal funding. Instead, it adds a match requirement that could be the end of home visiting on reservations altogether.

Most Indian Tribes struggle economically and already face challenges providing help to families. I understand that Tribal administrators have said almost none of them could meet the match requirement in this legislation.

Indian Tribes have also generally considered Federal match requirements to be a violation of Tribal sovereignty. As such, they may have to refuse the funds and shut down home visiting programs if the bill is enacted with the match requirement.

I appreciate that the chairman has delayed the implementation of the Tribal match and reduced it to 30 percent. But, realistically, the effect will be simply to give Tribes more time to shut down their home visiting programs. The match requirement will still be completely unworkable for them in 2022.

The Federal Government has a responsibility to our Tribal communities to do everything we can to support their people, strengthen their families, and expand economic opportunity.

Mr. Chairman, the underlying bill takes a dangerous step in the wrong direction for our Tribes, but we still have the opportunity to stop it.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on my amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. DELBENE).

The amendment was agreed to.

□ 1445

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MRS. MURPHY OF FLORIDA

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 4 printed in House Report 115-331.

Mrs. MURPHY of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk. The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 14, after line 9, insert the following:
SEC. 11. ALLOCATION OF FUNDS.

Section 511(j) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 711(j)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(4) ALLOCATION OF FUNDS.—To the extent that the grant amount awarded under this section to an eligible entity is determined on the basis of relative population or poverty considerations, the Secretary shall make the determination using the most accurate Federal data available for the eligible entity.”.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 533, the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. MURPHY) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

Mrs. MURPHY of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of my bipartisan amendment, which is cosponsored by Congresswoman JENNIFER GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN from Puerto Rico and Congresswoman NYDIA VELÁZQUEZ from New York.

The American citizens in Puerto Rico and the neighboring U.S. Virgin Islands are enduring an incredibly difficult situation in the aftermath of Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria.

As a Member whose central Florida district is home to over 100,000 individuals of Puerto Rican heritage, I join my colleagues on both sides of the aisle who have made crystal clear to our brothers and sisters in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands that they will receive all the Federal support they need to stabilize the situation in the short term, to rebuild in the medium term, and to emerge stronger in the long term.

We are part of one American family. And like any close-knit family, we always have each other's backs, especially when times are tough.

My amendment will ensure that Puerto Rico and the other U.S. territories are treated equally under the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, which the underlying bill reauthorizes. The amendment will implement a recommendation made by the bipartisan, bicameral Congressional Task Force on Economic Growth in Puerto Rico.

This Federal program provides annual grants to States and territories to fund home visiting services for families with young children. Visits are conducted by social workers and other professionals. They provide parenting education and other support services with a goal of helping at-risk families succeed. It is a great program that invests in children and families, helps lift them out of poverty, and increases the chance that they will become productive and successful members of society.

In theory, the program treats States and territories equally when it comes to the distribution of grant funding. In

practice, however, Puerto Rico is treated unfairly. The Department of Health and Human Services makes allocations based, in part, on a U.S. Census Bureau data product on childhood poverty, but that data does not include information on Puerto Rico or the other territories. Therefore, Puerto Rico always receives the minimum grant allowed by the law, even though the island of 3.4 million has a high rate of childhood poverty.

My amendment would simply require HHS, when making grants, to use the best Federal data available for every State and territory and to use an appropriate alternative data source, if necessary, in the case of Puerto Rico. This will ensure that Puerto Rico receives its fair share of funding and not one penny more and not one penny less.

I hope my colleagues will support this amendment and that we will continue to do everything possible to help our fellow citizens in Puerto Rico.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment, even though I am not opposed to it.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Chairman, I support this amendment, the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, that is designed to serve families with young children living in communities at risk of a range of negative outcomes.

Today, HHS allocates money for MIECHV based on the share of children under age 5 in families at or below 100 percent of the Federal poverty line living in each State and territory.

It is imperative that the distribution of funds is done using the most accurate and up-to-date information so we can use our limited resources to target those most in need.

I thank the sponsors of this amendment, Representatives MURPHY, GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN, and VELÁZQUEZ, for bringing this issue to our attention and for offering this amendment.

Mr. Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. MURPHY of Florida. Mr. Chairman, in closing, I would simply reiterate my hope that my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will support this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Chairman, I urge support of this amendment and the underlying bill so that we can help children.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. MURPHY).

The amendment was agreed to.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Chair, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. RICE of South Carolina) having assumed the chair, Mr. SIMPSON, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2824) to amend title V of the Social Security Act to extend the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, had come to no resolution thereon.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 51 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1514

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. UPTON) at 3 o'clock and 14 minutes p.m.

INCREASING OPPORTUNITY AND SUCCESS FOR CHILDREN AND PARENTS THROUGH EVIDENCE-BASED HOME VISITING ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 533 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 2824.

Will the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) kindly take the chair.

□ 1515

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 2824) to amend title V of the Social Security Act to extend the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, with Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose earlier today, amendment No. 4, printed in House Report 115-331, offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. MURPHY), had been disposed of.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. PASCRELL

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, the unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on amendment No. 2 printed in House Report 115-331 offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 191, noes 231, not voting 11, as follows:

[Roll No. 535]

AYES—191

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

NOES—231

Abraham	Blum	Collins (GA)
Aderholt	Bost	Collins (NY)
Allen	Brady (TX)	Comer
Amash	Brat	Comstock
Amodel	Brooks (AL)	Conaway
Arrington	Brooks (IN)	Cook
Babin	Buchanan	Costello (PA)
Bacon	Buck	Cramer
Banks (IN)	Bucshon	Crawford
Barletta	Budd	Culberson
Barr	Burgess	Curbelo (FL)
Barton	Byrne	Davidson
Bergman	Calvert	Davis, Rodney
Biggs	Carter (GA)	Denham
Bilirakis	Carter (TX)	Dent
Bishop (MI)	Chabot	DeSantis
Bishop (UT)	Cheney	DesJarlais
Black	Coffman	Diaz-Balart
Blackburn	Cole	Donovan

Duffy	Kinzinger	Rogers (KY)
Duncan (SC)	Knight	Rohrabacher
Duncan (TN)	Kustoff (TN)	Rokita
Dunn	Labrador	Rooney, Francis
Emmer	LaHood	Rooney, Thomas
Estes (KS)	LaMalfa	J.
Farenthold	Lamborn	Roskam
Faso	Lance	Ross
Ferguson	Latta	Rothfus
Fitzpatrick	Lewis (MN)	Rouzer
Fleischmann	LoBiondo	Royce (CA)
Flores	Loudermilk	Russell
Fortenberry	Love	Rutherford
Fox	Lucas	Sanford
Franks (AZ)	Luetkemeyer	Schweikert
Frelinghuysen	MacArthur	Scott, Austin
Gaetz	Marchant	Sensenbrenner
Gallagher	Marino	Sessions
Garrett	Marshall	Shimkus
Gianforte	Massie	Shuster
Gibbs	Mast	Simpson
Gohmert	McCarthy	Smith (MO)
Goodlatte	McCaul	Smith (NE)
Gosar	McClintock	Smith (NJ)
Gowdy	McHenry	Smith (TX)
Graves (GA)	McKinley	Smucker
Graves (LA)	McMorris	Stefanik
Graves (MO)	Rodgers	Stewart
Griffith	McSally	Stivers
Grothman	Meadows	Taylor
Guthrie	Meehan	Tenney
Handel	Messer	Thompson (PA)
Harper	Mitchell	Thornberry
Harris	Moolenaar	Tipton
Hartsler	Mooney (WV)	Trott
Hensarling	Mullin	Turner
Herrera Beutler	Murphy (PA)	Upton
Hice, Jody B.	Newhouse	Valadao
Higgins (LA)	Noem	Wagner
Hill	Norman	Walberg
Holding	Nunes	Walden
Hollingsworth	Olson	Walker
Hudson	Palazzo	Walorski
Huizenga	Palmer	Walters, Mimi
Hultgren	Paulsen	Weber (TX)
Hunter	Pearce	Webster (FL)
Hurd	Perry	Wenstrup
Issa	Pittenger	Westerman
Jenkins (KS)	Poe (TX)	Williams
Jenkins (WV)	Poliquin	Wilson (SC)
Johnson (LA)	Posey	Wittman
Johnson (OH)	Ratcliffe	Womack
Jordan	Reed	Woodall
Joyce (OH)	Reichert	Yoder
Katko	Renacci	Yoho
Kelly (MS)	Rice (SC)	Young (AK)
Kelly (PA)	Roby	Young (IA)
King (IA)	Roe (TN)	Zeldin
King (NY)	Rogers (AL)	

NOT VOTING—11

Bridenstine	Johnson, Sam	Ros-Lehtinen
Granger	Long	Scalise
Hanabusa	Payne	Tiberi
Johnson, E. B.	Pelosi	

□ 1540

Messrs. LUETKEMEYER, POSEY, WESTERMAN, CARTER of Texas, and RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois changed their vote from “aye” to “no.”

Ms. MATSUI, Messrs. LOEBSACK, EVANS, Mses. BLUNT ROCHESTER, DEGETTE, KUSTER of New Hampshire, Mr. RICHMOND, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. VELA, Mses. VELÁZQUEZ, and ADAMS changed their vote from “no” to “aye.”

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. Under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of Georgia) having assumed the chair, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Acting

Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2824) to amend title V of the Social Security Act to extend the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, and pursuant to House Resolution 533, he reported the bill back to the House with an amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

Is a separate vote demanded on any amendment to the amendment reported from the Committee of the Whole?

If not, the question is on the amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the bill?

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Speaker, I am opposed in the current form.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Ms. DelBene moves to recommit the bill H.R. 2824 to the Committee on Ways and Means with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendment:

Strike sections 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Washington is recognized for 5 minutes.

□ 1545

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Speaker, this is the final amendment to the bill, which will not kill the bill or send it back to committee. If adopted, the bill will immediately proceed to final passage, as amended.

Like all my colleagues on this side of the aisle, I strongly support reauthorization of the home visiting program before it expires on September 30. We know it has an incredible track record of success improving child and family outcomes in our most vulnerable communities.

We also support a timely reauthorization of the program before its expiration, to ensure families across the country who are benefiting from home visiting do not face a disruption in services.

Unfortunately, Republicans have put forward a partisan bill with reckless policy changes that are not supported by experts and with only three legislative days remaining. It is incredibly disappointing, Mr. Speaker.

Earlier this summer, I got to see firsthand how impactful this program

can be. The families who choose to participate receive regular home visits from nurses and social workers, often from the same neighborhoods, who help to create healthy and supportive home environments for children and parents alike—parents like Jessie, from my home State of Washington, who struggled before she got connected with home visiting.

Jessie says: “Home visiting changed my life and helped me break the cycle of poor parenting.”

The results can't be denied. It has been shown to reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect by 50 percent, while, at the same time, reducing domestic violence, improving children's school readiness, and increasing parents' self-sufficiency and economic well-being.

It is precisely the kind of evidence-based model that we know gives us a great return. Unfortunately, there are huge unmet needs for home visiting services across the country. Last year, more than 29,000 eligible families were unserved in Washington State alone.

That is why I am so disappointed this legislation fails to make the meaningful investments we need to lift more families out of poverty and into the middle class.

Democrats even offered a proposal to double funding over 5 years, which was fully paid for, but the majority refused to allow a vote. Instead, they have included objectionable policy changes that are not supported by experts who have said the bill's matching requirement for States is the single greatest threat to home visiting.

We should not be taking steps that undermine the program or that reduce the number of States and communities that are working to help families thrive.

We should also not have waited to consider this issue until days before the program expires, like we have done with the Children's Health Insurance Program, or CHIP, the Community Health Center Fund, the National Health Service Corps, and so many other programs that are essential for the children and families that we represent.

It is unacceptable that so many programs are at risk due to Congressional inaction. We need to do a better job of providing families, States, and providers the long-term stability that they need.

My amendment is a step in the right direction. It eliminates the bill's dangerous policy changes and, instead, provides a clean, 5-year reauthorization of the home visiting program, giving States, counties, and Tribes the tools and visibility they need to help more children and families succeed.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote “yes.” Home visiting has a long history of bipartisan support, and I hope we can come together to take the program forward, not backward.

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

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, I claim the time in opposition to the motion to recommit the pending bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the motion to recommit. This bill is the result of an open process. In fact, several amendments were agreed to—in fact, one sponsored by my colleague who just spoke—and so I think we should reject this procedural motion so we can move on to pass a good underlying bill with modest reforms.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

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

RECORDED VOTE

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, this 5-minute vote on the motion to recommit will be followed by a 5-minute vote on the passage of the bill, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 191, noes 232, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 536]

AYES—191

Adams	DeGette	Kildee	Pelosi	Schakowsky	Thompson (MS)
Aguilar	Delaney	Kilmer	Perlmutter	Schiff	Titus
Barragán	DeLauro	Kind	Peters	Schneider	Tonko
Bass	DelBene	Krishnamoorthi	Peterson	Schrader	Torres
Beatty	Demings	Kuster (NH)	Pingree	Scott (VA)	Tsongas
Bera	DeSaulnier	Langevin	Pocan	Scott, David	Vargas
Beyer	Deutch	Larsen (WA)	Polis	Serrano	Veasey
Bishop (GA)	Dingell	Larson (CT)	Price (NC)	Sewell (AL)	Vela
Blumenauer	Doggett	Lawrence	Quigley	Shea-Porter	Velázquez
Blunt Rochester	Doyle, Michael	Lawson (FL)	Raskin	Sherman	Visclosky
Bonamici	F.	Lee	Rice (NY)	Sinema	Walz
Boyle, Brendan	Ellison	Levin	Richmond	Sires	Wasserman
F.	Engel	Lewis (GA)	Rosen	Slaughter	Schultz
Brady (PA)	Eshoo	Lieu, Ted	Roybal-Allard	Smith (WA)	Waters, Maxine
Brown (MD)	Españillat	Lipinski	Ruiz	Soto	Watson Coleman
Brownley (CA)	Esty (CT)	Loeb sack	Ruppersberger	Speier	Welch
Bustos	Evans	Lofgren	Rush	Suozi	Wilson (FL)
Butterfield	Foster	Lowenthal	Ryan (OH)	Swalwell (CA)	Yarmuth
Capuano	Fudge	Lowe y	Sánchez	Takano	
Carbajal	Gab bard	Lujan Grisham,	Sarbanes	Thompson (CA)	
Cárdenas	Gallego	M.			
Carlson (IN)	Garamendi	Luján, Ben Ray			
Cartwright	Gomez	Lynch			
Castor (FL)	Gonzalez (TX)	Maloney,			
Castro (TX)	Gottheimer	Carolyn B.			
Chu, Judy	Green, Al	Maloney, Sean			
Cicilline	Green, Gene	Matsui			
Clark (MA)	Grijalva	McCollum			
Clarke (NY)	Gutiérrez	McEachin			
Clay	Hastings	McGovern			
Cleaver	Heck	McNerney			
Clyburn	Higgins (NY)	Meeks			
Cohen	Himes	Meng			
Connolly	Hoyer	Moore			
Conyers	Huffman	Moulton			
Cooper	Jackson Lee	Murphy (FL)			
Correa	Jayapal	Nadler			
Costa	Jeffries	Napolitano			
Courtney	Johnson (GA)	Neal			
Crist	Kaptur	Nolan			
Crowley	Keating	Norcross			
Cuellar	Kelly (IL)	O'Halleran			
Cummings	Kennedy	O'Rourke			
Davis (CA)	Khanna	Pallone			
Davis, Danny	Kihuen	Panetta			
DeFazio		Pascarell			
			Abraham	Gibbs	Newhouse
			Aderholt	Gohmert	Noem
			Allen	Goodlatte	Norman
			Amash	Gosar	Nunes
			Amodei	Gowdy	Olson
			Arrington	Graves (GA)	Palazzo
			Babin	Graves (LA)	Palmer
			Bacon	Graves (MO)	Paulsen
			Banks (IN)	Griffith	Pearce
			Barletta	Grothman	Perry
			Barr	Guthrie	Pittenger
			Barton	Handel	Poe (TX)
			Bergman	Harper	Poliquin
			Biggs	Harris	Posey
			Bilirakis	Hartzler	Ratcliffe
			Bishop (MI)	Hensarling	Reed
			Bishop (UT)	Herrera Beutler	Reichert
			Black	Hice, Jody B.	Renacci
			Blackburn	Higgins (LA)	Rice (SC)
			Blum	Hill	Roby
			Bost	Holding	Roe (TN)
			Brady (TX)	Hollingsworth	Rogers (AL)
			Brat	Hudson	Rogers (KY)
			Brooks (AL)	Huizenga	Rohrabacher
			Brooks (IN)	Hultgren	Rokita
			Buchanan	Hunter	Rooney, Francis
			Buck	Hurd	Rooney, Thomas
			Bucshon	Issa	J.
			Budd	Jenkins (KS)	Roskam
			Burgess	Jenkins (WV)	Ross
			Byrne	Johnson (LA)	Rothfus
			Calvert	Johnson (OH)	Rouzer
			Carter (GA)	Jones	Royce (CA)
			Carter (TX)	Jordan	Russell
			Chabot	Joyce (OH)	Rutherford
			Cheney	Katko	Schweikert
			Coffman	Kelly (MS)	Scott, Austin
			Cole	Kelly (PA)	Sensenbrenner
			Collins (GA)	King (IA)	Sessions
			Collins (NY)	King (NY)	Shimkus
			Comer	Kinzing er	Shuster
			Comstock	Knight	Simpson
			Conaway	Kustoff (TN)	Smith (MO)
			Cook	Labrador	Smith (NE)
			Costello (PA)	LaHood	Smith (NJ)
			Cramer	LaMalfa	Smith (TX)
			Crawford	Lamborn	Smucker
			Culberson	Lance	Stefanik
			Curbe lo (FL)	Latta	Stewart
			Davidson	Lewis (MN)	Stivers
			Davis, Rodney	LoBiondo	Taylor
			Denham	Loudermilk	Tenney
			Dent	Love	Thompson (PA)
			DeSantis	Lucas	Thornberry
			DesJarlais	Luetkemeyer	Tipton
			Diaz-Balart	MacArthur	Trott
			Donovan	Marchant	Turner
			Duffy	Marino	Upton
			Duncan (SC)	Marshall	Valadao
			Duncan (TN)	Massie	Wagner
			Dunn	Mast	Walberg
			Emmer	McCarthy	Walden
			Estes (KS)	McCaul	Walker
			Farenthold	McClintock	Walorski
			Faso	McHenry	Walters, Mimi
			Ferguson	McKinley	Weber (TX)
			Fitzpatrick	McMorris	Webster (FL)
			Fleischmann	Rodgers	Wenstrup
			Flores	McSally	Westerman
			Fortenberry	Meadows	Williams
			Fox	Meehan	Wilson (SC)
			Franks (AZ)	Messer	Wittman
			Frelinghuysen	Mitchell	Womack
			Gaetz	Moolenaar	
			Gallagher	Mooney (WV)	
			Garrett	Mullin	
			Gianforte	Murphy (PA)	

Woodall Yoho Young (IA)
Yoder Young (AK) Zeldin

NOT VOTING—10

Bridenstine Johnson, Sam Scalise
Granger Long Tiberi
Hanabusa Payne
Johnson, E. B. Ros-Lehtinen

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE
The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1558

Mr. ADERHOLT changed his vote from “aye” to “no.”

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

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

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

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

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 214, noes 209, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 537]

AYES—214

Abraham Emmer Latta
Aderholt Estes (KS) Lewis (MN)
Allen Farenthold LoBiondo
Amodeli Faso Loudermilk
Babin Ferguson Love
Bacon Fitzpatrick Lucas
Banks (IN) Fleischmann Luetkemeyer
Barletta Flores MacArthur
Barr Fortenberry Marchant
Barton Foxx Marino
Bergman Franks (AZ) Marshall
Bilirakis Frelinghuysen Mast
Bishop (MI) Gallagher McCarthy
Bishop (UT) Gianforte McCaul
Black Gibbs McClintock
Blackburn Gohmert McHenry
Blum Goodlatte McKinley
Bost Gowdy McMorris
Brady (TX) Graves (GA) Rodgers
Brooks (IN) Graves (LA) McSally
Buchanan Graves (MO) Meadows
Buck Grothman Meehan
Bucshon Guthrie Messer
Budd Handel Mitchell
Burgess Harper Moolenaar
Byrne Hartzler Mooney (WV)
Calvert Hensarling Mullin
Carter (GA) Herrera Beutler Murphy (PA)
Carter (TX) Higgins (LA) Newhouse
Chabot Hill Noem
Cheney Holding Norman
Coffman Hollingsworth Nunes
Cole Hudson Olson
Collins (GA) Huizenga Palazzo
Collins (NY) Hultgren Palmer
Comer Hunter Paulsen
Comstock Hurd Pearce
Conaway Issa Peterson
Cook Jenkins (KS) Pittenger
Costello (PA) Jenkins (WV) Poe (TX)
Cramer Johnson (LA) Poliquin
Crawford Johnson (OH) Posey
Cuellar Joyce (OH) Ratcliffe
Culberson Katko Reed
Curbelo (FL) Kelly (MS) Reichert
Davidson Kelly (PA) Renacci
Davis, Rodney King (IA) Rice (SC)
Denham King (NY) Roby
Dent Kinzinger Roe (TN)
DeSantis Knight Rogers (AL)
DesJarlais Kustoff (TN) Rogers (KY)
Diaz-Balart Labrador Rohrabacher
Donovan LaHood Rokita
Duffy LaMalfa Rooney, Thomas
Duncan (SC) Lamborn J.
Dunn Lance Roskam

Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce (CA)
Russell
Rutherford
Sanford
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)

Adams
Aguilar
Amash
Arrington
Barragán
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Biggs
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brat
Brooks (AL)
Brown (MD)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capuano
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Ciallone
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Clever
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Crist
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DeBene
Demings
DeSaulnier
Deutsch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duncan (TN)
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Espallat
Esty (CT)
Evans
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard

Bridenstine
Granger
Hanabusa
Johnson, E. B.

Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smucker
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner

NOES—209

Gaetz
Gallego
Garamendi
Garrett
Gomez
Gonzalez (TX)
Gosar
Gottheimer
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Harris
Hastings
Heck
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Hoyer
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Jones
Jordan
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loeb sack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowe
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
Maloney,
Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Massie
Matsui
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano

NOT VOTING—10

Johnson, Sam
Long
Payne
Ros-Lehtinen

Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Young (AK)
Zeldin

Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Halleran
O'Rourke
Pallone
Panetta
Pascrell
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Rooney, Francis
Rosen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Soto
Speier
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Webster (FL)
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth
Yoho
Young (IA)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

□ 1604

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. TIBERI. Mr. Speaker, on roll call No. 537 (Passage of H.R. 2824—Increasing Opportunity and Success for Children and Parents through Evidence-Based Home Visiting Act), I did not cast my vote. Had I been present, I would have voted “yea” on passage of this bill.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, due to a personal conflict, I was unable to make votes. Had I been present, I would have voted: “Yea” on rollcall No. 532, “Yea” on rollcall No. 533, “Yea” on rollcall No. 534, “Nay” on rollcall No. 535, “Nay” on rollcall No. 536, “Yea” on rollcall No. 537.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER
AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 3005

Mr. O'HALLERAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that my name be removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 3005.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DUNN). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Arizona?

There was no objection.

APPOINTMENT OF INDIVIDUAL TO
THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE
DRUG POLICY COMMISSION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to section 603 of the Department of State Authorities Act, Fiscal Year 2017 (Pub.L. 114-323), and the order of the House of January 3, 2017, of the following individual on the part of the House to the Western Hemisphere Drug Policy Commission:

Mr. Matt Salmon of Mesa, Arizona

CONGRATULATING DR. RORY
COOPER

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

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an Army veteran and University of Pittsburgh engineer, Dr. Rory Cooper, for his achievements and impact on society.

While serving as a soldier, Rory was injured in an accident that left him paralyzed from the waist down. Despite the challenges presented by his disability, Dr. Cooper earned his Ph.D. in electrical and computer science from the University of California, Santa Barbara. His education and passion for helping others with disabilities led him to found the Human Engineering Research Laboratories at the University of Pittsburgh.

Along with his team of researchers, Dr. Cooper is credited with 25 patents that have significantly advanced wheelchair technology and benefited tens of thousands of veterans.

Mr. Speaker, this week, Dr. Cooper will be presented with the Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medal. I

thank Dr. Cooper for his work and congratulate him on this achievement.

DISAPPEARANCE OF MEXICAN STUDENTS NEEDS MORE INVESTIGATION

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

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, 3 years ago today, 43 students from Ayotzinapa, Mexico, disappeared.

I recently traveled to Mexico where I spoke with many of their parents and the family members of the students who disappeared. I was humbled by the strength that they show. After a 3-year struggle, they have asked for answers to two simple questions: What happened that night when their children were taken; and where are they now?

On this third anniversary of their loss, I am repeating my past calls for the Mexican Government to prioritize their search for the students, to bring justice to those responsible for their disappearance, and to investigate any obstruction of justice.

If the Mexican Government cannot do this, I urge them to allow the independent panel of experts to expand on their initial investigation. The students, their parents, and the Mexican people deserve answers.

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM IS A CONCERNING TREND

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

Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER. Mr. Speaker, September is the time when students return back to school, and it also marks Attendance Awareness Month.

Chronic absenteeism is a concerning trend in my district in southwest Washington State and across America. In the 2013–2014 school year, more than 6.8 million students missed enough class to be considered chronically absent.

My State of Washington has the second highest chronic absenteeism rate in the country, with 25 percent of students being chronically absent. We can do better.

To understand the challenges locally, I recently met with several superintendents in southwest Washington, and there are a myriad of issues that these students are facing.

We are trying to address some of these with H.R. 1864, the Chronic Absenteeism Reduction Act, which I have introduced with my Democratic colleague, TIM RYAN from Ohio.

This bill would empower schools to solve attendance problems locally, using such tactics as partnering with local health, transportation, and social service providers, and implementing school-based mentoring programs.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this bill.

HELP FELLOW AMERICANS IN PUERTO RICO

(Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, we are right now witnessing a humanitarian crisis—not in some far-flung corner of the world, but right here at home. Mr. Speaker, 3½ million of our fellow Americans in Puerto Rico, fellow U.S. citizens, are without water and without electricity, cut off from the rest of the world. These are our fellow Americans.

Puerto Ricans are just as American as we are. They have fought in every single one of our American wars. They need our help now. This is what we do best as Americans.

When there is a crisis, we come together and help our fellow Americans. We must act now. This should be the number one priority of Congress and the White House this week, and we should not leave here until we have let the millions of people in Puerto Rico know that we will be there for them.

□ 1615

HONORING GOLD STAR MOTHERS

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, Sunday marked a special kind of Mother's Day: Gold Star Mother's Day. Since 1936, the Nation has observed Gold Star Mother's Day on the last Sunday in September. The President humbly proclaimed Gold Star Mother's and Families' Day this Sunday, September 24.

Our Gold Star Mothers should be honored and offered respect and gratitude for their personal sacrifice. Gold Star Mother's Day is intended to pay tribute to women who have experienced tremendous personal loss on behalf of our country.

Mr. Speaker, our Gold Star Mothers serve as a strength and inspiration for this country. They are part of an exclusive group, one that no one ever hopes to belong to. One can hardly imagine the deep pain and anguish that a mother experiences when losing a child, particularly in military action.

May we always honor the Gold Star Mothers of America for their courage, their strength, and their sacrifice. They bear their cross with honor. The memory of their children lives on not only in their hearts, but in the heart of this Nation.

TRADE AND JOBS HEARING IN BROOK PARK, OHIO

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, during the August recess, I organized a dis-

trict field hearing to hear firsthand accounts from America's workers, my constituents, on NAFTA's disastrous job impacts. These voices must be heard and listened to as our Nation renegotiates NAFTA. These real stories are the people who live the impacts of Washington's agreements.

I thank the Local United Auto Workers Chapter 1250 for graciously hosting us, a region that lost over 14,500 jobs after NAFTA's passage to Mexico and to Latin America.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD the testimony of Amy Hanauer of Policy Matters Ohio, Donnie Blatt of the United Steelworkers, and Mark Payne of the United Auto Workers.

AMY HANAUER, POLICY MATTERS OHIO

Representative Kaptur and others, thank you for the opportunity to testify today alongside these strong community leaders. I'm Amy Hanauer and I run Policy Matters Ohio, a policy research institute dedicated to creating a more vibrant equitable, sustainable, and inclusive Ohio. Find us online at www.policymattersohio.org.

Trade and jobs in Ohio: Key principles to improve outcomes for workers

NAFTA and other trade agreements have eliminated jobs in Ohio and the United States. Manufacturing remains an essential part of Ohio's economy, despite its downturn. Smart policy can strengthen Ohio manufacturing while making our economy greener and stronger. Some key recommendations include:

- Invest in infrastructure, particularly clean energy

- Invest in solar panels and wind turbines
- Structure these projects carefully, prioritizing good jobs and diverse workers

- Support American manufacturing through proven programs

- Support manufacturing extension programs

- Buy American when spending public dollars

- Support smart worker training
- Improve trade agreements
- Increase worker protections
- Improve environmental standards
- Eliminate special courts

As we have long documented at Policy Matter, the North American Free Trade Agreement and other trade agreements have not accomplished what they were supposed to in Ohio. Our current trade rules favor multinational corporations and their investor over workers and citizens. As a result, these policies have reduced the quantity and quality of domestic jobs, thereby exacerbating wealth inequality. Many multinational corporations that once employed people here have instead located in places with lower wages, fewer environmental regulations, and weaker labor regulations. NAFTA rules made that shift easier.

One reason these deals have been so destructive is that they transfer power away from citizens and to international investors. They bar nations, states, and cities from enacting labor and environmental policies that protect the public. They block local governments from using policy to boost demand for domestic products, such as local sourcing.

NAFTA was promoted as being broadly helpful to Americans and our trading partners. But the economist Susan Helper recently testified that NAFTA slowed wage growth in U.S. industries and regions. This hurt not just manufacturing workers, but also service employees, as displaced manufacturing workers sought jobs in restaurants and retail and as laid-off workers had less to

spend in the economy. In Mexico as well, wages stayed mostly flat even though productivity increased. Mexican manufacturing wages remain well under 20% of U.S. manufacturing wages.

The Economic Policy Institute found that NAFTA cost the U.S. 683,000 jobs from 1994 to 2010. Manufacturing, as a sector, lost the most, 60.8 percent. Geographically, Midwest states like Ohio took the hardest hit. NAFTA also displaced Mexican small farmers and business owners, and did not raise wages relative to the U.S. Despite that, the treaty became a model for the World Trade Organization, China trade normalization, and other deals. As a result of all of these, economist Jeff Faux estimates an additional net loss of 2.7 million U.S. jobs and economist Josh Bivens found that the typical American with just high school degree loses \$1,800 a year.

Manufacturing has declined, but remains an essential part of Ohio's economy. One in eight Ohio employees works in manufacturing. We had 687,000 manufacturing workers in 2015: only California and Texas have more. Average wages of \$1,119 a week were 24.9 percent higher than in other sectors. Ohio manufacturers contributed \$108 billion to the economy in 2015, 17.8 percent of the total for the state. So that sector is responsible for one in every six dollars and one in every eight jobs in Ohio. The typical worker with a high school diploma and no college earns \$2.99 more per hour in manufacturing.

While the sector has generally lost employment over the past several decades and in the most recent recession, some signs point to a partial recovery. Good policy, including trade policy, can make this more likely. There are clear things we can do to improve policy so that workers and the environment on all sides of the border are better protected.

At Policy Matters, we recommend three large policy priorities to address these issues:

Invest in infrastructure, especially energy: America's infrastructure is crumbling around us and we are completely underinvested in infrastructure that would reduce energy use and address other environmental problems. We should get to work now, upgrading, maintain, and building infrastructure that would strengthen our communities and make our planet more sustainable, and we should make sure that American products are used throughout these projects. To name a few priorities:

We should install solar panels on every public building in the United States, buying from American companies and having unionized tradespeople do the installation. Right here in Cleveland there are entrepreneurs selling solar panels and they argue that even here in snowy Cleveland, many residential solar installations now pay for themselves in less than a decade and commercial systems will pay for themselves in less than six years. Representative Kaptur is a longtime champion of this approach, and Toledo, with its extensive glass-making history, has a strong supply chain that could play a key role in this work.

We should be installing wind turbines wherever appropriate, using Ohio's substantial supply chain to produce component parts for these turbines. Here in Cleveland, we continue to want to see the Lake Erie Economic Development Company project build the first fresh water wind farm in the country on Lake Erie. We got some great news just this week that this project cleared another hurdle and is moving forward—but movement has been much slower than needed because public policy at the federal and state level just down to incentivize this kind of job-creating energy-generating investment.

These projects should be structured carefully. There are sound principles at the website millionsofjobs.org that I encourage you to look at, but some of the elements we support include supporting direct public investment, not tax giveaways for corporate subsidies and making sure that these projects are union-built, have inclusive workforces that represent the diversity of the communities in which they're being done, and have worker and environmental protections. SA mentioned, all of these projects should pay decent wages, should source from U.S. made products, and should prioritize the needs of disadvantaged communities—both urban and rural. Finally, these projects should be paid for through fair, progressive taxes so that the wealthiest Americans and giant corporations who reap the greatest economic benefit from public goods pay their fair share.

Support American manufacturing through proven programs:

Manufacturing Extension Partnerships (MEPs) help manufacturers work together to solve problems and find solutions to assist their sector. They assist with research and development, commercialization, joint marketing and branding, worker training, identifying new technology, share investments like makerspaces, and reshoring. The federal government should deepen investments in MEPs. Instead President Trump's budget proposal threatens to entirely eliminate this modest but successful program. Similarly, the manufacturing innovation institutes that have been so successful, including one in Youngstown, face 70% cuts in the Trump budget.

Buy American: We should Buy America provisions for all public spending at all levels of government. Senators Rob Portman and Sherrod Brown have both voiced support for these important provisions and I would urge you to join in that support. The Trump Administration should apply Buy America to all federally-funded infrastructure projects. President Trump's intent in this area is not entirely clear and we should encourage him to make good on promise he has made to support American products. While Buy America rules apply to some federal infrastructure programs, many taxpayer-funded projects still lack rules requiring the use of American-made products. Brown's proposed legislation would ensure Buy America rules apply to all federally-assisted projects.

Invest in worker training: The Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act, WIOA, trains and educates workers, focusing on career pathways and apprenticeships. By incorporating a strong understanding of the labor market, WIOA is transforming the workforce system for those who face significant barriers to employment. The act pushes the public sector to better serve low-skilled, low-income adults so they can achieve not just self-sufficiency, but real economic mobility. Ohio trains have been working hard to take advantage of these new approaches. For Ohio workers who face barriers to employment and tough job markets, it's essential that we all deliver. Yet, this program too is on the chopping block under the Trump Administration. The Trump budget calls for cuts of approximately \$1 billion from the WIOA program. The cuts represent about a 40 percent reduction from current funding levels and would have devastating impacts on states and local communities seeking to address the skill needs of businesses and jobseekers. Instead of cutting WIOA, we should be enhancing it.

Improve trade agreements. This encompasses three primary provisions.

Increase worker protections. NAFTA has reduced bargaining power for workers in both the U.S. and Mexico. Workers and their

representatives have little ability to object to sweatshop conditions or labor law violations. At most they can call for consultations that have no enforcement mechanisms. Investors have much more power to object and much stronger mechanisms to do so. Worker representatives from all countries in an agreement should be brought in to propose standards. I encourage this committee to consult the AFL-CIO (2017) and the Roosevelt Institute (Tucker, 2017) about how best to remedy this in renegotiation.

Improve environmental protection. Environmental protections in NAFTA are relegated to side agreements with no enforcement provisions. This is why we've seen more use of polluting fossil fuels, less protection of greenspace and forests, and more deeply problematic mining since NAFTA. Other testimony today provides more detail on how best to address environmental concerns, but minimally, those who breathe the air, drink the water, and suffer from global warming should have as much power as multinational corporations to raise their issues. (350.org et al, 2017)

Eliminate special courts for investors. NAFTA established special courts where firms can challenge government policies that affect their investments. These "investor-state dispute settlement" (ISDS) mechanisms undermine democracy and national sovereignty. This system should be eliminated so that citizens again have the ability to advocate for the laws they think will best protect their communities.

In sum, there is much that federal policy can do to create fair trade, to promote American manufacturing, and to improve job quality and availability. We decide the kind of economy we want to have and we can choose one that does more for our families, communities, and planet. We appreciate your interest in exploring and further those policies.

DONNIE BLATT, ASSISTANT TO THE DIRECTOR,
UNITED STEELWORKERS—DISTRICT 1

I would like to thank the sponsors for holding this event, UAW Local 1250 and its officers and of course our great Congresswoman MARCY KAPTUR. Congresswoman KAPTUR has been a great public servant for many years and has been a great friend to the United Steelworkers, not only in her Congressional District but all over Ohio and our Nation. I want to thank her personally for her role in the re-negotiation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The United Steelworkers have been involved in the trade debate since NAFTA was inception in 1994 and we are happy for include our voice going forward to again try to make trade competitive and fair for all workers, not just in the United States, but for the workers of our trading partners as well.

As an International Union that represents workers in a wide range of sectors, not just steel but aluminum, tire and rubber, glass, paper, auto parts, fabrication, public sector and many more. We have a wide range of knowledge on trade and how trade affects not only the U.S. workers, but also the communities where they live. The biggest problem with NAFTA and similar trade agreements is that it allowed for multi-national corporations to shift jobs wherever workers can be exploited and environmental regulations are the weakest. Even with the promises of great economic growth for all the U.S. Labor Department certified nearly 1 million manufacturing jobs has been lost just with the NAFTA agreement alone.

With NAFTA and other NAFTA-style trade policies such as Permanent Normal Trade Relations with China (PNTR), the Central

America Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) and the Korea-U.S. Free Trade Agreement (KORUS), the United States has closed roughly 60,000 manufacturing facilities here at home. To put things into perspective, this represents 3 times the number of people that live here in Brook Park, OH. If you would go around Brook Park today, every man you would see would be equal to 3 manufacturing facilities closed, for every woman you would see would be equal to 3 manufacturing facilities closed and for every child you would see would be equal to 3 manufacturing facilities closed. The 60,000 closed facilities equates to around 5 million lost manufacturing jobs. This number represents the entire population of the states of Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, North Dakota and South Dakota combined. It's not just about manufacturing jobs, the U.S. has also experienced job loss in the sectors of computer programming, call centers, engineering and service sector jobs as well and many other employment sectors. In Ohio alone, since NAFTA, we have lost over 300,000 manufacturing jobs which is more than every man woman and child that lives in the city of Cincinnati.

Along with the jobs that are lost directly in manufacturing, there are effects to the local community. First, because manufacturing jobs typically pay more than other jobs in the area, when they are lost there is a natural downward pressure that is put on wages and benefits to remaining jobs in the immediate area. Secondly, the combination of the lost manufacturing jobs and the downward pressure on the remaining jobs means less money for the community tax base, which affects the schools, police and fire departments, roads and bridges and other public services. This means the public sector workers are left struggling to maintain a decent standard of living for their families. Donald Trump has been right to highlight NAFTA and the impact it has had on our trade deficit. Yet his administration has failed to propose the bold changes needed to properly replace NAFTA, reduce our trade deficit, and create more manufacturing jobs that would raise wages for workers at home and abroad, as was promised.

There are conditions needed in future trade agreements that the Trump Administration has not committed to, to make trade fair and a level playing field. First, we a strong and enforceable labor and environmental standard that will not only lift wages and protect jobs here at home, but will lift working conditions abroad. So far the Trump Administration only seeks to use the weak and unenforceable standards from previous agreements. Second, we need to end investor state protections that make it easier for multi-national corporations to shift jobs overseas and end investor state dispute settlements that allow corporations to sue the United States taxpayers because of a law that may protect its citizens yet may increase corporate production costs. Third, we need stronger rules of origin laws and close the back door that allows parts made in China and Vietnam and assembled in the United States and labeled made in the USA in order to get tariff relief protection. Tariff deduction should not be granted unless the majority of the product is made here at home. Lastly, we need to end the NAFTA ban on "Buy America" so tax dollars can be used as much as possible to create jobs that local communities desperately need. The White House plan to renegotiate NAFTA is vague on these four points. If the NAFTA renegotiations process is going to benefit American workers we have to hold the White House more accountable for these promised changes and more.

Finally, the NAFTA renegotiations cannot be done behind closed doors with corporate

advisors dictating the terms of the Agreement. This creates too many conflicts of interests. They must be transparent and exposed to public scrutiny. The United Steelworkers stand ready to lend their voice and resources to ensure these points are part of any NAFTA renegotiations. Thank You Congressman KAPTUR for your work and your consideration.

NAFTA HEARING, MARK PAYNE

I am here to talk about manufacturing in Cleveland and the effect NAFTA has had on our Site. At one time our Site had over 14,000 workers. Our Aluminum Plant phased out 2005 and the equipment was loaded up and sent to Cifunza, Mexico.

Our Casting Plant phased out in 2010 and its work was sent to Mexico and Tupy, Brazil. Engine Plant 2 Phased out in 2012 and is now sitting idle. This Plant won the Shingo Award for best quality!

What is the common denominator here? Bad Trade Agreements!!!!

We battled against the EPA Restrictions in the Casting Plant. We fought against low wages from other countries.

How do you compete against poverty wages? Against lax EPA standards from other countries? Against a lack of investment in America?

Across from our Union Hall once stood our Casting Plant, it is now just an open field . . . Was it dirty work, yes, but it was our work!!!

Our workers know the effects of a bad Trade Agreement!

But, we did not have a Level Playing field!

Trade Agreements seeks to drive down our wages in a race to the bottom. The current Mexican auto worker wage has even fallen under NAFTA, from \$3.95 an hour to \$2.93 an hour.

With fair competition we have proven that we will excel in the global marketplace. But we must have a living wage for a fair day of work. We must invest in America.

The problem is our Trade agreements "perception" of progress, without making any. The problem is our trade agreements reward Companies that take work out of America.

Are the Trade agreements unlocking the opportunities for America or are we just widening the lane for our jobs to leave America?

Trades Agreements has cost Ohio over 323,000 manufacturing jobs. Under NAFTA the trade imbalance in the auto sector has grown from \$3.5 billion in 1993 to \$45.1 billion in 2016.

Ford will say that they were only following their "Way Forward" Strategy. For Cleveland NAFTA has been a job killing strategy.

No one can tell me that low wages mixed with lax EPA standards was not a part of Ford's "Way Forward" decision to relocate our work.

Nothing stings worse than having your jobs moved to another country produce the product you used to make, and have that same product brought back into this Country for us to buy.

In Cleveland, we are slowly coming back, we produce the 3.5 and 3.7 V-6 Ecoboost engines and we were able to accomplish a 'reverse NAFTA', bring work from Spain to Cleveland when we launched a new 4 cyl engine. We are also slated to produce the engine from the New Ranger/Bronco vehicles coming out in 2019.

Work coming back to Cleveland is like Lebron James coming back to the Cavs. They should have never left! Ohio is a great place for work to come to . . . no social unrest, just hard working men and women from a blue collar town, building quality engines.

In closing, I want to thank Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur for fighting the good fight and

for supporting good paying jobs in America once again. Congresswoman, Spread our message! The UAW has your back!

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, they directly know the negative impacts of NAFTA. Amy stressed the changing nature of manufacturing in Ohio, making up one of eight jobs. Donnie discussed how Ohio has lost over 300,000 manufacturing jobs as well as the imperative for a new NAFTA transparent agreement. Mark Payne spoke about the need for a continental living wage and investment in American job growth. All three emphasized a deal that works for jobs here in America, America's workers, and Buy American provisions.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues and the administration to take heed of their testimony. We need to create jobs here in America and across this continent that are living wage jobs.

SALUTING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF FORMER MARINE AND ONEIDA COUNTY DEPUTY SHERIFF KURT B. WYMAN

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

Ms. TENNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute Deputy Kurt B. Wyman, a Marine Corps veteran and Oneida County sheriff's deputy who was killed in the line of duty in 2011 at only 24 years old.

Deputy Wyman served with distinction in Iraq, earning the Iraqi Campaign Medal, Sea Service Deployment Ribbon, Armed Forces Reserve Medal, and the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal. During his service in the Oneida County Sheriff's Office, he was named Rookie of the Year and earned the Grand Cordon Medal twice.

Following his tragic death, the Deputy Kurt B. Wyman Foundation was created to celebrate and honor his distinguished life of service to our community and our Nation. Through the foundation's efforts, the Deputy Kurt B. Wyman Memorial Park in Whitestown was constructed as a resource for local families.

Each year, an annual fall festival and a motorcycle ride are held at the park to honor and remember Deputy Wyman's legacy. I am honored to be joined by so many others who are grateful citizens by riding my own Harley-Davidson in this beautiful tribute to Deputy Wyman each year.

Please join me and our entire community today in celebrating the life of Deputy Kurt B. Wyman, who paid the ultimate sacrifice in service to our community and this great Nation.

PUERTO RICO IS FACING A HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

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

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Mr. Speaker, Puerto Rico is facing a humanitarian crisis. Puerto Rico is in desperate need for us to assist them. Hurricane Maria, soon after Hurricane Irma, has left a trail of destruction for Puerto Rico's residents. Currently, 3.5 million American citizens in Puerto Rico are without power, 20,000 people are on a waiting list to leave the island, and about \$85 billion is needed in recovery funds.

The island and its towns have been completely cut off by water flooding, broken bridges, lack of electricity, and no cell phone service. As a result, there are displaced senior citizens and children who cannot get basic goods and medical supplies.

The people of Puerto Rico need supplemental funding not next week, but today. The Jones Act must be waived. Price gouging by airlines should not be allowed. Clean water needs to be shipped to the island, and hospitals need to be set up.

It is our responsibility as Members of Congress and U.S. citizens to provide relief to Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and the small Caribbean countries in that area. Please, let's save Puerto Rico.

HURRICANE HARVEY BRINGS NEW LIFE

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as Hurricane Harvey's hammering floodwaters crept closer and closer to their home, Annie and her husband, Gary, became nervously anxious because, you see, Annie was pregnant and needed to get to the hospital.

But the 2-mile drive to the hospital was no longer possible due to high rising water. So they called 911, but the lines were busy. Both doctors in training, the Smiths started preparing for a home delivery. Finally, a call to Annie's school brought a rescue team to their door. But the waters were still high and moving fast.

Risking their own lives, numerous neighbors and firefighters formed a human life chain, passing Annie along in the raging floodwaters to a high-water truck. A few hours later, Annie brought new life—Adrielle Smith—into the world.

That is the thing about Texas, Mr. Speaker, we help each other. That is what makes us Texas strong.

Congratulations to the Smiths on the birth of their hurricane daughter, Adrielle.

And that is just the way it is.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM

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

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, across the Capitol, Republican Senators fi-

nally decided to cancel the vote on a disastrous health bill that could have upended insurance markets and caused 3.2 million Floridians to lose coverage, increased premiums in my State by an average of \$4,000, and destroyed over 180,000 Florida jobs.

Now, not only did this process threaten the health and financial security of tens of millions of Americans, it also delayed reauthorization of the Children's Health Insurance Program.

CHIP expires at the end of this week, but renewing it has taken a backseat to a cruel health bill motivated by a political vendetta and the hope of unlocking billions from campaign megadonors.

It is time for Congress to get back to work on CHIP, a program that ensures nearly 9 million kids get access to care—375,000 of them in Florida. It has only become stronger since the passage of the Affordable Care Act.

I hope my colleagues in the majority will waste no time in joining me in supporting this vital program. Let's help our children, let's reauthorize CHIP, and let's do it this week.

HURRICANE HARVEY

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

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Harvey took a lot away from us, but it couldn't take away who we are as Texans. It has shown our resilience and brought our communities closer together as we rebuild.

I am very proud of our volunteers and first responders who have shown hospitality and heroism to support our neighbors in need. When disaster struck, Texans came from across the State to help our communities rebuild and recover from this storm.

In my district, central Texans set up evacuation shelters and donated clothing and other necessary supplies. Our soldiers at Fort Hood and our local fire and rescue teams headed southeast to assist in lifesaving recovery missions because that is what Texans do: we come together to support one another.

I know we will continue to work together as we rebuild after Harvey and in the face of anything that comes our way.

By the way, a great big Texas thank-you to all our neighbors from across the United States who also came to help.

Our hearts go out to those recovering disaster areas in Florida, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and all other communities in need of help. Let's do it together.

God bless Texas.

PUERTO RICO IS FACING A HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

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

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, the people of Puerto Rico are crying out for help, and these American citizens need America's help. Whenever there is a disaster anywhere in the country, we need to move fast. We moved fast when there was a disaster in Texas recently, which we unanimously supported.

We cannot afford to wait. People are dying. Every day it gets worse. There is lack of food, lack of water, lack of safety, and lack of electricity. These are American citizens. We cannot just allow this to continue to happen.

We must help the people of Puerto Rico and help the people in the U.S. Virgin Islands, who are also American citizens, as well as people in all of the islands.

It is just a crisis of tremendous proportion, and we have to help—not tomorrow, not next week, but immediately. These people need our help. We need to save Puerto Rico, save the U.S. Virgin Islands, and help and save the islands of the Caribbean, as we have done so many times around the world.

Let's do it now. Let's do it quickly. People are waiting for us. We don't want to wait until people are dying.

MAJOR HURRICANES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, to my colleagues in the House of Representatives, most of whom are not here right now but perhaps they are back in their office listening, and really to the American public and folks here in the Chamber, it has been a most interesting week—well, actually, the last 3 weeks.

The United States has been hit with three major hurricanes. In Houston, they say was a 500-year storm. The Florida Keys, the Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, disasters beyond, in many cases, human understanding. We have never seen 50 inches of rain in a matter of days.

We have seen storms in the Caribbean that have been vicious. I don't believe we have ever seen one that completely wiped out an island, leaving 3.5 million people without water and power, islands in the Florida Keys flattened, and floods throughout most of Florida.

These are natural disasters.

We look to our neighbors in the south, and we see Mexico City, that great capital, once again, lay bare with an earthquake. Further south and west of that, another community. Yet, just yesterday and the day before, another earthquake.

These are natural disasters.

As Members of Congress representing 350-plus million Americans, we have an obligation. You heard a couple of our colleagues speak to this.

I went to bed last night with visions and pictures of Puerto Rico on the television screen. I woke up this morning,

turned the television on, and it was all about the President calling a couple of athletes a name that I should not repeat on the floor.

□ 1630

What is going on here? How could it be that, 2 days after the devastation of Puerto Rico, our President would decide that the appropriate thing for him to do is to call out African-American athletes who are protesting the death of African Americans at the hands of police?

All of that was followed in just a few moments by experts who were saying that we are closer to nuclear war today than we have been since the Cuban Missile Crisis in the sixties.

What in the world is going on here? What is happening? Why are we in this situation? Why is it that we are not debating here on the floor of the House how to provide relief to Houston, Florida, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands—our own citizens?

Is there a debate going on in the House of Representatives in any hearing? No, there isn't.

Is there a debate on the floor about the necessity to rebuild, to find the money to put back the lives of people who are seriously at risk today?

What are we doing?

Well, here is what we are doing. We have got a President that is in a third grade brawl with a world leader. You may as well be in a classroom or on the school grounds with a bunch of third graders calling out each other about their mother. That is what our President did over the weekend.

How did that promote our humanity, our empathy? Not a bit.

How did it promote our division? Oh, it did a very good job of that. We see fans in the NFL stadiums booing the athletes.

We see more division in our country. We see natural disasters. And our response? Let's pass a bill that will create a humanitarian crisis for 30 million Americans who will lose their healthcare over the next decade. That is what the Senate did over these last few days, a replication of what happened here on the floor of the House of Representatives months ago.

I think Americans thought those days were over when we would see the Senate and the House purposely harm people, purposely set out with legislation to physically harm people by denying them the health insurance that they have been provided over the last few years.

How can it be? How can it be that we would allow this to happen? But it is happening.

Thankfully, four Senators stood up to the President, stood up to the Republican leadership in the Senate and said: No. No. I am not going to set out on a vote that is going to harm people.

I thank them. They had courage.

Where were the others? Where were my Republican colleagues here on this floor who voted to do exactly the same

thing months ago? Millions of Americans purposely denied their health insurance.

Where is the outrage?

It is out there. Take a look at the polling. Take a look at the disabled men and women who were in the Senate Chamber yesterday who were physically dragged out of there—a fine testament to America's democracy.

Where is the outrage? Where is the outrage that there is not a bill on the floor this week to take care of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands—American citizens? I guess there is something more important to do.

Where is our President? What is his tweet today? His tweet today is who knows what. I guess he is going to Puerto Rico next week, thankfully. Maybe there will be some humanity expressed and he will put in motion the great power of this administration to bring relief and to ask the Congress to appropriate the money that is going to be necessary. Maybe.

Maybe it will be another tweet about a leader who has the fourth largest army in the world. You have third graders on the school ground bullying and demeaning, and you expect somehow to go anywhere except into a brawl?

There is a road that we could take, but it begins with reducing the rhetoric. There is a road we can take with North Korea. It is called negotiation.

Don't say it is not possible. It is far more possible and would have a far better outcome than all the bombast, all the rhetoric, all the threats.

All of us have been in the third grade. We know what happens when two boys start fighting on the school ground.

These boys have awesome weapons. We have 25,000 U.S. military on the DMZ border. They are ready to fight. We have an awesome military. It should only be used with wisdom. It should not be put at risk unnecessarily. There are tens of thousands of American servicemembers, spouses, and children nearby, and millions of South Koreans and North Koreans.

It is time for our President to speak softly. We know we have a big stick. Speak softly. Tone it down. Move toward the negotiations. It would be far more fruitful. We can do this.

I go back home, as I did this weekend, and I do my community events. People come up to me and say: I am scared; I am frightened. What is our President doing? Why is he acting this way? Why is Kim Jong-un acting this way?

We don't need another crisis. We have got to deal with this. We have got to do it with wisdom, plenty of strength, and determination. God help us if we get in a war on the Korean Peninsula again.

Consider for a moment that the 1953 Korean war never ended. It was an armistice. It is time for a peace treaty. It is time to recognize that there are two countries. It is time to settle this

down. It is time for this Congress to turn its attention to the reality of the crisis that faces Americans—yet we don't.

Instead, we have had more than 2 weeks of attention on legislation that would purposely harm millions upon millions of Americans by taking away their health insurance. We have got to put that behind us. We have got to find ways to improve the Affordable Care Act. We must do this. People are hurting.

There are problems with the Affordable Care Act, and we know where the fixes are, but we can't get our colleagues on the Republican side to work with us here in the House of Representatives.

Perhaps we will find Senator MURRAY and Senator ALEXANDER coming back together again, since it appears as though the ill-begotten Graham-Cassidy legislation is dead. Maybe Senators Murray and Alexander can come back together and work together.

I would ask my Republican colleagues here to work with us on the Democratic side to work towards solutions to strengthen and provide the necessary changes and fixes to the Affordable Care Act. We can do it.

While we are doing that, let us use the normal, natural empathy that resides in each one of us to reach out to those in Puerto Rico, Florida, Houston, and the Virgin Islands and use our innate compassion to provide the resources for them to rebuild.

Then, let's take it a step further. Instead of calling out Mexico, instead of getting into a verbal and perhaps economic conflict with Mexico, let us work with Mexico. Reach out to Mexico City now. Provide them with the assistance that this great country can. There are so many things we must spend our time on.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ESPAILLAT), who spoke a few moments ago. I ask him to join me here on the floor.

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Mr. Speaker, I, too, want to join the voices that echo the deep, troubling concern that we shared this weekend when we saw our President engage in a sterile fight, a childish, almost, type of fight with the NFL players.

We all know that football, baseball, and many of our sports have been a level playing field where many people of different races, ethnicities, and economic backgrounds come together and cheer for a particular team from their hometown or their region.

Instead of concentrating on bringing healthcare to millions of Americans or retreating on failed attempts to repeal and replace ObamaCare, the President chose to engage in another activity: tweeting that insulted Americans across the country.

Instead of engaging in a real, substantive discussion about the Dream Act and DACA recipients, looking at the provisions of the bipartisan legislation that has been put forward and co-sponsored by close to 200 Members of

this House, led by Congresswoman ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, a Republican from Florida, and LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD, a Democrat from California, instead of going through the provisions of that bill that could bring relief for 800,000 young people who otherwise would be potentially deported—they are larger than any of the congressional districts that any one of us may represent in this House. Instead of looking at the provisions of that, rolling up our sleeves and coming here this week to discuss how we bring relief to 800,000 young people who are working, going to school, and are members of our Armed Forces, he chose to engage in distraction.

Instead of looking at a real humanitarian crisis about to ensue in Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and some of our neighboring countries of Barbuda, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, and the Caribbean, as well as the challenges of Florida and Houston, instead of taking a look at a potential humanitarian crisis that may ensue in Puerto Rico and bringing about relief for those 3.5 million Americans, he chose to look the other way.

We remember how a President hovered in his airplane over New Orleans and Louisiana as people drowned and died without getting the help they needed. This could be our modern-day Katrina, and yet our President chose to look the other way.

□ 1645

He could have engaged in bringing about results. Today, I join Congresswoman NYDIA VELÁZQUEZ and Congressman ADAM SMITH in signing on to a letter asking the Department of Defense to step it up in Puerto Rico.

We ask for a senior general to be appointed to work with FEMA to manage the crisis in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands the same way it was done for Katrina. We ask for Department of Defense engineers and aviation assets to be deployed to Puerto Rico, as many of the municipalities up in the mountains are still cut off from the general population and have not been heard of for nearly a week.

We ask for technicians and experts to bring restoration of power and to work with telecommunications on the island because people are still disconnected from government, from hospitals, from the police department. There is no cell service; there is no energy on the island; and we ask for that as well.

We ask, in this letter, for the USNS Comfort, an offshore medical treatment facility, to be deployed to the island of Puerto Rico. Puerto Rico only has two hospitals that have been able to restore power, yet the President looked this weekend the other way.

For three major pieces and issues that confront the American people: healthcare, as it pertains to close to maybe 30 million people that may lose their services if this failed attempt to repeal and replace ObamaCare goes through; DACA, impacting over close

to a million young people who go to school, who work, who are part of our future economic recovery, who are members of the Armed Forces; and the humanitarian crisis, a new-day Katrina that is about to ensue in Puerto Rico—for those three issues of great importance to America, our President looked the other way.

He chose to engage in tweets; he chose to insult our local athletes in an un-Presidential manner; he chose to turn his back on the American people.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. ESPAILLAT very much for bringing to our attention the possibilities.

The U.S. military is awesome. I am very thankful that ADAM SMITH, the ranking member of the House Armed Services Committee, together with you and other colleagues, have called upon the President to deploy to Puerto Rico a military task force. The military is the most organized of all of our Federal organizations. They have the ability, they have the resources, and they certainly have the capability of addressing at least the immediate needs of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, and even other islands that have been devastated in the Caribbean.

Ultimately, the task falls to those of us who are elected to represent the American people in the office of the Presidency, the House of Representatives, or in the Senate. And the questions we must ask ourselves: Are we meeting our responsibilities; are we deploying the resources of this Nation to assist in these devastated communities; are we providing the funding necessary to carry out these tasks; or are we engaged in legislation that would create a healthcare disaster on top of the natural disasters?

Well, thankfully, it appears as though four Senators have stopped a Republican effort in the Senate that is a repetition of an effort made here in the House of Representatives months ago, to stop the creation of a healthcare crisis in America.

There is more out there that will be brought forward. Tomorrow, my colleagues on the Republican side will meet to discuss tax reform. By all appearances, it appears that tax reform is likely to turn out—at least their version of it, is likely to turn out to be serious tax cuts for the superwealthy and for corporations with a hope and a prayer some day that it might create jobs.

There is precious little economic history to indicate that that would happen, but there is a lot of economic history and studies that indicate you continue to cut taxes for the superwealthy and we will have even a more serious inequality of wealth in the United States. That is a discussion for tomorrow and beyond.

Today, now, the discussion must focus on our American citizens who are not in harm's way, they are being harmed.

My plea to my colleagues here is to put aside these other issues, to focus

the great power and empathy of the American people on meeting the needs of our American citizens in Houston, Florida, the Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, and then to reach out beyond to others who have been hurt, wherever they may be—Mexico City, other islands in the Caribbean.

Finally, a plea to our President. Mr. Speaker, a plea to our President: Tone it down. This is not a schoolyard for bombast and for belligerent talk. This is extraordinarily serious. It has been said by people who have followed these issues over the decades that we are closer to nuclear war now than we have been since the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Mr. President, Mr. Speaker, please tone it down. Speak softly; tweet softly; don't worry about our big stick that we have. Go to the negotiation table; be humble; be firm; no nukes on the Caribbean peninsula. We can do that. We can do it.

This is my prayer.

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

HURRICANES' DESTRUCTION AND COST

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WEBER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, in all my years, I have seen a lot of storms, a lot of hurricanes, a lot of floods, a lot of tropical depressions, a lot of rains in Texas. We have a whole variety of weather in Texas and a lot of just about every calamity weather-wise you can think of. I have seen nothing come close to Hurricane Harvey. In 24 hours, we went from Tropical Storm Harvey to Category 4 Hurricane Harvey.

As with most hurricanes, there was no rhyme or reason for the destruction and the ensuing devastation. Harvey's bands of rains sat on southeast Texas with a vengeance and for days on end, and the situation turned quickly from bad to worse.

Mr. Speaker, we got 51 to 53 inches of rain in 3 to 4 days. That part of Texas' annual rainfall is about 53 inches a year. We got a whole year's worth of rainfall in under a week's time. Our great first responders, our volunteers, risked their lives time and time again to save others.

When the Nation saw that we needed help, the boats and the people just kept coming. We got the Cajun Navy from Louisiana; 100 guys with their own boats came to help us. They did things we didn't think were possible, so I coined a new phrase, "Cajuneering." They came in and really helped us. We saw neighbors and strangers alike step up to help each other. That is the Texas way.

When the Nation saw that we needed help, people came pouring in. More

than that, it is not just the Texas way, it is the American way. No matter our creed, our color, our religion or background, we are all united and we work together. Harvey may have brought the downpour, but Texans and Americans brought the outpour.

Texas 14 is arguably ground zero for flooding and devastation. My district, from Brazoria County to Jefferson County, the enormity and the severity of Harvey, sadly, is on full display.

Entire neighborhoods were underwater. How do you recover from that? Your family and your house is underwater, your cars are underwater, your furniture, and, sadly, even some of your most prized and precious heirlooms, family photos and pictures and albums, how do you overcome that?

Well, I will tell you, by working together. Everyone back home in our great State knows someone who needs help, and everyone back home is doing their part to help that person in need.

In all the devastation and destruction, the hope and determination shared among Texans was absolutely remarkable. Harvey may have deluged our State with rain and with water, but he certainly did not dampen our spirit.

One month ago today, Harvey made landfall between Port Aransas and Port O'Connor, the eye of the hurricane. A few days later, Harvey swung back into the Gulf and made landfall just west of Cameron, Louisiana. We literally had a 3-day weather event. Harvey came on shore there by Rockport-Corpus Christi. We got the bands of rain coming up in the hurricane as he came ashore. He then went up north and stayed around for a day or two dumping rain on all of our rivers and streams upstream from us and our watersheds. Then he came back down to southeast Texas, down on the coast, and he worked right over, as I said, in Louisiana. Then after Harvey came Hurricane Irma; after Irma came Jose; and after Jose came Maria. It has been a historic time.

As of Sunday, September 24—let this sink in—817,758 people are registered for disaster assistance. FEMA has distributed \$502.6 million in housing assistance and \$160.2 million in other assistance. In the one month since Harvey, the first of a series of hurricanes, FEMA has completed 239,612 inspections. Almost 22,000 people are living in hotels because they have no home to return to. That number doesn't even include those who are staying with family and friends.

The Small Business Administration has approved \$509.4 million. Homeowners have received, to date, \$467.3 million in loans. Businesses have received \$42 million in loans. Earlier this month, we passed out of this Chamber, with overwhelming bipartisan support, a \$15 billion relief bill. Two or three more of those bills, at a minimum, are expected.

Folks, the monetary damages are adding up to over \$150 billion, with a "B."

□ 1700

There are five business recovery centers in Texas. There are 41 disaster recovery centers. Over 30-something Texas counties were named in the disaster declaration.

Folks, these are just numbers. They are mind-boggling. You can see the pictures here beside me. Those numbers don't really tell the whole story. Let me tell you: behind those numbers are people; behind those numbers are families; behind those numbers are homes, livelihoods, and businesses. The lives of our great Texans are behind those numbers. Our people are hurting, but they will not let a hurricane keep them down.

Wrapped up in all of the devastation is a bunch of heroes and first responders. I have already talked about the Cajun Navy. I can talk about the States that sent firefighters and first responders from all over this great country of ours. So behind the devastation is a bunch of American heroes. Behind that devastation is a bunch of love, people doing things for others that just makes your heart feel good. Behind that devastation is a bunch of hope that we really are one Nation under God, with liberty and justice and help and mercy for all. Behind that devastation is a bunch of Americans.

Hurricane Harvey reminded us of our deepest, truest American values. United we can accomplish just about anything.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to open up the floor for some of my colleagues. As I said earlier, our great 14th Congressional District is, arguably, ground zero for flooding and devastation, but I have a lot more colleagues here on the floor with us that all have a story to tell.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MCCAUL), the distinguished chairman of the House Committee on Homeland Security. Chairman MCCAUL has worked closely with FEMA and many of our first responders. His district saw quite a bit of water as well, and I appreciate his direct involvement and his willingness to be there.

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman WEBER for holding this Special Order and his leadership on this issue. My condolences to the people in his district. I know Beaumont, particularly, was hit the hardest. We were hit hard all around, but I know Beaumont was hit very hard. That is why we need to pass the supplemental in October, to help the great people in the great State of Texas.

I am chairman of the Homeland Security Committee. One of my responsibilities is overseeing the response efforts of FEMA—Federal, State, and local—to see if this working or not. I have seen what happened in Katrina and Rita and other disasters. I can tell you that this was the most impressive response effort Federal, State, and local.

I commend the President for signing an advanced disaster declaration at the

request of my Governor, Governor Abbott, who enabled us to mobilize in advance and preposition assets to have, I think, one of the best responses I have seen in one of the most tragic storms that Texas has ever weathered.

By way of history, personally, my grandfather survived the 1900 Galveston hurricane. They rescued him from a treetop. He was 8 years old. Sadly, 10,000 people were killed in that tragic event.

In this case, we saved almost 20,000 lives, thanks to the good work of the people in this picture that I had the great privilege to see right after the storm hit. It was one of the most compassionate humanitarian responses I think I have ever witnessed.

This particular photo, I think, really captured what Houston looked like at the time—the first floor under water. It almost looks like the Iwo Jima of Harvey. You have DPS—Department of Public Safety—the American flag, a marine, Coast Guard, and National Guard. These people came together.

But do you know who else came together?

You talked about the Cajun Navy, who came together from Louisiana to help Texans. A lot of Texans saved Texans in this storm. But to see that process was really a shining light in a very dark time.

There are so many untold stories of heroic bravery that took place. I call it Operation Dunkirk. Many of us know or read about that battle, or many of us have seen the movie, of all of the private boats that came out to save the British in that battle.

We saw hundreds of private boats coming out, working in unison with Federal, State, and local responders, saving lives. Again, there were 20,000 lives saved in the process.

Katy High School—Katy is in my district—became the forward operating base for the Texas Guard, the Active Duty servicemembers, and all of the first responders. This is where they launched their efforts to the Beaumont area after they took care of all of the crises and the flooding in the Houston area. I saw these guys going out in boats and helicopters and saving lives. This is the best side of mankind in one of the darkest chapters that our State has really seen. I had an opportunity to bring Speaker RYAN and Chairman SHUSTER of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee down to look at this. A remarkable story in, again, a really awful time, but we saw the resiliency of Texans helping other Texans.

But I also want to credit the entire Nation for responding in a very compassionate way. I went to the shelters and the churches and I saw all of the food coming in, and people calling me from other States asking: What can I do to help?

The firefighters I saw coming from Nebraska, Pennsylvania, and Ohio were all converging on the State. Indeed, the eyes of the Nation were on the State of Texas during this devastating hurricane that continued to rain for days.

Lastly, I do want to talk about what we can do moving forward. This is a 1940 map flood control plan that was built by the Civilian Conservation Corps under President Roosevelt, back in the forties. And you see here the Addicks Reservoir and Barker Reservoir that were built in the 1940s. This is the Buffalo Bayou, and this is downtown Houston.

But they had another plan at the time, and it was on Cypress Creek. That is in my district. In Katy is where these guys were. This is where it all started. This is the third flood in 2 years in this area, all starting at Cypress Creek. This is all developed now. It is not rice fields anymore. It was a watershed event into these reservoirs that then had a controlled release at 1 in the morning into these neighborhoods below, flooding the Buffalo Bayou, and then flooding Houston.

Mr. Speaker, as we look at the supplemental and other projects, this is the prevention that I think we can be doing in Congress that makes a lot of sense to provide infrastructure at key points to stop this flooding from ever happening again.

I know, as Texans, we are all going to come together as a delegation. I know this entire Congress would come together to not only save lives, as we did, and help with FEMA assistance to get people back up on their feet, but then do smart projects like this one to stop this kind of flooding from ever happening again. That is smart prevention that, at the end of the day, is going to save money and save human lives in the process.

In closing, I just want to say that I have never been prouder to call myself a Texan. I have seen a lot. It is my seventh term. Judge POE and I came in together, and we have seen a lot in the seven terms we have been in Congress. I have never seen our State rally like this at a time of need, and the Nation rallying behind the State of Texas. I want to thank all of those who made it possible in our great State, and also in our great country, the United States of America.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman MCCAUL for his remarks. I certainly appreciate him and his involvement.

My next friend, BETO O'ROURKE, from across the aisle, has seen plenty of Texas action here. Earlier this year, he had a bipartisan trip with WILL HURD. On Facebook, we got to watch that and participate in that. I thank him for doing that. That was a great event. And even though his district may not have seen any water as a result of Harvey—in fact, we would have loved to send him some to El Paso, quite frankly—he is a Texan, he gets it, and he has been there working with us every step of the way.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. O'ROURKE), my good friend.

Mr. O'ROURKE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Congressman WEBER for

bringing us today. I also want to extend my condolences for the loss of life and the devastation that was visited on the communities that he represents. I know that he is doing his best to unite those communities in every way possible to ensure that they get back on their feet, they rebuild, and are bigger and better than ever. Party difference doesn't mean anything at this moment. It is all of us as Texans. I join Chairman MCCAUL in agreeing that we cannot have a better moment as a State. I am grateful to him for bringing us all together today.

As he said, I have really had an opportunity to spend some time traveling Texas, and especially southeast Texas, starting around the time that Harvey hit. I will tell you, Mr. Speaker, that in Austin, Texas, on the 25th of August, I was there as the first evacuees were leaving southeast Texas, coming from Victoria and Corpus Christi and other places that were under mandatory evacuation orders. They were arriving at Red Cross shelters that were staffed both by the professionals and the volunteers.

I was told by the head of Red Cross in Austin that they had never seen a greater turnout of volunteers on the first day of a disaster. In fact, I met a young man named Luis Zamora, who at the time was a rising junior at Tarleton State University and a member of the National Guard, and who was so disappointed that his colleagues in the Guard were called up, but he was not. He drove himself down to the Red Cross headquarters so that he could sign up, volunteer, and help staff one of these shelters, welcome those who were fleeing this storm, and help try to make their lives a little bit better.

It reminded me of visiting some of the shelters in San Antonio, where I had a chance to see their great Mayor Ron Nirenberg in action personally welcoming people coming from other parts of the State. To every one of them, his message was: We are so glad you are here. Stay as long as you need to. We are going to make things better for you. You focus on you. We will do our best to take care of you.

That really was the message we heard everywhere that we went.

When we found ourselves in Victoria helping to transport some medical supplies for two of those hospitals, we met an extraordinary young woman named Lisa Price, who had been up for the last 72 hours, as many of the people working in those hospitals were, trying to coordinate care for those in need, coordinate the evacuation of those who were no longer able to be cared for in hospitals that only had backup generator power and did not have reliable water and could not keep those medicines and vaccines chilled.

There were volunteer ambulance corps from all over the State of Texas who had driven down to Victoria to help transport these patients out. Lisa and others were helping to coordinate that. Her husband, Jason, a Depart-

ment of Public Safety Trooper was out on those roads that had no streetlights, that had no working traffic signals, trying to ensure the safety of his fellow Texans. Two extraordinary heroes who exemplify the way that Texas met this challenge.

I certainly spent some time in Houston, where we heard tale of all of the first responders, certainly folks who were working under the great fire chief there, Chief Pena. But also first responders who came from across the State. El Paso sent folks from the El Paso Police Department and the El Paso Fire Department. They made over 100 rescues not just in the Houston area, but also in the greater Beaumont area, including rescuing a 1-month-old child from chest-high waters. Again, we saw that both from first responders and everyday citizens who risked their own lives to save the lives of fellow Texans.

We were in a parking lot in Victoria, where we were picking up supplies to take to Rockport. We knew, however, that Rockport was under a mandatory curfew, enforced by DPS. So I approached two DPS cruisers that were in the parking lot at Walmart, where we were going in to buy ice and water and diapers and other supplies that they might need in Rockport. I wanted to ask these two DPS officers if they could help us to get into Rockport under the curfew. As they were rolling down their window and I began to introduce myself, they said: I know exactly who you are. You are BETO O'ROURKE. We are from El Paso. We were one of the first volunteers from the Department of Public Safety in El Paso to come out to Victoria, and we have been working this community, communities like Cuero, Port Lavaca, Rockport, and other places.

□ 1715

They wanted to be where the action was. They wanted to be out there saving lives. And it made me so extraordinarily proud of El Paso and Texas once again. It is like the 90 soldiers from Fort Bliss from one of the aviation brigades who were in southeast Texas as well trying to facilitate the rescue of their fellow Texans, being where the need was at its moment of greatest importance, again, making us so proud.

Congressman WEBER, I will conclude by telling you that, as we came in to Rockport and were able to successfully get in under curfew to make our delivery, we were blown away and inspired by the volunteer fire department, 20 people strong, 8 of whom had lost their homes and literally everything in their homes but had not lost a minute's service to their fellow community out of that Rockport fire station.

They were living in the fire station because they had nowhere else to live. They were responding to triple or quadruple the service calls. The rains had now ended. The fires had begun. There was some question about the viability

of those structures, and they wanted to be there to save lives.

That fire chief, Steve Sims, and the men and women who serve under him are the absolute best of us as Texans. I am so glad that you and every one of our colleagues from Texas, Republican or Democrat, House Member or Senator, are focused on making Chief Sims, the members of that fire department, and every Texan affected by Harvey whole again. We have got to use their inspiration and their example to do the important work that is here before us.

So I thank you once again for bringing us together, allowing me to join you and work with you and our colleagues to make sure that Texans fully recover from Hurricane Harvey bigger and better than ever. Thank you.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Thank you, Congressman O'ROURKE. And, by the way, happy birthday.

Mr. O'ROURKE. Thank you. I cannot think of a better way to spend it than to be here with you.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. At this time, I recognize my good friend, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BABIN).

Mr. BABIN. Thank you very much for yielding. I would like to thank my colleague, RANDY WEBER, my neighbor. I represent the 36th District in Texas and he represents the 14th, and he also represents my hometown of Beaumont, Texas, for this Special Order. I really appreciate that.

It was about a month ago that Hurricane Harvey began wreaking havoc on southeast Texas, dumping record amounts of rainfall across our region, upending the lives of thousands of families, businesses, and communities. Across our congressional district, the 36th District of Texas, we saw anywhere between 20 and 50 inches of rain, setting a new record for the United States. In fact, unofficially, ranchers in Liberty County, which I also represent, measured over 60 inches of rain.

Our entire district, from Houston to the Louisiana border, turned into, essentially, one gigantic lake, as thousands of homes that had never flooded before succumbed to Harvey's floodwaters. The impact was devastating and widespread.

No one was spared. People from all walks of life and socioeconomic situations, with the majority never having been displaced before, were baffled and desperate in their situations.

Each of the nine counties that I have the privilege of representing have been declared Federal disaster areas. The devastation is simply overwhelming, and the vast lake now is a vast debris field. But in the midst of this devastation, there were, and still continue to be, incredible stories of goodness. Let me share just a few examples.

In Orange, Texas, a young couple canceled their wedding to help their friends and neighbors clean up and begin the process of rebuilding. These newlyweds have now welcomed nearly a dozen family members into their non-flooded home.

A volunteer fire department in Buna, Texas, became a big staging area, like many, many schools and volunteer fire departments all across this area.

In Cleveland, a constable organized a flotilla of boats to deliver shelter and supplies.

Dozens and dozens of churches immediately marshaled their congregations and good Christian people for food, supplies, and shelters to be delivered.

In Deer Park, church members sprang into action immediately and began cooking and sharing meals with evacuees from Houston.

In Silsbee, a church opened a community shelter after the county's only other shelter was cut off by floodwaters.

In Rose City, a really good friend and neighbor rescued nearly everyone in his entire neighborhood on his airboat, even as his own home was flooded. His name was Dennis Landry.

Since the flood, neighbors have organized mucking crews, where they help neighbors remove furniture, appliances, Sheetrock, carpets from one another's flooded homes.

This has happened all across the Texas Gulf Coast, and the stories go on and on: neighbors helping neighbors, communities helping communities, strangers helping strangers. Churches, first responders, private citizens, businesses, people from out of State all around our district are helping one another. But that is what we do in east Texas. When times get tough, we pull together and we get to work.

No one waits around to be told what to do. We are people of action, and we act when we see a need. And, quite frankly, this is what makes east Texas so special. Our communities are strong. And through our faith in God, we take care of one another in times of need regardless of our own means. It is our shared value for our fellow man that makes the difference.

In that same east Texas spirit, our office has been doing everything possible that we can do to help. From the very start, we have been working overtime to help people get back on their feet. We are blessed with a professional and dedicated staff that is second to none. And despite some of our own staff being flooded themselves, we have worked tirelessly to help our east Texas neighbors and friends get the information and resources they need to recover and build.

We are extremely grateful for their service, and I would like to personally recognize some of our staff: Lanie Brown, Lauren Jones, Rachel Iglesias, Sarah Blacksher, Beverly Ferguson, Will Carter, Jeannie Kranz, Joyce Morgan, Kelly Waterman, Beth Barber, Sarah Reese, Steve Janushkowsky, Lauren Ziegler.

These individuals have spent the past month doing everything they can to help the people of District 36. These are often the unsung heroes who go the extra mile each and every day, and lately, on weekends and evenings, to

serve the needs of our constituents. It has not gone unnoticed and is part of the incredible good that has come out of a tragic hurricane. We are extremely proud and very grateful to them and their families and everyone who has pitched in.

I would also like to recognize our friends from Louisiana, and specifically my colleague, Congressman GARRET GRAVES, and his staff, Paul Sawyer and David Cavell.

Everywhere we went, we saw folks from Louisiana coming over and helping in the recovery, and we would tell them: Thank you so much. And we said: This is payback because of Katrina.

Countless churches and individuals and neighbors from our neighboring State of Louisiana came out to help. Thank God for the Cajun Airlift, the Cajun Navy, the Cajun Special Forces, and the Cajun Gravy.

And lastly, I would like to thank our first responders. The death toll would have been much higher if it had not been for these brave men and women. And for our game wardens, our police departments, our DPS officers, sheriff's deputies, all the way to our U.S. Coast Guard and Texas and other States' National Guardsmen, we thank you for everything that you did, and we remember those who gave their lives in the line of service.

As we push forward, we have a long road ahead. People are still very much in need of assistance and resources as they work to put their lives back together. In fact, the fact that over 800 folks showed up for our Disaster Recovery Town Hall Meetings over the past several days demonstrates that there are still many in need.

Last Thursday night in Lumberton, Texas, we had over 200 people come out. In Orange, Texas, we saw that 77 percent of all homes in that county were impacted. We had over 500 people come out to meet with FEMA, State officials, and my staff on a Friday night, and that is big, because that is football night in Texas.

It is our goal to help folks cut through the bureaucracy and the red tape to get the answers and help that they need. We have been spreading staff out across our nine counties, setting up mobile offices to provide constituents with one-on-one assistance in applying for help and ensuring they have access to a computer or to complete the application. And this is not unusual. My colleagues and all of the other counties, up to 38 counties, I believe, were involved in this thing and have been doing the exact same thing.

This will be a long road to our recovery, but together, we will recover, and we will rebuild and come back stronger than ever.

Congressman WEBER, I want to thank you, and God bless.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. I thank you, Dr. BABIN. The enormity of this storm and the debt of gratitude that we owe our first responders cannot be overstated.

My good friend, Judge TED POE, saw plenty of it up in his district, but he took it in stride, as he always does with any challenge because he is a Texan and he is a fighter. And, Judge, that is just the way it is.

I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE).

Mr. POE of Texas. I thank the gentleman for yielding. I appreciate it, Congressman WEBER, for allowing us to talk a little bit about Hurricane Harvey and what folks did down in the Texas area.

While it was still raining hard, I get a phone call, and I looked at the area code on my cell phone and I said: I think that is Massachusetts.

And sure enough, it was Representative KENNEDY from Boston, Massachusetts, calling me saying he would do whatever he could to get Bostonian's first responders down to Texas to help out. And that is what happened, as has already been mentioned by all of my colleagues tonight: both sides of Members of Congress working on this issue to help in Harvey. BETO O'ROURKE is from El Paso. You are from Beaumont.

People may not realize that there is a sign in Beaumont. I used to represent Beaumont, as you know. As you are driving in from Louisiana, there is a sign that says: El Paso, Texas, 876 miles away.

That is how far it is from Beaumont to El Paso, and yet BETO O'ROURKE made his way all the way to the Houston-Galveston area to help out as well. The whole State helped with what was taking place.

The magnitude of the devastation—not just the weather, but the devastation—if you take the State of New Jersey and turn it on its side and set it down on the Gulf Coast, that is how much devastation there was in the State of Texas. That was the area that was hit where disaster occurred. They got rain as far as Dallas and San Antonio, and, of course, we know that it went all the way up to Kentucky a thousand miles away. Still, they were getting rain days later.

I want to talk about one of the people involved in the rescue. Dr. BABIN talked about a lot of folks who helped out. Here is another guy who helped out. You have probably never heard of him: Steven Perez, Houston police officer, 34-year veteran of the Houston Police Department, married, two kids. The rains are coming down. It is in the middle of the night. It is his time to go on shift at the Houston Police Department. His wife is saying: Don't go; it is too bad. And he said: I am going to work. It is my duty.

And he did. He left home. He couldn't get to the downtown Houston Police Department, so he is headed in a different direction, my understanding is, up to Kingwood, where I represent—that is about 25 miles away from downtown Houston—where he was going to do what he could to help folks out there. He took a bad turn, got under an underpass, and his patrol car was sub-

merged and he drowned. He was out doing what he wanted to do: to protect and serve.

He is a symbol of all the first responders, of all the badges that they wear from all over the country who came down there to do their duty, to help people in need. We regret his loss. We are with his family and our prayers are with his family, his wife and his two kids, for their future.

At his funeral, of course, in Houston that I had the opportunity to attend, there were a lot of police officers from all over the country showing their respects to another first responder.

With this hurricane that came through the Houston area, I have kind of an unusual district, so I got hit several places. People got flooded.

Michael McCall showed, earlier, a map of the Houston area, that there are two reservoirs that are supposed to protect the city from flooding. Water filled up those reservoirs, and people whom I represent are on the downstream of that reservoir. They got flooded when water came over it.

□ 1730

But I also represent people upstream, and they got flooded because the reservoir overflowed up in the northwestern direction. People also got flooded in the middle of the night after they thought the storm was over with because Conroe—and, Mr. Speaker, I know you don't know where that is, but it is just northwest of Houston. They have a lake up in Conroe. They started letting water out of Lake Conroe because it was too full. Water came rushing down the San Jacinto River into Humble, Texas, and Kingwood, Cypress Creek. All that overflowed, and people got flooded in all of that area as well—thousands of people. Their homes are devastated. In fact, two of those people who have lost their home, they are still staying with us, friends of ours. We do take care of each other.

One thing that I want to mention is we need to get a regional plan to prevent these disasters in the future. It would be a whole lot cheaper, in fact, to prevent these floods than try to continue to pay for the damage of these floods. No question about it, we have to do recovery now for those people who have lost everything they have, do what we can here in Congress, and we are going to do that in a bipartisan way. But we need to have a plan for the future as well.

I have introduced legislation for the Corps of Engineers to come up with, in 90 days of our legislation being signed by the President, to evaluate all the conditions in the flood plain area that was flooded and come up with a long-term plan, whether it is building one more reservoir, two more reservoirs, making the ones that we have bigger, desilting the channel to Buffalo Bayou, San Jacinto River, whatever it is. We need to come as a united area from Mr. WEBER's district all the way up to Mr. MCCAUL's district and everybody in be-

tween on what we are going to do to solve the long-term flooding problem.

Because, you see, September comes around every September. Mr. MCCAUL talked about the flood of 1900. That happened in September, almost to the same day. Here this flood happened at the end of August, near the beginning of September.

I hope we can do that. I think that we can, and I do want to reiterate what has been said about people who just helped each other. They didn't know each other. It wasn't just neighbors helping neighbors. It was people who didn't know each other. Some of them who were flooded out themselves were doing everything they could to help other people.

There were a lot of bass boats. They weren't all from Louisiana. There were a lot from Louisiana, but I think it is every young boy's dream in Texas to own two things: a pickup truck and a bass boat. You saw all of those pickup trucks and bass boats on the road and in the water—because a lot of them are pretty high—rescuing people. People they did not know, Mr. Speaker. They were just looking to help other individuals. It is remarkable.

I have been through a lot of hurricanes. I grew up in the Houston area. I remember Hurricane Carla in 1961, before most of you all were even around. We have had a lot of hurricanes since then. Nothing like Harvey. It was the granddaddy of all of them. It hammered the Houston area, but we are using this as an opportunity to fix things because this Hurricane is not going to defeat the spirit of Texans. It is not. We will resolve to overcome whatever the difficulties are now and to fix things in the future so that we can have a response when the rains of September come.

The rains have stopped, the flood waters have gone down, the rainbow is out, the kids are playing in the parks again, but we are still at work solving the problem of what took place and moving on because, as I said, Harvey will not defeat the Texas spirit. And that is just the way it is.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank Judge POE. He is exactly correct. Harvey cannot dampen our spirit or those of our neighbors and all of our first responders, those who came and helped.

Texas saw the first of four hurricanes this month. Think about that. Puerto Rico has seen the last two hurricanes. Maria did a number on the island. They are in need of so many things, but one thing is certain that they are not in need of: they have a leader here in Washington, D.C. She has got their back, and I am proud to yield to my good friend, Congresswoman JENNIFFER GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN.

Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico. Thank you, Mr. WEBER, for allowing me to speak in these Special Orders, and actually speaking about hurricanes.

Mr. Speaker and Members, last week, Hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico, and

it is by far the worst hurricane to do so in the last century. It came at a time when Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands and most of the Caribbean were beginning to recover from the impact of Hurricane Irma just 10 days earlier.

Keep in mind, also, that even before the winds and waves of Irma and Maria began to lash at the shores, Puerto Rico was already in a dire economic shape. We are still engaged in life-saving operations, searching for and helping people who are in the greatest danger.

Maria snapped the island's communication towers, and gathering information from many communities has been nearly impossible at this time, especially in the rural center of the island, where the winds were ferocious and landslides have occurred.

This hurricane has been a disaster of unprecedented proportions. The images that you have been seeing on TV are dramatic but don't even begin to tell the magnitude of this catastrophe and the human suffering that you can only truly experience by being on the ground. In every way, Maria is on the same level of Hurricanes Katrina, Sandy, Harvey, but with one major difference: Puerto Rico is an island, which makes it almost impossible to get aid and disaster relief resources in, as they can only come by sea or air. The people are basically stuck there with no place to go.

Currently, Puerto Rico's electric grid is completely down. Roads and bridges have been washed away, leaving many communities without communication. A crucial dam has burst, forcing the evacuation of thousands of people. Hospitals are crippled and operating on power generators, but the logistics of transporting the diesel needed to run them is extremely difficult. Thousands of homes, buildings, and businesses have been destroyed. Water and food are in short supply. People are waiting in line for up to 6 hours just to purchase \$20 worth of gasoline. Commercial flights to and from the island are almost nonexistent, with thousands of people on airline wait-lists just to leave. Most banks cannot operate, and people don't have easy access to cash, which they need desperately because credit cards are not being used on the island because we don't have power.

Maria flattened 80 percent of the island's agriculture, and Puerto Rico's tourism industry has been crushed. For most of the island's residents, the hurricane can best be described as apocalyptic. Congress must approve an aid package that is proportional with the level of devastation. We need tangible relief that addresses the island's immediate needs. Without help, there will be a massive exodus to the U.S. mainland, and the ongoing humanitarian crisis will only get worse.

The residents of Puerto Rico are American citizens. They are not different from every person sitting in this Chamber. But unlike everyone else, Congress has 100 percent control over

the land where we live. This is a job for the Federal Government, particularly this Congress, to authorize and appropriate the money needed to rebuild the island. This is a dire time for the island, and, therefore, our Nation. The U.S. has an abiding national interest in the recovery and prosperity of Puerto Rico and its 3.4 million U.S. citizens who are facing very tough economic times, even before this latest blow.

I have heard from many of you, many of my colleagues, even the Vice President today, and I am deeply grateful for all the prayers and support.

I also want to thank the Trump administration for their unwavering collaboration with the Puerto Rico National Guard. More than 10,000 people were deployed helping the island to restore the power grid. It will take more than 6 months to get power on the island again.

I hope this House can keep us in your prayers, but also to approve the package that is going to be needed in October, and I know we will respond. That was the claim that President Trump made today, and the Vice President. I was just in a meeting with them. I want to thank the Speaker of the House for his leadership allowing the waiver to the cost sharing of FEMA on the island.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN for her remarks.

My good friend from the Southwest, BLAKE FARENTHOLD, is going to come and address us. Blake represents the area where Harvey actually made land-fall and brought Category 4 winds and storm surges. As Congressman FARENTHOLD knows, I understand the devastation that that brings. My heart goes out to them, and, Blake, please come share with us.

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, I am here to talk a couple minutes about the best and the worst that I saw during Hurricane Harvey in the 27th District of Texas that I represent.

The worst was dished out by nature and high winds. The best was the spirit of the Texans who rose to the challenge. It was neighbor helping neighbor, friend helping friend, and stranger helping stranger.

I live in Corpus Christi. It is a relatively large community of almost 400,000 in the metropolitan area. We were spared the brunt of Harvey. It missed us by about 20 miles. But just across the bay, communities like Port Aransas, Aransas Pass, Ingleside, Rockport, Refugio, Tivoli, and many more took horrible winds. Ninety-some-odd percent of the homes in the resort town of Port Aransas are uninhabitable right now. The brand new school in Refugio they just turned the keys over had the roof blown off and was severely water damaged, and it will be weeks before they are fully operational again in that school.

Rockport, with their beautiful oak trees, had limbs and branches strewn all over the streets, and houses' second

stories are gone. They looked great from the front, but then you would look in the back, and there would be no back.

In Port Aransas, boats having risen and moved inland, an oil drilling platform loose in the ship channel, completely changing the skyline of the city.

But rather than sitting around and moping and crying, Texans came together, helped each other clear the debris, and are slowly but surely getting on with their lives.

The recovery period is going to be tough, though. There is just so much debris. They are picking it up and stacking it at transfer stations, but it will be months before the process is finished. It is tough driving down the streets of the places you love seeing debris stacked, smelling the rotting mold. But you know it is going to come back.

We are struggling right now to find homes for people, places for them to stay. People have been staying with friends and relatives. FEMA has been helping out with hotels. I have to say, I am really impressed with the way local, State, and Federal folks are working hard to give people a hand up. We have had leaders from President Trump down to Members of Congress and all throughout the country come to see what is going on, and all have pledged their help. And it is going to be a Herculean effort to come back, but come back we will.

I suspect in a year, certainly in 2 years, towns like Rockport and Port Aransas, where many folks vacation, are going to have their doors open again and inviting people to come visit. In fact, the goal is to be ready by spring break of this year, and I suspect it is going to be worth visiting.

You need to help the businesses out, need to help the people out by not forgetting us, by keeping us in your prayers, and by supporting us here in Congress as we give the people the help they need to rebuild their lives. I want to thank my colleagues from Texas, my colleagues from the rest of the country, for the support. It is a shame that this has been such a tough season, but we are seeing not just the resilience of Texas but of all the American people with what is going on in Florida. And we are going to get reports, I think, of people helping people in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands and other areas so damaged by the storms we faced this year.

□ 1745

But I am proud to be an American. I am proud we are all helping out, and I look forward to continuing the recovery effort in all of the areas of this country that have been so devastated by natural disasters this year.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman FARENTHOLD for his comments. The 27th District of Texas is blessed to have him.

A little background: On Friday, August 25, some of the outer bands of Harvey were beginning to brush the Gulf

Coast. Texans do what we always do to prepare for a storm. We bought the essentials. We prepped the house. We tightened things up. We watched the news. We were as ready for the rain, we thought, as we would ever be.

But what happened, in my 64 years on God's green Earth, is unlike anything I have ever seen before like this. And I am no stranger to the area. I have lived in a 20-mile radius almost my entire life. I hope I have got a lot more to go yet.

We didn't see the sun for 4 days. Over 50 inches of rain, as reported by the weather forecasters on TV news, fell from the sky. Actually, it was about 60 inches in District 4—7, rather, in Jefferson County.

Evacuation orders, mandatory and voluntary, were posted. City after city started posting the notices. Roads were flooded. Some of them had hip-deep water, some of them more.

Now, I am a Texan, kind of like Judge POE said. Two things apply to me, especially apply to me as a Texan: number one, I am stubborn, and, number two, I have one of those pickup trucks he talked about; although, I don't have a half-ton truck. I have got a Ford F-350 4-wheel drive truck, and I can go through almost waist-deep water.

Starting Saturday, my bride and I began traveling Texas 14, checking on people. We went first to Brazoria County and met with their EOC, emergency operations center. We went to the Hitchcock shelter. We met with volunteers in those shelters. We met with people from the La Marque Police Department, all over, our first responders.

Our first responders worked endless hours and hours. I tell you what, it was heartwarming; and I tell you what, Mr. Speaker, you have never seen anything like that.

From Bay Area Church to the families from League City and Dickinson that sought shelter, we were there with them. At Victory Lakes, we saw much of the same thing in the school there at Victory Lakes and League City.

At Friendswood High School, I met with evacuees, responders, doctors who had come in from other States to be there to help. These are just a handful of the shelters that popped up. These shelters and the volunteers provided a dry place with warm food and warm, friendly smiles, understanding smiles, to hundreds of families in need. That is no exaggeration.

Homes that never came close to flooding were taking on water. Roads turned into rivers. Evacuations and rescues were happening everywhere you looked around.

Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time I have left?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FASO). The gentleman has 6½ minutes remaining.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FARENTHOLD).

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, I did want to add that, though Texans are helping people and people are helping each other, volunteer organizations like Mr. WEBER is talking about, the Federal Government, also, is helping with FEMA and SBA loans.

Some people have gotten denial letters from FEMA. If you read them carefully, they are not always denial letters. You should follow up with FEMA. It may be you are just missing some paperwork.

All Congressmen have folks in their office, caseworkers or red tape cutters, who can help if you are having problems getting the help you need from FEMA or the SBA. We can't get them to bend or break the rules, but if you are having trouble communicating or you feel like you are not being treated right, please call your Member of Congress' office because we are here to help in more ways than just sitting up here in Washington making laws.

One of the best parts of the job is helping folks out on a one-on-one basis, and we are doing that throughout the district I represent, from Wharton, Bay City, Victoria, down to Corpus Christi, Rockport, and to all the other communities that I represent.

So I just want to make sure folks knew that your congressional office is a resource.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. I thank the gentleman for that.

You know, we were moving throughout our district, as I was describing. Folks, the sound of a helicopter will never be the same for us. We saw Coast Guard helicopters. We saw Army, Marine helicopters. The Marines arrived in Friendswood.

The sun made a brief appearance on Tuesday evening. I found myself on I-45 in Dickinson passing out water on the overpass there, where the water was about 4 feet deep in the intersection.

Things kept turning from bad to worse. I was honored to meet with EOC leaders from Brazoria, Dickinson, Galveston, and Beaumont.

On Tuesday, August 29, in Friendswood, Texas, the Marines arrived. Thank God for our great Marines.

On Friday, August 31, Beaumont lost water. My bride and I drove almost 7 hours, having to take back road after back road to deliver three pallets of bottled water. My good friend Dwight Sullivan and his wife, Misty, accompanied us with another pallet of water.

We got to Beaumont. I want to give Mayor Becky Ames of Beaumont a shout-out. She never wavered. She was a stalwart.

Will Crenshaw from Beaumont, Dragon Products, they got in gear and they put a workaround on the water system, laid temporary pipes, got them power, got pumps and got Beaumont some water.

That is just the short version of the first week of Harvey.

The sun finally started to shine again, but the water did not recede

overnight. We took many flyovers to assess the damage. President Trump came in. Senator CORNYN, Senator CRUZ, Speaker RYAN, and leader KEVIN MCCARTHY were among the many who visited.

Help came from far and wide: New York, Massachusetts, Minnesota. I could go down the list of State after State after State, all Americans, all wanting to help. And, of course, Louisiana and the Cajun Navy we talked about.

Between the Cajun Navy, our Texans, our fellow Americans, there were many countless heroes who haven't been named and many haven't even been thanked at all. So to all of them, I want to say thank you. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for the lives you have saved. I witnessed some of the evacuations. Thank you for your heroism. I just can't tell you enough, thank you on behalf of us.

We saw doctors send supplies. We saw hospitals pay for things that normally they would charge for. We saw cattle and horses wading through water. We saw businesses open up their doors and help people. We saw a mother and daughter who took hundreds of evacuees into a Texas City hotel for a home-cooked meal of spaghetti, salad, fresh fruit, and dessert.

You were heroes, Lakewood Church, who did open their doors and provided transportation for the congregants of Beth Yeshurun synagogue.

You heroes were the citizens who saw the incredible effort of your local officials, and you raised money for them to begin recovering for their own homes and their belongings.

The heroes were the young men, hoping to attend the Naval Academy one day, who jumped in that jon boat and went door to door to help.

You were the people who were scared to death in the face of disaster, and yet you put on a brave face and you waded in, unabashed.

You were the people who lost everything, and your first thought was: I need to get back to help my community.

You heroes were the first responders who worked around the clock. Beaumont, alone, received 12,022 911 calls. Let that sink in. That's one city, 12,000 911 calls.

Well, we are going to have more meetings. We are going to be meeting with city officials, State officials. We will be meeting with Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner, who, by the way, tomorrow is his birthday. We want to thank Mayor Sylvester Turner, County Judge Ed Emmett, County Judge Matt Sebesta, County Judge Mark Henry, all great heroes.

God bless our heroes. God bless Texas, our great Nation, and all of those who went beyond and above.

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

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3823, DISASTER TAX RELIEF AND AIRPORT AND AIRWAY EXTENSION ACT OF 2017, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS TO SUSPEND THE RULES

Mr. SESSIONS (during the Special Order of Mr. WEBER of Texas), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 115-333) on the resolution (H. Res. 538) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3823) to amend title 49, United States Code, to extend authorizations for the airport improvement program, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the funding and expenditure authority of the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, to provide disaster tax relief, and for other purposes, and providing for consideration of motions to suspend the rules, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF DR. JAMES DURELL TUBERVILLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JOHNSON) for 30 minutes.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, it is with profound sadness that I rise today to recognize the life and dedicated service of one of the Lord's most humble and outstanding servants, Dr. James Durell Tuberville. He made it his life's work to help others during difficult times, and he was a beacon of light and a towering figure in the life of countless many people, including my own family. His lasting influence on our community cannot be expressed enough, and I am humbled to rise and pay tribute to his life today, his faithful stewardship, and his unwavering commitment to the people of our region in northwest Louisiana.

James Durell Tuberville was born on October 25, 1958, in Shreveport, Louisiana, and on Sunday, August 13, 2017, he left this world to be with our Lord.

After graduating from Southwood High School in Shreveport, Dr. Tuberville continued his education at Grawood Christian School and Southwestern Assemblies of God College. He majored in pastoral ministry at Southwestern University, and received a master of arts in counseling from Louisiana Tech University.

He did all things for the glory of God, Mr. Speaker, and he brought care and compassion to multitudes. Dr. Tuberville served his early ministry as a youth pastor in Luna and then in Natchitoches, Louisiana. He later served as pastor of the Bethel Assembly of God in Shreveport for more than 11 years, before becoming counselor on the pastoral staff at Shreveport Community Church and president of Personal Solutions, Inc.

He selflessly aided those suffering through some of the largest disasters of our lifetime, including the horrific earthquake in Haiti, the Oklahoma City bombing, and the great tragedy on September 11, 2001.

Known and loved by all, Dr. Tuberville also served selflessly as chaplain for the Caddo Parish Sheriff's Office, Caddo Fire District 3, and as national chaplain of the firefighters Brother's Keepers Motorcycle Club.

It is difficult to imagine our community without the leadership and the larger-than-life presence, always encouraging, of Dr. Tuberville. His legacy and example are an enduring lesson for all of us, and we are comforted to know he has been received by the Lord with that ultimate affirmation: "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, it is a privilege to honor Dr. James Durell Tuberville today and to celebrate a life exceptionally well lived.

My wife, Kelly, and I extend our continued prayers and sincerest condolences to his wife and soulmate, Susan, and their two sons, Joshua Durell and Dustin Bruce, to the entire Tuberville family, and to all those whose lives were changed by this true giant of a man.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE AND ACHIEVEMENT OF MAJOR GENERAL JOANNE SHERIDAN

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a hero from my home State, Major General Joanne Sheridan, for her steadfast service to the safety and security of the people of the State of Louisiana in the Louisiana National Guard.

Five years ago, Major General Sheridan became the first female general in the Louisiana National Guard's history, and today I would like to commend her for raising the bar once again and becoming the first female two-star general in the history of our Louisiana National Guard.

Originally from Maine, Major General Sheridan moved to Leesville, Louisiana, when the Army stationed her father, Command Sergeant Major Joe S. Fernald, at Fort Polk. There, she attended Leesville High School, and she went on to earn her bachelor of arts degree in sociology at Northeast Louisiana University in Monroe, Louisiana, where she received her commission through her Reserve Officers' Training Corps in May 1983. Later, she received a master's degree in strategic studies from the prestigious U.S. Army War College.

A true soldier for her community and in our country, Major General Sheridan began her impressive military career as an Active-Duty servicemember in the U.S. Army in February 1984 at Fort Polk Army Base. Throughout her 33-year career, in both her Active-Duty and National Guard service, her leadership has earned her the respect of her peers and included many major accomplishments.

□ 1800

She became the first female to command a battalion leading the 415th Military Intelligence Battalion, commander of the 199th Regiment Regional Training Institute, and the first female to helm a major command when she led the 61st Troop Command.

Currently, she serves as the assist general for the Louisiana National Guard and is responsible, as the principal military adviser to the adjunct general, in assisting in the deployment and coordination of programs, policies, and plans for the Louisiana Army and Air National Guard.

The National Guard is unique in defending Louisiana both at home and abroad. Major General Sheridan served as a citizen soldier through Hurricane Katrina. She was deployed to Baghdad in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2008, and led rescue and recovery efforts in the historic Louisiana flooding of 2016.

She previously served as president of the National Guard Association of Louisiana, and she now serves as the secretary of the National Guard Association of the entire United States.

Her dedication to the National Guard extends way beyond what is required of anyone. Twice—and this is even more inspiring—Major General Sheridan has battled breast cancer, and with her last round of treatment in August, she has again prevailed in that battle. Her incredible strength and courage serve as a beacon of hope for countless many others.

Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to honor Major General Sheridan's many accomplishments and to recognize her honorable service to the State of Louisiana and to our great Nation. She has set a tremendous example, and I hope her accomplishments inspire others to aspire to her level of excellence.

My wife, Kelly, and I thank Major General Sheridan for all she does to defend our community and country, and we wish her continued success.

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

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and the balance of the week on account of family illness.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 3110. An act to amend the Financial Stability Act of 2010 to modify the term of the independent member of the Financial Stability Oversight Council.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 6 o'clock and 1 minute p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, September 27, 2017, at 3 p.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS,
ETC.

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

2635. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Anthony J. Rock, United States Air Force, 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.

2636. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Technical Amendments to Procedure 6 [EPA-HQ-OAR-2013-0696; FRL-9968-02-OAR] (RIN: 2060-AS86) received September 21, 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.

2637. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's direct final rule — Significant New Use Rules on Certain Chemical Substances [EPA-HQ-OPPT-2016-0331; FRL-9959-81] (RIN: 2070-AB27) received September 21, 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.

2638. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Phosphoric Acid Manufacturing and Phosphate Fertilizer Production Risk and Technology Review Reconsideration [EPA-HQ-OAR-2012-0522; FRL-9968-01-OAR] (RIN: 2060-AT14) received September 21, 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.

2639. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's direct final rule — Approval of Kansas Air Quality State Implementation Plans; Construction Permits and Approvals Program [EPA-R07-OAR-2017-0512; FRL-9967-97-Region 7] received September 21, 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.

2640. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval of Air Quality Implementation Plans; New Jersey, 2011 Periodic Emission Inventory SIP for the Ozone Nonattainment and PM2.5/Regional Haze Areas [EPA-R02-OAR-2017-0044; FRL-9968-05-Region 2] received September 21, 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.

2641. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of State Plans for Designated Facilities and

Pollutants: Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming; Negative Declarations [EPA-R08-OAR-2017-0171; FRL-9968-11-Region 8] received September 21, 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.

2642. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Plans for Designated Facilities; New Jersey; Delegation of Authority [EPA-R02-OAR-2017-0132; FRL-9968-13-Region 2] received September 21, 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.

2643. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Texas; Reasonably Available Control Technology for the 2008 8-Hour Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard [EPA-R06-OAR-2015-0496; FRL-9967-53-Region 6] received September 21, 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.

2644. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's direct final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; West Virginia; Removal of Clean Air Interstate Rule Trading Programs Replaced by Cross-State Air Pollution Rule Trading Programs [EPA-R03-OAR-2016-0574; FRL-9968-15-Region 3] received September 21, 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.

2645. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's direct final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Maryland; 2011 Base Year Inventory for the 2008 8-Hour Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard for the Maryland Portion of the Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City Nonattainment Area [EPA-R03-OAR-2017-0149; FRL-9968-00-Region 3] received September 21, 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.

2646. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Plan Approval; North Carolina Miscellaneous Rules [EPA-R04-OAR-2016-0362; FRL-9968-10-Region 4] received September 21, 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.

2647. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Plan Approval; Minnesota; Prevention of Significant Deterioration [EPA-R05-OAR-2016-0603; FRL-9968-22-Region 5] received September 21, 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.

2648. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's direct final rule — Air Plan Approval; GA: Emission Reduction Credits [EPA-R04-OAR-2009-0226; FRL-9968-17-Region 4] received September 21, 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.

2649. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's direct final rule — Air Plan Approval; Delaware; State Implementation Plan for Interstate Transport for the 2008 Ozone Standard [EPA-R03-OAR-2013-0408; FRL-9968-20-Region 3] received September 21, 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.

2650. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Plan Approval; Delaware; Infrastructure Requirements for the 2012 Fine Particulate Matter Standard [EPA-R03-OAR-2017-0152; FRL-9967-99-Region 3] received September 21, 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.

2651. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Finding of Failure to Submit State Implementation Plans Required for the 2008 8-Hour Ozone NAAQS; California; Sacramento Metro [EPA-R09-OAR-2017-0426; FRL-9966-86-Region 9] received September 21, 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.

2652. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, Office of Regulations and Administrative Law, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Atlantic Ocean, Ocean City, NJ [Docket No.: USCG-2017-0627] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received September 21, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2653. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, Office of Regulations and Administrative Law, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone, Delaware River; Dredging [Docket No.: USCG-2017-0811] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received September 21, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2654. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, Office of Regulations and Administrative Law, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Dredging, Shark River, NJ [Docket No.: USCG-2017-0843] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received September 21, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2655. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, Office of Regulations and Administrative Law, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Delaware River, Philadelphia, PA [Docket No.: USCG-2017-0543] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received September 21, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2656. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Wando River, Charleston, SC [Docket No.: USCG-2017-0348] (RIN: 1625-AA-00) received September 21, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2657. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland

Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, Sarasota, FL [Docket No.: USCG-2016-0330] (RIN: 1625-AA09) received September 21, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2658. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Rice Creek, Putnam County, FL [Docket No.: USCG-2016-0523] (RIN: 1625-AA09) received September 21, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2659. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway, Little River to Savannah River, Beaufort, SC [Docket No.: USCG-2015-0343] (RIN: 1625-AA09) received September 21, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2660. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Special Local Regulation; Frogtown Regatta, Maumee River, Toledo, OH [Docket No.: USCG-2017-0754] (RIN: 1625-AA08) received September 21, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2661. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Tombigbee River, Demopolis, AL [Docket No.: USCG-2017-0786] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received September 21, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2662. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Great Lakes Pilotage Rates — 2017 Annual Review [USCG-2016-0268] (RIN: 1625-AC34) received September 21, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2663. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Relief for Hurricane Irma Victims (Announcement 2017-13) received September 21, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

2664. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Treatment of Amounts Paid to Section 170(c) Organizations under Employer Leave-Based Donation Programs to Aid Victims of Hurricane and Tropical Storm Irma (Notice 2017-52) received September 21, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

2665. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's "Report to the Congress: Compact Impact Analysis of the 2016 Report from Guam", along with the related report "Impact of the Compacts of Free Association on Guam FY 2004 through FY 2016" by the Governor of Guam, pursuant to 48 U.S.C. 1921(c)(8); Public Law 108-188, Sec. 104(e)(8); (117 Stat. 2741);

jointly to the Committees on Natural Resources and Foreign Affairs.

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. GOODLATTE: Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 3229. A bill to protect the safety of judges by extending the authority of the Judicial Conference to redact sensitive information contained in their financial disclosure reports, and for other purposes (Rept. 115-332). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. SESSIONS: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 538. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3823) to amend title 49, United States Code, to extend authorizations for the airport improvement program, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the funding and expenditure, authority of the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, to provide disaster tax relief, and for other purposes, and providing for consideration of motions to suspend the rules (Rept. 115-333). Referred to the House Calendar.

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. SOTO (for himself and Mr. CURBELO of Florida):

H.R. 3829. A bill to establish a program to provide grants to States, local governments, and electric utilities to make electric infrastructure more resilient to hurricanes, tornadoes, and other major weather-related events; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. FARENTHOLD:

H.R. 3830. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude major professional sports leagues from qualifying as tax-exempt organizations; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. TAYLOR (for himself and Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas):

H.R. 3831. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to expand eligibility for participation in the Federal Pell Grant program to certain trade schools; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. DUNN (for himself, Ms. TENNEY, Mr. POLIQUIN, Mr. ARRINGTON, and Mr. TONKO):

H.R. 3832. A bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the executive director of a national network of State-based prescription monitoring programs under which Department of Veterans Affairs health care providers shall query such network, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mrs. COMSTOCK (for herself, Mr. YODER, and Mr. CICILLINE):

H.R. 3833. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the child tax credit; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. CROWLEY (for himself, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. SUOZZI, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. MENG, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. NADLER, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. ENGEL, and Mr. DONOVAN):

H.R. 3834. A bill to provide that members of public safety agencies who died of 9/11-related health conditions are eligible for the Presidential 9/11 Heroes Medal of Valor, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mrs. DAVIS of California:

H.R. 3835. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to eliminate origination fees for Federal Direct Loans; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mrs. DAVIS of California:

H.R. 3836. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 and the Truth in Lending Act to clarify the application of prepayment amounts on student loans; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on Financial Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. DEUTCH:

H.R. 3837. A bill to amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to require the Federal Election Commission to establish and operate a website through which members of the public may view the contents of certain political advertisements, to require the sponsors of such advertisements to furnish the contents of the advertisements to the Commission, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. DUFFY (for himself, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. HARPER, and Mr. LUCAS):

H.R. 3838. A bill to require the appropriate Federal banking agencies to treat certain non-significant investments in the capital of unconsolidated financial institutions as qualifying capital instruments, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Ms. KELLY of Illinois (for herself, Mr. POCAN, Mr. EVANS, Ms. LEE, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. NORTON, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Ms. MOORE, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. KHANNA, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. VEASEY, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. TONKO, Ms. ADAMS, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. WELCH, and Ms. ESTY of Connecticut):

H.R. 3839. A bill to address slow economic growth and spur investment and development in underserved communities across America; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committees on Education and the Workforce, Agriculture, Financial Services, Small Business, Energy and Commerce, the Judiciary, and Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. POLIS (for himself and Ms. SINEMA):

H.R. 3840. A bill to expand the use of open textbooks in order to achieve savings for students; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. ROGERS of Alabama (for himself, Ms. SINEMA, Mrs. LOVE, and Mr. CÁRDENAS):

H.R. 3841. A bill to amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to make certain multivitamin-mineral dietary supplements eligible for purchase with supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. RYAN of Ohio (for himself, Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia, and Mr. YARMUTH):

H.R. 3842. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize the Healthy Start for Infants Program; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SUOZZI (for himself and Mr. FITZPATRICK):

H.R. 3843. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, with respect to bribery; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN:

H.R. 3844. A bill to restrict the authority of the Attorney General to enter into contracts for Federal correctional facilities and community confinement facilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. WENSTRUP (for himself, Mr. CORREA, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. ROTHFUS, and Mr. SUOZZI):

H. Con. Res. 80. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of the Congress that assisted suicide (sometimes referred to as death with dignity, end-of-life options, aid-in-dying, or similar phrases) puts everyone, including those most vulnerable, at risk of deadly harm and undermines the integrity of the health care system; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SMITH of New Jersey (for himself and Mr. MCGOVERN):

H. Res. 537. A resolution promoting United States national security and foreign policy objectives through consolidation and strengthening of the rule of law and respect for human rights in the Republic of Azerbaijan; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Ms. LEE (for herself, Mr. BURGESS, Ms. NORTON, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. EVANS, Mr. HASTINGS, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. MEEKS, and Mr. PAYNE):

H. Res. 539. A resolution calling for sickle-cell trait research, surveillance, and public education and awareness; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. PASCRELL (for himself and Mr. KING of New York):

H. Res. 540. A resolution expressing support for the designation of September 2017 as "Campus Fire Safety Month"; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

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. SOTO:

H.R. 3829.

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

Article I, Section 8, of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. FARENTHOLD:

H.R. 3830.

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

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. TAYLOR:

H.R. 3831.

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

Article I Section 8

The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises,

to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States;

To borrow money on the credit of the United States;

To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes;

To establish a uniform Rule of Naturalization, and uniform Laws on the subject of Bankruptcies throughout the United States;

To coin Money, regulate the Value thereof, and of foreign Coin, and fix the Standard of Weights and Measures;

To provide for the Punishment of counterfeiting the Securities and current Coin of the United States;

To establish Post Offices and Post Roads;

To promote the Progress of Science and useful Arts, by securing for limited Times to Authors and Inventors the exclusive Right to their respective Writings and Discoveries;

To constitute Tribunals inferior to the supreme Court;

and Offenses against the Law of Nations;

To declare War, grant Letters of Marque and Reprisal, and make Rules concerning Captures on Land and Water;

To raise and support Armies, but no Appropriation of Money to that Use shall be for a longer Term than two Years;

To provide and maintain a Navy;

To make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces;

To provide for calling forth the Militia to execute the Laws of the Union, suppress Insurrections and repel Invasions;

To provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining, the Militia, and for governing such Part of them as may be employed in the Service of the United States, reserving to the States respectively, the Appointment of the Officers, and the Authority of training the Militia according to the discipline prescribed by Congress;

To exercise exclusive Legislation in all Cases whatsoever, over such District (not exceeding ten Miles square) as may, by Cession of particular States, and the acceptance of Congress, become the Seat of the Government of the United States, and to exercise like Authority over all Places purchased by the Consent of the Legislature of the State in which the Same shall be, for the Erection of Forts, Magazines, Arsenals, dock-Yards, and other needful Buildings; And

To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. DUNN:

H.R. 3832.

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

Article I, section 8—Congress shall create all laws it deems necessary and proper.

By Mrs. COMSTOCK:

H.R. 3833.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 (Power to lay and collect taxes)

By Mr. CROWLEY:

H.R. 3834.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18: "The Congress shall have Power [. . .] to make all laws, which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers.

By Mrs. DAVIS of California:

H.R. 3835.

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

Article I, Section 8

By Mrs. DAVIS of California:

H.R. 3836.

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

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. DEUTCH:

H.R. 3837.

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

Article 1, Section 4, Clause 1 of the US Constitution

The Times, Places and Manner of holding Elections for Senators and Representatives, shall be prescribed in each State by the Legislature thereof; but Congress may at any time make or alter such Regulations, except as to the Place of choosing Senators.

By Mr. DUFFY:

H.R. 3838.

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

Article 1, section 8, clause 1 (relating to the general welfare of the United States); and Article I, section 8, clause 3 (relating to the power to regulate interstate commerce).

By Ms. KELLY of Illinois:

H.R. 3839.

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

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. POLIS:

H.R. 3840.

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

Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. ROGERS of Alabama:

H.R. 3841.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. RYAN of Ohio:

H.R. 3842.

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

Article I, Section 8: To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. SUOZZI:

H.R. 3843.

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

Under Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution, Congress has the power "to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or any Department or Officer thereof."

By Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN:

H.R. 3844.

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

Article 1, Sections 1 and 8

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

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

H.R. 29: Mr. NORMAN.

H.R. 36: Mr. STIVERS, Mrs. HANDEL, Mr. ESTES of Kansas, Mr. ZELDIN, Mr. GRAVES of Georgia, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. BRAT, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, and Mr. MCCAUL.

H.R. 44: Mr. LOUDERMILK.

H.R. 113: Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. CAPUANO, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, and Mr. BARR.

- H.R. 154: Mr. COSTA.
H.R. 216: Mr. ROE of Tennessee.
H.R. 227: Ms. MCCOLLUM and Mr. DEFazio.
H.R. 241: Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 246: Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. NEWHOUSE, and Mr. BUCSHON.
H.R. 392: Mr. LATTA and Mr. ESTES of Kansas.
H.R. 411: Mr. DELANEY.
H.R. 449: Mr. KHANNA.
H.R. 519: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.
H.R. 535: Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. LOBIONDO, and Mr. ROSS.
H.R. 576: Mr. REICHERT, Mr. BARR, and Mr. MEEHAN.
H.R. 586: Mr. NORMAN.
H.R. 620: Mr. GOSAR, Mr. WOMACK, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. DENT, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, and Mr. WESTERMAN.
H.R. 644: Mr. NORMAN.
H.R. 676: Mr. BEYER.
H.R. 685: Mr. RYAN of Ohio.
H.R. 747: Mr. WEBER of Texas, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. CRIST, and Mr. GROTHMAN.
H.R. 807: Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 809: Mr. ROUZER.
H.R. 820: Mr. CORREA.
H.R. 846: Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. SIRES, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. NORTON, Mr. HUNTER, and Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia.
H.R. 855: Mr. CAPUANO.
H.R. 899: Mr. NORMAN and Mr. ROKITA.
H.R. 905: Mr. FITZPATRICK.
H.R. 907: Ms. ESTY of Connecticut.
H.R. 909: Mr. ROYCE of California and Mrs. MURPHY of Florida.
H.R. 916: Mr. NORMAN.
H.R. 918: Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 936: Mr. BACON, Mr. TURNER, Mr. TED LIEU of California, and Mr. KING of New York.
H.R. 964: Mr. KENNEDY and Mr. FITZPATRICK.
H.R. 1017: Mr. YOHO.
H.R. 1066: Mr. O'ROURKE.
H.R. 1148: Mr. HOLLINGSWORTH.
H.R. 1150: Mr. YOHO and Mr. GRAVES of Missouri.
H.R. 1159: Mr. HULTGREN.
H.R. 1164: Mr. EMMER, Mr. MACARTHUR, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. BLUM, Mr. KATKO, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, and Mr. FLORES.
H.R. 1176: Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 1267: Mr. PAULSEN.
H.R. 1279: Mrs. BEATTY and Ms. PINGREE.
H.R. 1292: Mrs. ROBY.
H.R. 1298: Mr. WELCH.
H.R. 1310: Ms. MENG.
H.R. 1357: Mr. COSTA.
H.R. 1406: Mr. ROYCE of California.
H.R. 1409: Mr. STIVERS and Mr. TAKANO.
H.R. 1438: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, and Mr. CROWLEY.
H.R. 1456: Mrs. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. CAPUANO, and Mr. SARBANES.
H.R. 1468: Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 1472: Mr. NOLAN.
H.R. 1515: Mr. CRIST.
H.R. 1539: Mr. HARPER.
H.R. 1575: Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 1649: Mr. ELLISON.
H.R. 1676: Mr. KILDEE and Mr. RUTHERFORD.
H.R. 1698: Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana.
H.R. 1699: Mr. ROKITA.
H.R. 1730: Ms. LOFGREN.
H.R. 1731: Mr. LOWENTHAL and Mr. DELANEY.
H.R. 1811: Mr. MCGOVERN and Mr. O'ROURKE.
H.R. 1825: Mr. COURTNEY and Mr. PAULSEN.
H.R. 1838: Mr. CRAWFORD.
H.R. 1847: Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER.
H.R. 1861: Mr. WILLIAMS, Mr. LABRADOR, and Mrs. NOEM.
H.R. 1865: Mr. PAULSEN.
H.R. 1889: Mr. NORCROSS.
H.R. 1911: Mr. HIMES, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Ms. LOFGREN, and Mr. PALLONE.
H.R. 2049: Mr. PALLONE.
H.R. 2077: Mr. COFFMAN.
H.R. 2095: Ms. MOORE.
H.R. 2147: Mr. JONES.
H.R. 2148: Mr. BUDD and Mr. MESSER.
H.R. 2193: Mr. DELANEY, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. KINZINGER, and Mr. VEASEY.
H.R. 2225: Mr. JOYCE of Ohio, Mr. OLSON, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. HIMES, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. EVANS, Mr. HURD, Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. SMUCKER, and Mr. GIBBS.
H.R. 2228: Mr. NORMAN.
H.R. 2318: Ms. NORTON and Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.
H.R. 2327: Mr. GOHMERT.
H.R. 2405: Mr. GROTHMAN and Mr. ALLEN.
H.R. 2408: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. HASTINGS, and Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.
H.R. 2426: Mr. CLAY.
H.R. 2436: Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, Mr. PETERS, Mr. KIND, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. WELCH, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. DEFazio, Ms. LEE, Mr. POLIS, Mrs. BEATTY, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire, Mr. COSTA, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Ms. NORTON, Mr. EVANS, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, and Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico.
H.R. 2452: Ms. LOFGREN.
H.R. 2482: Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mr. GOTTHEIMER, Ms. BASS, Mr. AGUILAR, and Mr. REICHERT.
H.R. 2499: Mr. QUIGLEY.
H.R. 2513: Mr. NORMAN.
H.R. 2521: Mr. NORMAN.
H.R. 2556: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 2628: Ms. DELBENE, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. SMITH of Washington, and Mr. ELLISON.
H.R. 2651: Mr. MESSER and Mr. DELANEY.
H.R. 2666: Mr. COLE.
H.R. 2705: Mr. CRAMER.
H.R. 2719: Ms. DELAURO and Mr. LOWENTHAL.
H.R. 2740: Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. AGUILAR, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. SCHNEIDER, and Mr. FLEISCHMANN.
H.R. 2777: Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, and Ms. ROSEN.
H.R. 2790: Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. THOMPSON of California, and Mr. SARBANES.
H.R. 2797: Miss RICE of New York.
H.R. 2811: Ms. SHEA-PORTER and Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 2820: Mr. MOULTON.
H.R. 2871: Ms. MCSALLY.
H.R. 2895: Mr. PALLONE.
H.R. 2926: Mr. HILL, Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. GOWDY, and Mr. SIMPSON.
H.R. 2954: Mr. LATTA and Mr. ARRINGTON.
H.R. 2976: Mr. SCHIFF, Ms. ROSEN, and Ms. BONAMICI.
H.R. 2989: Mr. MEEHAN.
H.R. 2996: Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana, Mr. GAETZ, Mr. WOMACK, and Mr. FRANKS of Arizona.
H.R. 3011: Mr. DEFazio and Ms. LOFGREN.
H.R. 3053: Mr. HUIZENGA, Mr. BUDD, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, Mrs. BLACK, and Mrs. WAGNER.
H.R. 3076: Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 3108: Mr. FITZPATRICK.
H.R. 3152: Mr. PAYNE.
H.R. 3174: Mr. WELCH and Ms. ESHOO.
H.R. 3186: Mr. DELANEY.
H.R. 3227: Mr. GUTIÉRREZ.
H.R. 3248: Mr. SCHNEIDER.
H.R. 3269: Mr. PANETTA.
H.R. 3273: Mr. LOWENTHAL.
H.R. 3274: Mr. CARTER of Texas, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. SIMPSON, and Mr. CRAMER.
H.R. 3275: Mr. TONKO and Mr. PANETTA.
H.R. 3312: Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, Mr. BUCSHON, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. MAST, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mr. RATCLIFFE, and Mr. FITZPATRICK.
H.R. 3314: Ms. ESHOO and Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 3320: Mr. TED LIEU of California.
H.R. 3324: Mr. ROYCE of California.
H.R. 3325: Mr. FASO and Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H.R. 3327: Mr. CASTRO of Texas.
H.R. 3329: Ms. ROSEN, Mr. BROWN of Maryland, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, and Mr. HOLLINGSWORTH.
H.R. 3333: Ms. CHENEY.
H.R. 3345: Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 3363: Mrs. BLACKBURN.
H.R. 3368: Ms. BORDALLO.
H.R. 3378: Mr. LUETKEMEYER.
H.R. 3380: Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico.
H.R. 3427: Mr. KHANNA.
H.R. 3513: Mr. WALZ.
H.R. 3520: Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania and Mr. CÁRDENAS.
H.R. 3528: Ms. ESTY of Connecticut.
H.R. 3548: Mr. ABRAHAM and Mr. MCCLINTOCK.
H.R. 3602: Ms. JAYAPAL, Mr. SMITH of Washington, and Mr. CROWLEY.
H.R. 3606: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. CAPUANO, Ms. MOORE, and Mr. FOSTER.
H.R. 3621: Mr. GROTHMAN.
H.R. 3624: Mr. LOWENTHAL and Mr. SCHIFF.
H.R. 3638: Mr. YOHO.
H.R. 3671: Mr. NADLER and Mr. GUTIÉRREZ.
H.R. 3673: Mr. GALLAGHER.
H.R. 3679: Mr. KIND, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas, Mr. PALONE, and Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.
H.R. 3695: Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. DEUTCH, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. RASKIN, Mr. HECK, Ms. LEE, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. CAPUANO, and Mr. POLIS.
H.R. 3711: Mr. ROKITA.
H.R. 3740: Mr. POLIS.
H.R. 3745: Mrs. BEATTY.
H.R. 3755: Ms. HANABUSA, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. EVANS, Mr. BEYER, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, and Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 3758: Mr. POSEY.
H.R. 3770: Mr. TED LIEU of California, Ms. ESTY of Connecticut, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. GOTTHEIMER, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. WALZ, Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. BOST, Mr. UPTON, Ms. MENG, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. GRAVES of Georgia, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, and Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H.R. 3774: Mr. MITCHELL.
H.R. 3776: Ms. ROSEN.
H.R. 3784: Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. SIMPSON, Mr. NADLER, Mr. COLE, Ms. ESTY of Connecticut, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. COOK, and Mr. ELLISON.
H.R. 3795: Mr. PETERS.
H.R. 3815: Ms. NORTON, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. SOTO, and Mr. CRIST.
H.R. 3817: Mr. GROTHMAN.
H.R. 3822: Ms. TENNEY and Mr. LOUDERMILK.
H.R. 3827: Ms. JUDY CHU of California.
H.J. Res. 61: Mr. NEWHOUSE.
H.J. Res. 75: Mr. GRIJALVA.
H. Con. Res. 10: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona.
H. Res. 15: Mr. GUTHRIE.
H. Res. 68: Mr. GROTHMAN.
H. Res. 220: Mr. POLIS, Ms. PINGREE, and Mr. DONOVAN.
H. Res. 248: Mr. NORMAN.
H. Res. 257: Mr. POLIS.
H. Res. 279: Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS.
H. Res. 342: Mr. DONOVAN.
H. Res. 401: Mr. LIPINSKI.
H. Res. 433: Mr. GROTHMAN.

H. Res. 495: Ms. SEWELL of Alabama and Mr. LOBIONDO.

H. Res. 497: Mr. HUFFMAN.

H. Res. 501: Mr. ELLISON, Ms. NORTON, and Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania.

H. Res. 507: Mr. ELLISON.

H. Res. 529: Mr. GALLAGHER and Ms. PIN-GREE.

H. Res. 532: Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, and Mr. NORMAN.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAX BENEFITS, OR LIMITED TARIFF BENEFITS

Under clause 9 of rule XXI, lists or statements on congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits were submitted as follows:

OFFERED BY MRS. BLACK

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on the Budget in H.R. 3823, the Disaster Tax Relief and Airport and Airway Extension Act of 2017, do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

OFFERED BY MR. BRADY OF TEXAS

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on Ways and Means in H.R. 3823 do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

OFFERED BY MR. HENSARLING

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on Financial Service in H.R. 3823 do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

OFFERED BY MR. SHUSTER

The provisions of H.R. 3823, the Disaster Tax Relief and Airport and Airway Extension

Act of 2017, that fall within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of House rule XXI.

OFFERED BY MR. WALDEN

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on Energy and Commerce in H.R. 3823 do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

DELETION OF SPONSORS

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

H.R. 3005: Mr. O'HALLERAN.



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Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 115th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 163

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2017

No. 154

Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Holy God, who causes wars to cease, bring peace to our Nation and world. Let that peace first begin in our hearts.

Use our lawmakers to bring a spirit of concord instead of chaos to our world. May they set aside time each day to be still in Your presence. Lord, help them to know that time spent with You is never wasted. Permit this daily contact with You to motivate them to exalt You in their lives, as You use them to provide examples of how people can live if they put their trust completely in You.

Lord God of Hosts, continue to abide with us in sunshine and shadows. And Lord, be especially with the people of Puerto Rico.

We pray in Your sacred Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President 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.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). The majority leader is recognized.

HEALTHCARE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, last night on television, we saw a stark contrast between two different visions of healthcare in our country. One is an

idea that is gaining increasing currency with our friends on the other side of the aisle. Some call it single payer. Others try to dress it up with poll-tested PR labels.

No matter what you call it, at its core, here is what it is: a massive expansion of a failed idea, a quadrupling down on the failures of ObamaCare, a totally government-run system that would rip health insurance plans away from even more Americans and take away even more of their personal healthcare decisions. The costs of implementing it would be astronomical. The taxes required to pay for it would be sky high. Yet, after years of ObamaCare's failures—its higher costs, diminished choices, collapsing markets—it seems this is the best our Democratic friends can come up with—not a new idea but quadrupling down on an old one that has already failed. What a contrast with the general approach Senators GRAHAM and CASSIDY and many other Republicans have pursued.

We think the American people deserve a better way forward—like returning more power from the Federal Government to the States where Americans actually live, allowing for reforms that can actually lower costs and improve care, and actually moving beyond the growing failures of a failed law called ObamaCare.

As I said, what we saw last night reminds us of this stark contrast in vision. It is an important debate for our country. It is one that will certainly continue.

PUERTO RICO AND U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS RECOVERY EFFORT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, on another matter, we have seen all the serious problems facing the people of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands as a result of recent hurricanes. The damage has been terrible. The latest hurricane was especially devastating.

We want the people of Puerto Rico and the islands to know that we are thinking of them, and, more importantly, we want them to know that we will continue to work with FEMA, the Department of Defense, and the rest of the administration to help in the recovery.

I expect we will hear more soon on what additional resources will be necessary in Puerto Rico and elsewhere in the paths of the storms. The recovery effort is certainly not going to be easy. It is not going to be quick. But we are here to do our part.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018—MOTION TO PROCEED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 1519, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 165, S. 1519, a bill 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.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

HEALTHCARE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, over the last few days, three Republican Senators have publicly stated that they

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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S6097

will vote against the healthcare repeal bill that may come to the Senate this week.

In announcing his opposition, one Republican Senator, JOHN MCCAIN of Arizona, issued the following statement: "As I have repeatedly stressed, healthcare reform legislation ought to be the product of regular order in the Senate."

Last night, Republican Senator SUSAN COLLINS of Maine stated: "This is simply not the way that we should be approaching an important and complex issue."

She went on to say: "The fact that a new version of this bill was released the very week we are supposed to vote compounds the problem."

This should be the end of the Graham-Cassidy repeal debate. Republican leadership should finally scrap this one-sided effort to literally change the healthcare system for America.

There was a hearing yesterday—the only hearing on the bill we are about to vote on. It was a lengthy hearing, but it, frankly, did not entertain all of the witnesses or any amendment process so that Members could really have input into the bill we are going to face.

The Congressional Budget Office is supposed to tell us what this critical legislation will do for America. It issued a preliminary finding yesterday that millions of Americans would lose their health insurance and that those with preexisting conditions, as well as their families, if they could buy insurance, would find it very, very expensive.

At the end of this week, funding for our Nation's community healthcare centers will run out, as will funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program. Shouldn't we be focused on reauthorizing those programs appropriately in a timely way? Let's allow the HELP Committee, which is the committee of jurisdiction when it comes to healthcare, to do its work. I have faith in two Senators—one Republican and one Democrat—to do the right thing on this. Senator LAMAR ALEXANDER of Tennessee, a Republican, and Senator PATTY MURRAY of Washington, a Democrat, have proven before that they can take complex issues such as Federal funding for education and find a bipartisan compromise.

What would America say if we announced at the end of next week or even this week that we have a bipartisan compromise to make healthcare stronger in the United States, that it is going to pass the Senate, that we are going to send it to the House, and that we are going to get something done this year in the Senate?

First, most Americans would be amazed and skeptical, as they should be, but if we can prove that we are going to do it, they would applaud us for finally reaching a point at which we do something on a bipartisan basis.

That was the process that was underway until last week. Senator ALEXANDER was given orders by the leader-

ship: Step back. Let's vote on Graham-Cassidy. Don't do anything more on a bipartisan basis.

Well, this is the week for that vote, and I hope it is the week in which that vote ends in the basic defeat of the approach and a return to bipartisan compromise and bipartisan negotiation.

I don't know what it will take for the Republicans in the Senate and the House to end this never-ending crusade against so-called ObamaCare. They have voted 50, 60, 70 times. We know how they feel about it, but the American people have said to them: It is not enough to oppose ObamaCare; give us a better alternative. And that is where they have stumbled each time.

Over the weekend, rather than making improvements to fix what is wrong with their bill, many Republicans doubled down in secret meetings, negotiations, and with incentives that were built into the newest version of the bill.

The latest Graham-Cassidy repeal measure would slash funding to the States, decimate the Medicaid Program, eliminate protections for people with preexisting conditions, and basically throw our entire healthcare system into chaos. A few special changes were made for special States, but the changes that have come to Graham-Cassidy in the closing days have not really changed the fundamental problem with the bill in that it diminishes Medicaid coverage.

Medicaid is the health insurance program about which most people say: Well, that is for the poor people of America. To some extent, that is true, but it has reached far beyond that. Two out of three senior citizens in nursing homes and other institutional settings rely on Medicaid for basic healthcare. If the cutbacks in Medicaid take place that Graham-Cassidy calls for, what will these seniors do? What will you do for Mom, for your grandmother, or for your grandfather when it reaches a point at which they cannot any longer count on Medicaid to help them pay their medical bills? Will American families have to step up with their own savings? Will they have to look for alternative settings to those in which their parents and grandparents are today? That is the stark choice Graham-Cassidy will create for many families across America.

No one has had time to properly review this latest proposal, in large part because it was drafted behind closed doors—no input from experts, no support from the medical community. You would think, after saying it over and over again, that the Republicans would challenge the following statement: There is no medical advocacy group in the United States of America who supports the Graham-Cassidy bill. That is the case in my State. The Illinois Hospital Association, doctors, nurses, surgeons, pediatricians, and community health are all opposed to this bill, every single one of them, as they were to the previous versions. It says some-

thing when the bill to change America's healthcare system is opposed by the people who provide healthcare to America. All of them oppose it. It is that bad.

Republican leaders want to force a vote this week. If that is what it takes, then we have to move to that vote, but I wish they would save some time. I wish they would move to this bipartisan negotiation I referred to earlier.

The Congressional Budget Office is a nonpartisan agency that is supposed to measure the impact of legislation so that, before we vote on it, we know if it is good or bad for the Nation and for the people we represent. Here is what it told us last night in a preliminary review, but it has not had time to review this bill in detail.

In a preliminary review, the CBO told us: "The number of people with comprehensive health insurance . . . would be reduced by millions each year."

How in the world can we as Senators make a proposal for the United States of America which we know will take health insurance coverage away from millions of Americans—exactly the opposite of what our goal should be?

The CBO went on to write: "Federal spending on Medicaid would be reduced by about \$1 trillion."

There are some Republicans, fiscal conservatives who say that we have to stop the growth of this program, but none of them—not one of them—can address the fundamental issue: Who will then take care in paying for the delivery of babies to low-income families? Half of the children who are born in my State of Illinois are paid for by Medicaid. Their moms are taken care of by Medicaid until the moment of birth. What will you replace that with if you eliminate Medicaid funding?

What about the disabled who count on Medicaid as their health insurance? If you are blind or face a serious disability, Medicaid is the answer for basic health insurance for you. If you are going to cut \$1 trillion out of Medicaid, what will you say to those disabled Americans who want the same peace of mind that we all want in having health insurance?

School districts all over Illinois and all over the Nation receive Medicaid funds to care for special ed students—counselors, transportation, even feeding tubes. If you take the money out of Medicaid, what will we do for those school districts that are trying their best to give kids a fighting chance, even those with serious disabilities? That is the reality.

The CBO went on to write: "Coverage for people with preexisting conditions would be much more expensive . . . and could become unavailable for many more people."

This Republican proposal takes us back to that moment in history when health insurance was so expensive and so hard to find—almost impossible for those with preexisting conditions. Why would we ever want to go back to that? There is hardly a family in America

who does not have someone they love, who is part of the family, who has a preexisting condition.

Let me remind those who do not have that circumstance that you are one accident or one diagnosis away from being part of this class of Americans who wants health insurance even though the health of those Americans has not been perfect.

In sum, this bill does not do what its authors say it will. They like to tell the American public that States will magically be able to cover the same number of people and provide the same level of benefits with billions of dollars less in funding. The Governors—Democrats and Republicans—have stepped up and said: This is ridiculous. We cannot be asked to accept the burden of health insurance for generations to come, while the Federal Government continues to cut the money that is necessary to provide that protection.

The CBO rejected the claims that are the basis for this Republican bill. Since the Republicans refuse to wait for the CBO to complete its full analysis, we have asked outside health experts what they think the impact would be of this legislation which is before us this week.

Here is what they say: Within a few years, this bill would likely rip health insurance away from more than 20 million Americans, including 1 million people in the State of Illinois. In a State of 12½ million people, which I represent, 1 million people would lose health insurance because of this Republican proposal that is before us this week.

The average 60-year-old person in Illinois would see his health insurance premiums increase by \$11,700 a year. Almost by \$1,000 a month his health insurance would go up. Why? Because they change a basic formula. In the Affordable Care Act, we see that the disparity in premiums charged between the highest and lowest will be no more than 3 to 1. They change the ratio in their Republican bill to 5 to 1. It means that those over the age of 50 and under 65 are going to see premium increases estimated to be almost \$1,000 a month.

By 2026, Illinois would see its healthcare funding slashed by \$8 billion. By 2036, this number would soar to \$153 billion.

Medicaid, which covers half of all children in Illinois and two out of three seniors in nursing homes, would be decimated. Also, the Medicaid expansion in Illinois, which helps us to combat the opioid epidemic, provide coverage for 650,000 Illinoisans, and bring stability to our hospitals all across the State, would be shut down.

Here is what the Illinois Hospital Association said about this bill:

Illinois cannot absorb additional financial burdens and would be forced to reduce eligibility, covered services, and payments to providers. The magnitude of these cuts and changes to Medicaid is staggering.

Let's also review what this does to people with preexisting conditions. The

Republicans say that this is all about giving flexibility to States. We hear that over and over again. It sure sounds nice until you realize that it is a code word for there being massive funding cuts and the elimination of basic health protection.

In the name of "State flexibility," this bill would allow insurers to charge those with preexisting conditions sky-high premiums the moment they get sick.

Under this bill, "State flexibility" means reimposing annual and lifetime limits on patients, including infants who are born with serious medical problems.

Under TrumpCare, "State flexibility" means charging Americans over the age of 50 up to five times more than younger people. That is exactly why the American Association of Retired Persons, the AARP, has steadfastly opposed these Republican changes.

To my Republican friends, "State flexibility" means tossing out essential health benefits, which is the guarantee that your insurance will cover the basic services your family may need—prescription drugs, maternity care, mental health and addiction treatment.

I spoke to one of my Republican colleagues the other day and asked: What are you driving at here? Are you saying that we can reduce the cost of health insurance if we give people the option of saying that they will not buy coverage for mental illness and substance abuse treatment?

He said: Yes, that is one thing they can do.

I said: Then what happens next month when you discover that your daughter, a sophomore in high school, is now taking opioids and may move to heroin next? You want to intervene. You want to do it, but now you have to pay out of pocket because you didn't buy the essential coverage of mental illness and substance abuse treatment.

It is a shortsighted game to reduce premiums and give up basic essential benefits, but that is what Republicans propose. That is why this measure is opposed by every major medical provider and patient organization nationwide: AARP, the American Hospital Association, the American Medical Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, nurses, disability groups, the American Heart Association, the American Lung Association, the American Diabetes Association, and the Alzheimer's Association—the list goes on and on. But guess who also came out in opposition to this bill? Insurance commissioners and Medicaid directors. These are the officials who would actually have to implement these cuts. They agree with the Congressional Budget Office that you can't slash the healthcare budget by 20 to 30 percent and expect that States will have "flexibility" to make up the difference. The bipartisan association representing every Medicaid director in the country—every one of them—stated that

Medicaid cuts would "constitute the largest transfer of financial risk from the federal government to the states in our country's history."

Show me a State that can cover as many people with the same benefits if one-third of the money is taken away. That is what the Republican bill does.

Here is what Governor Sandoval, a Republican Governor in Nevada, said:

Flexibility with reduced funding is a false choice. . . . I will not pit seniors, children, families, the mentally ill, hospitals, care providers, or any other Nevadan against each other because of cuts to Nevada's health system proposed by Graham-Cassidy.

This is a Governor speaking in the same clear terms as Governors of both political parties about the impossible dilemma that would be created by this bill.

Enough is enough. The law that we passed, the Affordable Care Act, helped 20 million people get health coverage. People with preexisting conditions were finally protected. Women are no longer discriminated against when it comes to health insurance. Americans get free preventive healthcare, such as cancer screenings. Is it a perfect law? Not by any means, but at 3 percent of the individual market, we need to do better, and we can. We need to improve that market.

First, the Trump administration must do its best to help us, not hurt healthcare in America. If they are setting out to sabotage this healthcare system, they can do it, but I hope they will not. The President will not suffer if they do, but a lot of innocent American families will. It will make it harder for people to enroll in insurance groups. It will slash funding for outreach. It will actively discourage insurers to offer health plans to individuals.

Mr. President, I am going to yield the floor to the Democratic leader.

In closing, I ask unanimous consent that the September 22, 2017, article in the New Yorker by Dr. Atul Gawande be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the New Yorker, Sept. 22, 2017]

IF THE U.S. ADOPTS THE G.O.P.'S HEALTHCARE BILL, IT WOULD BE AN ACT OF MASS SUICIDE

(By Atul Gawande)

The fundamental thing to understand about Senate Republicans' latest attempt to repeal Obamacare is that the bill under consideration would not just undo the Affordable Care Act—it would also end Medicaid as we know it and our federal government's half-century commitment to closing the country's yawning gaps in health coverage. And it would do so without putting in place any credible resources or policies to replace the system it is overturning. If our country enacts this bill, it would be an act of mass suicide.

In my surgery practice in Boston, I see primarily cancer patients. When I started out, in 2003, at least one in ten of my patients was uninsured. Others, who had insurance, would discover in the course of their treatment that their policies had annual or lifetime caps that wouldn't cover their costs, or that

they would face unaffordable premiums going forward because they now had a pre-existing condition. When he was governor of Massachusetts, it was Mitt Romney, a conservative, who brought Republicans and Democrats together to make a viable state system of near-universal coverage. That system then served as a model for the A.C.A. The results have been clear: increases in coverage have markedly improved people's access to care and their health. For the last four years, health-care costs in Massachusetts have risen more slowly than the national average—while the national numbers themselves have been at historic lows. I have not seen a single uninsured patient—zero—in a decade. And now comes an utterly reckless piece of legislation that would destroy these gains.

To review how we got to this point: last spring, the House passed a health-care-reform bill that proposed to hollow out the A.C.A.'s funding, insurance mandates, and protections for people with pre-existing conditions. It was immensely unpopular with the public. The problem was not just that twenty-three million Americans would lose their health insurance if the bill becomes law but also the Republicans' vision of a health system where insurance with deductibles of five thousand dollars and more, and little or no primary-care coverage, would become the norm.

This summer, Senate Republicans failed to secure enough votes to pass a modified version of the House bill. Later, in a dramatic late-night session, the Senate also rejected, by a single vote, a "skinny" repeal bill. That bill would have repealed only the parts of the A.C.A. that required large businesses to insure their workers and all Americans to carry coverage. It would have resulted in a mere sixteen million more uninsured people, according to estimates.

The Republican bill currently being rushed to a vote was put forward by a group of senators led by Lindsey Graham, of South Carolina, and Bill Cassidy, of Louisiana. As has become the apparent rule for Republican health-care bills, there have been no hearings or committee reviews of the Graham-Cassidy bill. And, this time, lawmakers and the public do not even have a Congressional Budget Office analysis of the effects the bill would have on the budget, insurance costs, or the uninsured rate.

This is unprecedented: senators are moving ahead with a vote on a bill that would alter the health care of every American family and the condition of a sixth of our entire economy, without waiting to hear any official, independent estimates of the consequences. The irresponsibility is as blithe as it is breathtaking. Before becoming a senator, Cassidy spent twenty-five years working as a physician in hospitals devoted to the uninsured. I find it baffling that a person with his experience would not recognize the danger of this bill. But here we are.

The Graham-Cassidy bill goes even further than the bill passed by the House. It would bring to a virtually immediate end not only the individual and employer mandates but also the whole edifice of the Medicaid expansion, insurance exchanges, and income-based coverage subsidies set up under the A.C.A. Graham-Cassidy expects all fifty states to then pass, and implement, alternative health systems for tens of millions of people within two years—with drastically less money, in most states, than the current law provides. This is not just impossible. It is delusional.

Like the House bill, Graham-Cassidy would cut Medicaid payments for traditional enrollees—the elderly in nursing homes, pregnant women in poverty, disabled children, etc.—by a third by 2026. A portion of the money saved would go into a short-term fund

for states to use for health-care costs. The rationale is that this would give states "flexibility" to design coverage for their residents as they see fit. But the amount of funding provided is, by multiple estimates, hundreds of billions of dollars below what the A.C.A. provides.

The bill also nakedly shifts funds from Democratic-leaning states that expanded Medicaid under the A.C.A. to Republican-leaning states that didn't. Analyses indicate that states like California, Massachusetts, and New York will receive block-grant funding anywhere from thirty-five to almost sixty per cent below the health-care funding their residents would receive under current law. Much of those missing funds would be transferred to states like Texas, Mississippi, and Wisconsin. And special deals to make further shifts from blue states to red states such as Alaska are being negotiated to win votes.

As for what states can do with the funds they do receive, they would not be allowed to use them to enroll people in Medicaid, or able to establish a single-payer system. And states would not be receiving enough to continue Obamacare on their own. The only options for spending are for commercial coverage. States will be permitted to let insurers bring back higher costs for people with pre-existing conditions and to reinstate annual and lifetime limits on coverage. And then, starting in 2026, the funding turns out to only be temporary. Under the bill's provisions, unless further action is taken then, four trillion dollars will be removed from health-care systems over twenty years.

With these massive sums being flung around, it is easy to forget that this is about our health as human beings. The evidence is that health-care programs like the A.C.A. save lives. The way they do so is by increasing the number of people who have affordable access to a regular source of care and needed medications. Such coverage has been shown to produce a substantial and increasing reduction in mortality—especially among those with chronic illnesses, such as heart disease, cancer, or H.I.V.—in as little as five years.

Virtually all of us, as we age, will develop serious health conditions. A critical test of any health reform, therefore, is whether it improves or reduces our prospects of having the continuous care and medicines we need when we come to have a chronic illness. The Graham-Cassidy bill fails this test. It will terminate Medicaid coverage and insurance subsidies for some twenty million people. The entire individual-insurance market will be thrown into a tailspin. Federal protections for insurance coverage will be gone.

Every major group representing patients, health-care professionals, health-care institutions, and insurers has come out vociferously against this plan. Governors from Alaska to Ohio to Virginia have opposed the bill. In a highly unusual, bipartisan statement, the national association representing the Medicaid directors of all fifty states has also opposed the bill. The top health official in Louisiana, Cassidy's home state, has opposed the new plan. There is not a single metric of health or health care that the Graham-Cassidy plan makes better. This bill is a national calamity. It should not even come to a vote.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the statement of A.J. Wilhelmi, president and CEO of the Illinois Health and Hospital Association also be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Illinois Health and Hospital Association, Sept. 21, 2017]

THE GRAHAM-CASSIDY-HELLER-JOHNSON ACA REPEAL PROPOSAL

(By A.J. Wilhelmi)

The Illinois Health and Hospital Association opposes the latest Senate proposal to repeal the Affordable Care Act, which would do great harm to patients, hospitals, the healthcare delivery system, and our state budget and economy. The Graham-Cassidy-Heller-Johnson bill is even more damaging than the previous Senate and House repeal proposals. Not only will it result in the loss of healthcare coverage for up to one million Illinoisans, but it will erode key protections for patients and consumers and will cut federal healthcare resources to Illinois by more than \$150 Billion.

IHA also opposes changing Medicaid to a capped funding model. Illinois already ranks 50th in the country in federal funding support per Medicaid beneficiary. Capped funding would lock Illinois into low, insufficient federal funding levels and shift costs to the state.

Illinois cannot absorb additional financial burdens that would be imposed on the state and would be forced to reduce eligibility, covered services, and payments to providers. The magnitude of these cuts and changes to Medicaid is staggering.

We were encouraged by recent bi-partisan negotiations to stabilize the individual marketplace. The Graham-Cassidy-Heller-Johnson bill will do nothing in the short or long term to create marketplace stability.

We urge the Senate to reject this proposal, and we implore the members of the Illinois House Delegation to oppose the bill if it passes the Senate. There is a great deal at stake for the health and well-being of the people of Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Finally, I ask unanimous consent that the statement by the National Association of Medicaid Directors, to which I referred, be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the National Association of Medicaid Directors, Sept. 21, 2017]

NAMD STATEMENT ON GRAHAM-CASSIDY

The Board of Directors of the National Association of Medicaid Directors (NAMd) urges Congress to carefully consider the significant challenges posed by the Graham-Cassidy legislation. State Medicaid Directors are strong proponents of state innovation in the drive towards health care system transformation. Our members are committed to ensuring that the programs we operate improve health outcomes while also being fiscally responsible to state and federal taxpayers. In order to succeed, however, these efforts must be undertaken in a thoughtful, deliberative, and responsible way. We are concerned that this legislation would undermine these efforts in many states and fail to deliver on our collective goal of an improved health care system.

1. Graham-Cassidy would completely restructure the Medicaid program's financing, which by itself is three percent of the nation's Gross Domestic Product and 25 percent of the average state budget. Like BCRA, the legislation would convert the traditional Medicaid program into a per-capita cap financing system. All states will be impacted by this change, regardless of their decisions to leverage the Medicaid expansion option under the ACA. It would also incorporate

Medicaid expansion funding and other ACA health funds into a block grant, made available to all states. How these block grants will be utilized, what programs they may fund, and the overall impact they will have on state budgets, operations, and citizens are all uncertain. Taken together, the per-capita caps and the envisioned block grant would constitute the largest intergovernmental transfer of financial risk from the federal government to the states in our country's history. While the block grant portion is intended to create maximum flexibility, the legislation does not provide clear and powerful statutory reforms within the underlying Medicaid program commensurate with proposed funding reductions of the per capita cap.

2. The Graham-Cassidy legislation would require states to operationalize the block grant component by January 1, 2020. The scope of this work, and the resources required to support state planning and implementation activities, cannot be overstated. States will need to develop overall strategies, invest in infrastructure development, systems changes, provider and managed care plan contracting, and perform a host of other activities. The vast majority of states will not be able to do so within the two-year timeframe envisioned here, especially considering the apparent lack of federal funding in the bill to support these critical activities.

3. Any effort of this magnitude needs thorough discussion, examination and analysis, and should not be rushed through without proper deliberation. The legislative proposal would not even have a full CBO score until after its scheduled passage, which should be the bare minimum required for beginning consideration. With only a few legislative days left for the entire process to conclude, there clearly is not sufficient time for policymakers, Governors, Medicaid Directors, or other critical stakeholders to engage in the thoughtful deliberation necessary to ensure successful long-term reforms.

For these reasons, we encourage Congress to revisit the topic of comprehensive Medicaid reform when it can be addressed with the careful consideration merited by such a complex undertaking—as we articulated in our June 26 statement on BCRA.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, what America wants is to solve problems, not create them. The Graham-Cassidy bill will create problems for every American family. Let's do something right. On a bipartisan basis, let's sit down and work out improvements to our healthcare system. Let's stop the partisanship when it comes to healthcare. Let's come together now.

We each have our grievances against one another, one party or the other. The American people are tired of our grievances. They are expecting us to do something positive. We can do it. Let's return to the bipartisan negotiation process.

I think that Senators LAMAR ALEXANDER and PATTY MURRAY, Republican and Democrat, can lead us to a good path to strengthen our healthcare system.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

THANKING THE SENATOR FROM ILLINOIS

Mr. SCHUMER. First, let me thank my dear friend and colleague from Illi-

nois for his remarks. As usual, he is one of the most articulate Members of either side. He is also one of the most thoughtful and compassionate, and I hope people will listen to what he has to say.

HEALTHCARE

Mr. President, I would also like to respond to what the majority leader said this morning on healthcare. My good friend Senator MCCONNELL continues to try and create this straw man because he has nothing good to say about his bill. He wants to make this healthcare debate about a false choice between Graham-Cassidy on their side and single payer on our side, but as Senators SANDERS and KLOBUCHAR made clear in an excellent debate last night on CNN, Democrats have a lot of ideas to improve healthcare. There is not just one; there are many, and many Democrats support a bunch of different ideas. Each of our ideas, however, endeavors to increase coverage, improve the quality of care, and lower the cost of care. None of the Republican plans achieve these goals. That is the difference.

The difference is that one side wants to cut healthcare to average Americans, increase premiums, and give the insurance companies far more freedom, and one side wants to increase care to the number of people covered, lower premiums, and provide better coverage. That is the divide.

Our colleagues can't stand and debate that issue. They believe in letting the market have more say. We have learned that, left alone, the poor little consumer against a big market gets crushed in healthcare because there are infirmities. It doesn't work like an ordinary market for a whole lot of reasons. So we are happy to have a debate on the real issues.

Does Graham-Cassidy expand or reduce healthcare? They are rushing this through so we don't get a full CBO report. I am sure my colleagues on the other side of the aisle maybe breathed some relief there. CBO said that costs are likely to go way up for older Americans and Americans with preexisting conditions under Graham-Cassidy. They said that Graham-Cassidy would reduce coverage by gutting Medicaid and reducing subsidies that help Americans afford insurance. So there is, indeed, a contrast between the parties. It is a contrast we welcome.

Every Republican plan this year would cause millions to lose insurance and costs to go up, whereas Democrats are looking at many different ideas about how to achieve the exact opposite.

As my colleague said, we want to work in a bipartisan way to improve the existing system. Senator ALEXANDER and Senator MURRAY have had great negotiations. Once this repeal effort is dead and gone—this repeal and replace—we are willing and eager to sit down and come up with bipartisan improvements and do it in the regular order, as some of our colleagues on the

other side of the aisle have correctly and courageously recommended. Let's do it in regular order.

Senators ALEXANDER and MURRAY have had hearings, called in witnesses, and have had a lot of bipartisan discussions—just what this body is supposed to do. Let's realize that Graham-Cassidy is highly unpopular with the American people, doesn't do what some are saying it does, and cuts healthcare. Democrats don't want to do that, and neither do the American people. Let's move on and try to make our system better.

PUERTO RICO AND U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS
RECOVERY EFFORT

Mr. President, the main subject I am going to speak on today is that instead of trying to take healthcare away from millions of Americans, the Senate and the White House should focus on a much more pressing matter this week: the desperate situation in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

After suffering from the winds and rains of Hurricanes Irma and Maria, the island of Puerto Rico is completely devastated. I can't recall in my lifetime a hurricane wreaking such devastation on any part of the United States. There are 3.5 million American citizens facing one of the gravest humanitarian crises in recent memory.

Listen to these facts. Nearly the entire island is without power. The reserves of gas and diesel fuel are dangerously low; there may be a 20-day supply left. I read in the newspaper this morning that 80 percent of the major power lines—the big trunk lines that deliver power—are down. Without power, just think of what that does.

The Governor of Puerto Rico said last night that 40 percent of the people on the island lack potable water; some estimates say it is as much as 65 percent. The food supply is dwindling, so people are without food. Fewer than 250 of the island's 1,600 cell phone towers are operational. People can't find their parents, children, or relatives. There is no way to reach them.

I remember the day of 9/11 when cell phone service went out in New York and I couldn't reach my daughters. This has been going on for days and days and days.

The damage to one of the largest dams on the island has created the need for another massive evacuation, but with 95 percent of the cell phones out of service in that part of the island, the evacuations have to be carried out by officials going door-to-door to the nearly 70,000 residents in harm's way, telling them that they have to leave their homes. Worse still, the damage to Puerto Rico's roads, bridges, and ports have isolated communities and delayed the arrival of aid.

It is not hyperbolic to say that the two storms together have set Puerto Rico back decades. The damage is apocalyptic. It is Biblical.

The situation on the U.S. Virgin Islands is similar. Words and statistics can hardly begin to describe the devastation these Americans are beginning

to grapple with. It has hit home. One of my staffers couldn't find an uncle, and they found him dead on the Virgin Islands last night. So it hits home to all of us and to all Americans. Looking at the pictures and the news reports, the islands now resemble a war zone.

What we need to do now is provide aid to Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands as quickly as humanly possible—water, food, power, shelter. They need help and they need it now.

Here is what should happen. First, President Trump must issue a full disaster declaration for all of Puerto Rico. Right now, 24 of the 78 municipalities on the island are not eligible for FEMA grants to rebuild their homes.

President Trump should also waive the local cost-share requirement for emergency funds so that Puerto Rico can rebuild without having to worry about falling even deeper into debt.

While our Nation's Armed Forces—and we salute our Armed Forces all the time—are already assisting Puerto Rico, more needs to be done. As the most experienced part of our government in the movement of food, water, mobile power, and medical supplies, the Department of Defense should immediately determine what additional resources and capabilities can be deployed to aid Puerto Rico. If Secretary Mattis hasn't already met with the Director of FEMA, I hope he will do it today.

Most importantly, the administration should prepare an immediate and interim emergency aid request, and the majority leader should put that package on the floor of the Senate before we leave this week. Anything less would be an abject failure of our duty to come to the aid of our fellow U.S. citizens.

The administration submitted a request for Hurricane Harvey less than a week after the storm made landfall. We are rapidly closing in on that same marker for Maria having hit Puerto Rico. We need to move fast. We need to move now. Lives are at stake.

This morning I saw that President Trump had tweeted that Puerto Rico was in "deep trouble," but relief efforts were "doing well."

With all due respect, President Trump, the relief efforts are not doing well. They are not close to good enough. All any American needs to do is open up a newspaper or turn on a TV to know that Puerto Rico is not doing well.

In his tweets, President Trump also brought up the issue of Puerto Rico's debt. Now, that is a totally different issue, and it pales in comparison to the immediate humanitarian crisis faced on the island.

Again, now is not the time, Mr. President. Puerto Rico needs help from aid workers, not debt collectors from Wall Street. Yes, Puerto Rico needs debt relief, but first they need humanitarian relief—water, food, medicine, fuel.

But this fits a pattern of how our President unfortunately responds to natural disasters. He insists that relief and recovery efforts are "doing well" or "doing great," and sometimes it has

no relation to the facts on the ground, as if this is a public relations campaign and not a rescue, recovery, and rebuilding operation. The time for tweets and talk is over.

The American citizens in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands need action and results. The best thing the President can do is to get all of the relevant people in his administration together and come up with an aid package and deliver it to us in the next day or two so that we can pass it before we leave here this week.

Again, instead of trying to take away healthcare from millions of Americans—that is what we are debating now, and that effort seems to be in real trouble—the Trump administration and the Republican majority should put an emergency aid package on the floor before the week is out.

Carmen Yulin Cruz, the mayor of San Juan, said earlier today: "We need to get our act together because people are dying."

The situation is desperate. The need is urgent. It is time to act now.

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

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

HEALTHCARE

Mr. SASSE. Mr. President, until you arrived to relieve me, I had been presiding since the opening of the Senate this morning, and I had the opportunity to listen to lengthy speeches from the Democratic leader and the assistant Democratic leader this morning. I would like to correct the record on three brief items.

First of all, as is common, almost an epidemic around here, there were repeated references to the Republican desire to cut Federal spending on healthcare for the poor and for the sickest among us. That is simply not true. It is an epidemic way of speaking around here, where people act as though, if you want to reduce the rate of growth, that is actually a cut. The fact that people in this body say it all the time doesn't make it true. No normal people ever talk that way. If you are having a debate at your house about your household budget and you are spending beyond your means and somebody proposes that next year you should spend 30 percent more than you spent this year, when this year you already spent more than you can afford, and you have big debate and you say "No. Actually, next year, let's only spend 15 percent more than we spent this year," that is not a cut. You will still spend more money next year than you will this year. Because you have a debate about the rate of growth—that is not the same thing as a cut. It is a fundamentally dishonest way of speaking, and we should stop doing it around here.

The second thing that was said in these speeches that I listened to is that Republicans have a desire to give insurance companies more money. I would love it if some Democrat would come to the floor and explain why the stock prices of all the big health insurers in America have been through the roof since the passage of ObamaCare and why the big health insurance companies are the people lobbying the strongest to keep the current collapsing ObamaCare regime in place and actually asking for even more Federal money for insurance companies.

It isn't the case that the proposals Republicans are making on reforming healthcare are something for which the insurance companies are cheering; rather, the insurance companies want to keep the ObamaCare regime in place and add yet more tax dollars to it.

It would be great if we could have an honest debate around here instead of these sort of made-up stories that the Republican plans are in the interest of health insurance companies.

I will readily admit and have often admitted to this body that the Republican Party has done a bad job of explaining what we are for in terms of replacing ObamaCare. We have done a bad job, and we have not spoken with a clear voice. But speaking for myself, I will say that I actually want to have insurance play a smaller role in the healthcare sector because there are all sorts of things that we are currently insuring against in healthcare that we don't ever conceivably think would be a rational way to build an insurance marketplace in other sectors. If you think of property and casualty insurance, for instance, we don't have any law that mandates that Allstate and State Farm have to buy my gas and schedule my Jiffy Lube appointments. If they did, I submit to you that we would all consume a lot more gas, we would do it less thoughtfully, and we would have Jiffy Lubes that are at the wrong locations, open at the wrong hours, with poor customer service, with a lack of clarity as to what services they are delivering and what quality metrics they have.

We don't try to take in other sectors—the entire sector and swallow it by insurance. Insurance is supposed to be insulation and protection against catastrophic loss in the event of unforeseen, unpredictable, non-behaviorally driven events.

To be clear, I don't think the Republican Party has spoken clearly and spoken with one voice. But for this conservative vocalist, I actually want American healthcare to work better by making clear what things we want to insure against and what parts of the healthcare delivery market we think might work better if moms and dads and local doctors and nurses were more empowered by having to mediate fewer

of their transactions through the insurance space.

So while I am not in favor of cutting Federal spending for the poorest and sickest among us, I am in favor of having a debate about how we get to a sustainable growth rate, not the unsustainable growth rate we are on that is going to bankrupt the next generation.

I am in favor of shrinking the amount of money that goes to insurance companies. The plans being debated here on the floor tend to be debates where a lot of the Democrats actually want to have a conversation about how we can give even more money to insurance companies. They often have Orwellian names like “insurance marketplace stabilization funds,” but make no mistake—what they are really talking about is giving more money to private health insurance companies that have had stock prices go through the roof since the passage of ObamaCare. That is the second falsehood in the speeches this morning.

A third item on which it is important to correct the record—and this is not to pick on in particular the two most powerful Democrats in the body; those just happened to be the speeches I listened to this morning. We have a habit around here of people saying a lot of things that aren't true. You might ask: Why can you get away with saying things that aren't true? One of the ways we get away with it is, just as I am doing at this moment—I am speaking to an empty Chamber. The Senator from Arizona is here. He has the duty to preside over the Senate right now. But he is the only person in this Chamber. So everybody at home watching on C-SPAN—I know the camera angle is this wide, and so I am the guy on the screen, but this body has 99 empty desks.

One thing that is very common—and was true of both speeches I listened to this morning—is that there is no one in the Chamber even though, as the speeches are made, there is a lot of gesturing as I beat down this debate partner, and I just one-upped you and I just persuaded you. There is a lot of motioning and gesturing and fake rhetoric that goes on around here where we try to masquerade for the American people and for the 50, 60, 70 people in the Gallery right now. I see people chuckling because they all know that it is true. They are sitting in a body, and there is no one here. Yet, when people come and make their speeches on the floor, they pretend they are winning some grand debate, and then their communication staff rips apart the video and sends it to the local TV stations back home, where people get lots of credit, as if they just won some big debate on the Senate floor. And maybe they said a whole bunch of stuff that wasn't actually true, but there was no one here to answer them because we are not actually debating big issues very often in this body.

There are a lot of theatrics and a lot of charades and a lot of false deliberation. But right now, I am speaking to an empty Chamber, and both of the speeches that I heard this morning from the Democratic leaders—making up stuff about what the Republican healthcare proposals would do—those were speeches all delivered to an empty Chamber, even though the gestures implied somebody was winning a debate when that was happening.

Once upon a time—there is no golden age in world history; we all live post fall. But once upon a time, this really was the greatest deliberative body in the world. Two hundred forty years ago when the Constitution built a system of three separate but equal branches that checked and balanced one another, the Senate had a unique role. The upper body of article I, of the legislative branch, was a place where debates were supposed to be long so that you could forge consensus—70, 80, and 90 percent consensus—on issues, because people actually were in this body actually debating real issues.

We are not the greatest deliberative body in the world right now, and a lot of people pretend we are. One of the ways we get away with that is by standing in here and pretending there are a lot of people listening to our speeches when no one is here. Again, I am the third speech of the day in the Senate today, and all three of them have had an audience of zero. I submit that most of today on C-SPAN is going to have an empty Chamber with a little ticker at the bottom that says “waiting for Senators to speak.” When the Senator comes to speak, they are going to speak to an empty Chamber, and they are going to pretend they are winning a big debate. It is not a useful way to tackle the biggest public policy problems that face our people and not a great way to restore the Senate. We should make the Senate great again.

Thank you, Mr. President, for the opportunity to correct these three items.

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. KAINE. 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. KAINE. Mr. President, I rise to speak about the debate this week over the Graham-Cassidy proposal with respect to healthcare that is being considered by the body. I have high regard for both of these colleagues. I serve with each of them on different committees. I oppose the bill and want to talk a little bit about why I do but more specifically about an aspect of the bill that I find puzzling.

It is no surprise to me that there are many in this body who would like to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act. When the Democrats were in the majority for my first 2 years in the

Senate, I often sat in the chair where the Presiding Officer sits. I heard a lot of people giving speeches on the floor. I was in the Chair during an all-night sort of filibuster by the Senator from Texas about the repeal and replacement of the Affordable Care Act. I get that there are arguments about it. While I support the Affordable Care Act—I strongly did in 2010 and still do—I do want to work with my colleagues to find solutions to improve healthcare. There are differences of opinion about it.

One thing I never heard during all of the speeches that I heard, either as a presider or paying attention on the floor, was Members getting up and saying they wanted to dramatically cut Medicaid. That is not anything that anybody has filibustered about. That is not anything that people speak about.

When President Trump campaigned, he said: I am unique on the forum right now of all these candidates in that I will not cut the Medicaid Program. When the Senate started to consider versions of the ObamaCare repeal and replacement over the summer, after the House acted, what interested me was not the portions of the bill that attempted to replace the Affordable Care Act but the significant changes to the Medicaid Program that were never advertised. There was never this discussion: We are going to repeal ObamaCare, and we want to cut Medicaid. It was always about ObamaCare.

I am puzzled, standing here today, considering a Graham-Cassidy proposal that not only would be a fundamental change of repeal and replacement of the Affordable Care Act but also contains a very significant revision of Medicaid that would hurt my State and would hurt a lot of people I care about. That never seems to be acknowledged, and I am puzzled about why.

As to the Graham-Cassidy proposal, again, I respect my colleagues, and I think they are putting it on the table because they think it would be preferable to the current system. I don't question their motives. I was a Governor, and the notion of block grants and discretion and dollars back to the State can be a good thing. Quickly, before I get to the Medicaid piece, the problem is if you take the Graham-Cassidy proposal, it takes the dollars that are currently being delivered to the States through the Affordable Care Act, shrinks them by about \$240 billion over 10 years, and then eliminates them. Even with the shuffling of the deck on a block grant that might benefit one State over another, you can't take \$240 billion out of the system, in my view, without making people's premiums go up.

The money that is being delivered to States is largely delivered to help people either get a tax credit premium or pay out-of-pocket costs. If you take that much out of the system over 10 years, people's premiums are going to go up. That breaks a promise of President Trump's, who said that nobody is

going to lose coverage and nobody is going to pay more. People will pay more, if Graham-Cassidy passes, in the short term, over the next 10 years. Then, when all of the money expires after 10 years, they will pay a lot more. I oppose that.

Second, I also oppose the way this bill treats preexisting conditions. By allowing States to waive essential health benefits, it might be technically true to say that you could get a policy even if you had a preexisting condition, but the insurance company could say to you: I will write you a policy, but you are a diabetic; so the policy will not cover insulin. Or I will write you a policy, but you are a woman of child-bearing age; the policy will not cover maternity care.

If the policy doesn't cover your preexisting condition, then preexisting conditions are not protected. To my read of the 141-page bill—which has been revised a little bit, or so I hear, since I got the most recent version Friday to read it over the weekend—that is exactly what States can do. Because 43 of 50 States did not protect people with preexisting conditions before the Affordable Care Act, handing this power back to the States and allowing them to waive these benefits, I think, would jeopardize the tens of millions of Americans who do have preexisting conditions.

Finally, I don't like the fact that the current bill, as I understand it, ends funding for Planned Parenthood. Planned Parenthood doesn't have a line item in the budget. To the extent that Planned Parenthood gets funding, it gets funding for this reason: It provides primary medical care to women who are Medicaid-eligible, and they get services at Planned Parenthood that are Medicaid-eligible to be reimbursed.

Since Federal funding cannot be used for abortion services, the defunding of Planned Parenthood basically says that if you serve a woman who chooses to go to you for her primary healthcare and she is Medicaid eligible, we will not pay you for that service. That seems, to me, to be wrong. If women are choosing to go to Planned Parenthood, and they think that is the best place to go for primary care, why would we disable them and force them to go elsewhere by disabling Planned Parenthood from reimbursement?

All right. Those are some challenges I have, but I want to get to the real guts of my concern, which is the effort to go after Medicaid.

The Graham-Cassidy bill—and it is similar to the skinny repeal bill and other bills that were on the table that the Senate considered—goes into the Medicaid Program that was passed in 1965, which was long before the Affordable Care Act—long before it—and it puts caps on the program to restrict the growth of Medicaid spending. The estimate is that over the next 10 years, it will take \$1.2 billion out of Medicaid. Yet no description of Graham-Cassidy that I have ever heard a sponsor men-

tion and no description of any of the bills that have been pending on the Senate floor say we are going to repeal ObamaCare and that we want to go into the Medicaid Act of 1965 and dramatically cut Medicaid.

Why is that never made plain as it is a core feature of these bills? I would argue, it is sort of the core within the Trojan horse of the repeal of the Affordable Care Act to go in and change Medicaid. Yet it is never advertised that way, and it is never explained. You could have put a bill on the table to repeal the Affordable Care Act and could have left Medicaid alone. You would have touched the Medicaid expansion that was part of the Affordable Care Act, certainly, but you could have left the core Medicaid Program alone. Why was there an effort to both repeal the Affordable Care Act and cut Medicaid but not to say we are cutting Medicaid?

Maybe it is because, if you were to say that, you would directly counter a promise the President made, "I am not going to cut Medicaid." Maybe there is a concern about, boy, we are taking \$1.2 billion out of Medicaid, and we are about to come up with a big tax proposal that might give tax breaks for the wealthiest. We do not want to take money away from a program that is for the poor, elderly, disabled, or children and then immediately turn right around and increase the deficit by a tax cut.

I find this to be the big mystery of this entire debate, in that every proposal that is on the floor makes massive cuts to the core Medicaid Program even though it has nothing to do with the Affordable Care Act. Nobody ever acknowledges it, and nobody ever explains it, but I am here to both say it is real and to challenge it.

Who are Medicaid recipients? I think there tends to be a little bit of a misconception about who gets Medicaid in this country.

In Virginia, 50 percent of Medicaid recipients are children. The proposal, under Graham-Cassidy, calls for a \$1.2 billion cut in Medicaid in Virginia over the next 10 years and a \$120 billion cut in Medicaid nationally. In Virginia, 50 percent of Medicaid recipients are kids. One in three births in Virginia—one in three births every year—is compensated by Medicaid. Two in three nursing home residents are supported by Medicaid. There are a lot of people with disabilities in Virginia who are supported by Medicaid. The home and community-based waiver programs, under the core Medicaid bill, support nearly 50,000 Virginians in community settings of their own choosing. Medicaid is also the primary payer for behavioral health services—mental health treatment, substance abuse prevention treatment.

That is what this bill goes after even though that Medicaid funding has nothing to do with ObamaCare, nothing to do with the Affordable Care Act. So reducing Medicaid spending by the

\$120 billion-plus over 10 years or more in the out-years would not hand more power to States. No, it would dramatically limit the States' ability to provide the kinds of services that are needed by our most vulnerable—kids, seniors in nursing homes, and people with disabilities.

Later today, I am going to have a meeting in my office with folks who have communicated with me over the course of this debate—really since January when I was added to the HELP Committee. They are coming in to tell me how frightened they are about what will happen if Graham-Cassidy passes.

Samantha and Justin McGovern are parents. They have a girl, Josephine, who is 1½ years old. They are from Springfield, which is right here in Northern Virginia. Josephine is about 18 months old, and she was very premature—24 weeks gestation. She was 1 pound 12 ounces when she was born. That is the size of six sticks of butter. That is how tiny this little girl was. She was hospitalized, after her premature birth, for 407 days, across three units, in two hospitals, in two States. She is home and thriving now, but she is supported by a ventilator 24/7 via a tracheostomy, and she is fed primarily through a gastrointestinal tube.

Her mother Samantha writes:

We are fortunate that we get to focus on her health rather than medical crippling bills. We estimate that her hospital stay would have exceeded \$4 million, and the cost for her monthly medical expenses (baseline . . . not sick) is about \$26,000 a month (if we didn't have insurance or Medicaid coverage).

Here is what she writes:

We are fortunate we have amazing private insurance through our employer. However, if it were legal to have annual or lifetime caps, I don't know what would happen to us. Part of our Medicaid covers private duty nursing so that we can sleep and go to work. Without nursing, one of us would have to leave their job, and there would be no way we could continue to live in our house [or pay our insurance]. If there are caps and we lost our insurance, we would depend on Medicaid even more than we do now, and we would have less coverage than we currently have, making it virtually impossible for Josephine to continue to be followed by the doctors who saved her life.

Basically, if [this bill] passes, life as we know it could fall apart. I don't know how we would be able to support our daughter, how we could keep her home and not in an institution. She deserves to be home. She deserves to have every opportunity to thrive.

I met Rebecca Wood at a forum in Charlottesville. She has a 5-year-old daughter, Charlie. I met them in July.

Charlie's mom says:

Charlie . . . is five-years-old and loves playing outdoors, live music, things with numbers, and anything with animals. Charlie was born more than three months early and, as a result, is developmentally delayed. Currently, Charlie requires physical therapy (PT), occupational therapy (OT), and speech therapy. She has a . . . (feeding tube) and wears orthotics. Affordable care is the difference between independence as an adult or a permanent disability. Due to a three month NICU stay [when she was born], Charlie would have exceeded her lifetime cap before she ever came home for the first time.

Then, she would have been uninsurable due to her birth being a preexisting condition. Also, Institutional Medicaid paid for a large portion of her NICU stay. Upon discharge, a Medicaid waiver helps with out of pocket costs and provides services that [our private] insurance doesn't cover. She would not be where she is without any of these things. The changes in the proposed healthcare bill would cause Charlie to drastically lose access to these services. Receiving healthcare services is her chance to leave a life-limiting disability behind.

The last story I will tell is of Eric Young, from Norfolk, on behalf of his son, Ethan.

Eric has major concerns about Graham-Cassidy. His son, Ethan, has what is called heterotaxy syndrome, which is an incredibly complex congenital heart defect. There are seven defects that are combined in this brave and thriving youngster. Eric said that Ethan has had two open heart surgeries and is having his third in November.

Eric writes:

I anticipate his healthcare charges to surpass the \$1M mark before the end of the year. It's not an "if" for Ethan—it's when. "He" will have spent more on healthcare in his first 2 years of life than most people will during their entire lives. He's the outlier. But he's exactly the type of kid that needs protecting.

Dealing with such a critical issue when your baby is first born is overwhelming—having to worry about whether or not your decisions to save your child will affect whether he . . . [can] even obtain health insurance when he gets to be an adult is just wrong.

Eric writes about the ACA, as Eric works in the healthcare industry:

The ACA is not perfect—it needs to be changed. I work in healthcare—so I have the perspective of seeing it from my job and as a parent. But, we need a real bill that is well thought out, not something just for the sake of passing.

I wanted to come and really just talk about these youngsters. One out of every three children born in Virginia is able to be born in a hospital because of Medicaid, and 50 percent of Medicaid recipients are kids. If you were a child and you needed a wheelchair, your private insurance likely would not cover it. If you get a wheelchair, it is usually Medicaid that pays for it. If you go to school and then you get an individualized education plan and your public school system provides you some services, it is Medicaid that is usually paying the school system to reimburse it for the services that are provided.

My wife used to be a juvenile court judge, and this was the situation she would face all the time with kids in the court. It would be a heartbreaking situation, but there was an answer. You would have teenagers who were working so hard to be successful—not in court because of violating the law, not in court because of trouble but in court because their families were so dysfunctional nobody could take care of them. As a judge, my wife would have to grapple with this: Where is this child going to live? Who is going to help this child get to school? This kid is trying to succeed. Do I have to put the child

in a group home or institutionalize the child because there is no family support there?

What my wife could do as a juvenile court judge—and this happens all over Virginia every day and all over the country every day—is say: OK. The child is capable of success, but the family is dysfunctional. May I send a counselor to the home? May I find an aunt or uncle, and maybe with some support of counseling, provide some stability so this child does not have to be institutionalized and can be successful? When my wife would order that, it was Medicaid that was paying for it.

Medicaid pays for your birth, Medicaid pays for your wheelchair, and Medicaid pays for the services a local school system will provide so you can have a life of independence. If your whole world is falling apart around you and you are doing everything you can to succeed, Medicaid can actually pay for counseling so you can keep it together and graduate from high school and go on and go to college and be successful.

Medicaid is advancing these challenged kids toward lives of independence and success. Yet the bill that is on the floor before us would cut, by the most recent estimate, \$120 billion out of Medicaid over the next 10 years and more beyond. Why? Why is that not acknowledged? Why would you use the bill to cut Medicaid when all of the rhetoric about it is that we have to repeal the Affordable Care Act?

I think the right answer to this question is just staring us in the face, and it was what we gave Senator McCain a standing ovation for in July when he came back after getting his tough diagnosis. He came back, and he said: Look, healthcare is just too important. It is just too important. It is the most important expenditure anybody ever makes. It is the biggest sector of the American economy. It is the kind of thing that keeps parents up at night, worrying about what is going to happen to their children tomorrow or in 20 years, when the parents are deceased, and they want to know the children can have independent lives.

We just cannot afford to get this wrong, and the answer about getting it right is staring us right in the face. Let the HELP Committee, on which I serve—the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee—and let the Finance Committee, which has jurisdiction over Medicaid and Medicare, take up everybody's ideas: the Graham-Cassidy bill and BERNIE SANDERS' bill. I have a bill about reinsurance, but it is so wonky it is never going to be on a bumper sticker. I think it would be a good bill, but I have not been able to have a hearing on it.

Let the committees that are of a Republican majority but with Democrats who know some things about healthcare take up these bills, hear from the parents, hear from the hospitals, hear from the doctors, and come up with a bipartisan set of solutions

that will make healthcare better, not worse.

We were on the verge of doing that in the HELP Committee. We had 4 hearings with about 20 witnesses. We not only had committee members involved, but Chairman LAMAR ALEXANDER and Ranking Member PATTY MURRAY did a good thing—they opened up a coffee before every hearing and said: Hey, if you are not on the committee but you want to meet these witnesses and hear what they have to say, come and talk and ask them questions. We had over 50 Senators participate. We were working on a bipartisan bill and basically had a handshake deal last week to stabilize the individual insurance market for a couple of years. In a deliberate way, in a careful way, we considered Republican and Democratic ideas for improving health insurance.

Then, last Wednesday, the President tweeted out, in working with the Speaker and the majority leader, that they did not want the bipartisan effort to go forward. No. We have to push the Graham-Cassidy bill—the bill that is about the repeal of ObamaCare but that also has within the Trojan horse these massive cuts to Medicaid that will hurt kids.

I don't know why we had to set aside the bipartisan effort. I don't know why we had to subvert the good-faith work of the committee under the leadership of a great chair and a great ranking member. It is my hope that at the end of the week, we will have defeated the Graham-Cassidy bill and that we will go back to being the Senate we should be.

I will just say what I have said a couple of times on this floor. This is one we cannot afford to get wrong. The parents of these kids already have enough to worry about. Why would we make it harder on them? We do not have to. We can be better than that. That is what I ask we do.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRUZ). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, the Democrats talked this morning about the Affordable Care Act and what the reform efforts are trying to do and what they are not trying to do. I want to associate myself with the comments made by my colleague, the Senator from Nebraska, earlier today.

A lot of talk has been thrown around about how the new effort would cut Medicaid spending. As my colleague from Nebraska mentioned, here in Washington a cut is not a cut anywhere else. But if you deal with the rate of growth, if you raise spending only by the Consumer Price Index rather than the medical Consumer Price Index—5

percent rather than 6 percent, for example—then you are somehow cutting the program.

We know that the program as it currently stands is unsustainable. I think we all recognize that. So any efforts to deal with and to allow Governors and others at the local level to have more of a say on how these funds are spent and to gain efficiencies that way are frowned upon. It is said that we simply can't do that because it would be cutting Medicaid. That simply isn't the case.

Arizona, for example, has a version of Medicaid called AHCCCS. It is done far more efficiently than some of the other States do it. That is because at the local level they have been able to do what local governments do best. The government that is closer to the people generally spends money more wisely and finds efficiencies that the Federal Government simply can't find.

Let me mention that on the exchange, the Affordable Care Act dealt with a couple of different things. It is a so-called exchange where people who can't get insurance otherwise or don't get it through their employers will buy it on either a Federal exchange or a State exchange. Then you have the Medicaid side. Let me speak for a minute on the exchange side.

Arizona has been ground zero for the failure of the ObamaCare exchange. We have 15 counties in Arizona. In all 15 counties, if you are a family of four and you are buying on the exchange, you are paying more on average for your healthcare premiums than you are for your mortgage. Think about that for a minute. You are paying more for your healthcare premiums than you are for your mortgage in every county in Arizona. In some counties in Arizona you are paying double. In every county it is more, in some counties significantly more, and in a couple of counties you are paying double for your healthcare premiums—much more than what you are paying for your mortgage.

I spoke yesterday with an elected official from Arizona from one of the rural counties. He told me that his healthcare premium, which he simply can't afford anymore for his family of four children, would have been \$2,800 a month. That is what it has gone up to. It has doubled virtually every year. In some counties in Arizona, we saw increases of 116 percent. He owned insurance prior to ObamaCare, was paying a reasonable amount for a premium, and had copays and deductibles that were reasonable as well. But when the Affordable Care Act came in, the promise that you could keep your doctor or keep your plan simply wasn't the case. His premiums have gone up, up, and up until now; he has a premium of \$2,800 monthly for his family of four children.

Keep in mind, as well, that there are the deductibles on top of that. Were he to use that insurance, by the time he satisfies the family deductible, which is about \$12,000, he has paid—or he will

pay if he has any medical issues—between premiums and deductibles, more than \$40,000 before the first insurance dollar kicks in.

So when we hear from the other side of the aisle that there is no problem with ObamaCare, that the only thing we have to worry about is, for some people who have gained insurance, to make sure they keep that—I agree we have to make sure those with pre-existing conditions have access to affordable care. But when you have people on the exchange who simply can't find affordable care and if they do have a policy they can't afford to use it because deductibles and copays are so high, we have a problem.

The latest figures tell us that 155,000 Arizonans woke up this morning without any insurance. Most of them had insurance prior to the Affordable Care Act, but then insurance was priced out of their reach. So 155,000 people are paying a fine to the Federal Government because of their inability to find affordable insurance. They pay that fine, and they still have no insurance. Tell me that is not something we have to fix. We have to fix that. That is what we are responding to here.

This notion that it is all hunky-dory—keep with the plan—belies the fact that 155,000 Arizonans woke up this morning and said: We are paying a fine to the Federal Government because we can't find affordable care, and still we have no care, and we are somehow supposed to be OK with that. Somehow we are supposed to wait until we can find a solution for it all before we address that specific situation.

I submit that we have to fix this. People in Arizona and elsewhere are hurting. Let's stop with the rhetoric that this is somehow a cut and people will be left on the streets. We heard that back in 1996 with welfare reform. It was said that the Governors or others at the local level couldn't participate, couldn't be in charge of this program because people would be dying on the streets. Guess what. Within a couple of years, the welfare rolls had been cut in half. We are doing better, and the Federal Government's obligation in that regard has been sustainable, unlike the current situation we have with the so-called Affordable Care Act.

I hope we can stop the outrageous rhetoric on this and actually fix the problem. Let's fix the problem for Arizonans who are hurting right now.

With that, I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

CFPB RULE

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, we have the recent fake accounts scandal at Wells Fargo and the massive data breach at Equifax. I don't think any of us can go home and not hear, certainly, about the Equifax scandal that we found out about just a couple of weeks ago. The massive data breach at Equifax and the fake accounts scandal at Wells Fargo drive home the fact that so-called forced arbitration

clauses have become almost unavoidable in everyday life.

Whether it is a credit card or a bank account, whether it is a student loan or a college enrollment, whether it is a nursing home contract, your phone service, or even—now far too often—your job, you have probably signed a contract that forced you to give up your right to a day in court, usually, without even realizing it.

Forced arbitration is a tool that big corporations use to silence victims of corporate fraud and corporate abuse. These victims never get to tell their stories to a judge or a jury of their peers. Why? Because of the small print in these contracts. Victims are pushed into a secret process behind closed doors, where corporations win about 90 percent of the time.

Over the past couple of weeks, I have had an opportunity to hear from some of these victims. Let me tell you about George from Mentor, OH. George's wife suffered physical and mental abuse in a nursing home, but George and his wife have been denied a day in court. He said the lawyers he reached out to for help turned him away because they didn't think he had a chance fighting against the forced arbitration clause in his family's nursing home admittance agreement.

Any family who has been through the transition of admitting a loved one into a nursing home will tell you it is a difficult time in the best of circumstances. Forcing these families to sign away their rights is not only wrong. It is dangerous. Typically, because of all the trauma of moving a family member into a nursing home, you are not even aware that you have signed away your rights.

After the Equifax breach, my office was flooded with calls from scared consumers seeking help. Let me tell you about another one. Bill is from Hamilton, OH, which is at the other end of the State from Mentor. He and his wife are retired, and they worked hard to pay their bills on time. He has had excellent credit, and this is the story of millions of Americans. That was all put at risk when Equifax allowed his family's personal information to be stolen, along with that of 143 million other Americans. It is pretty much half of the country.

This breach was so huge and harmed so many people that the company's CEO, Richard Smith, retired suddenly today. Well, he will probably have a very comfortable retirement. His compensation was millions of dollars a year. The millions of people he has harmed will continue to struggle with the mess that he left behind.

That is bad enough, but Equifax was also demanding that Bill in Hamilton, OH, give up his right to hold the company accountable in court if Bill signed up for their credit monitoring service. Do you remember, after the story broke—I believe it was in July when the executives found out about the 143 million Americans breached, or the 140-

plus million Americans breached—that a couple of executives sold some of their stock. That is interesting. We will see what happens about that. Then it became public in September. So we know that.

Now, we also know that Equifax, then, to make it up to their customers, said that they would give them a free year of credit monitoring. A year ago, I believe it was, when there was another situation like that of a data breach, Congress voted to protect Federal employees and to give them free credit monitoring for 10 years. But Equifax, generously—I believe some used that word, but they probably didn't—gave the 1 year, but they had a forced arbitration clause. It was only because of a staff person on the Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee, that CORY saw that they had that provision in these contracts—this free year of credit monitoring—and Equifax decided to back off of that.

These forced arbitration clauses are incredibly powerful. To understand them better, big companies use the small print not just against regular families back in Ohio but even against people who could afford top-notch legal teams.

Gretchen Carlson, a well-known news anchor, endured sexual harassment at FOX but was prevented from suing her employer by a forced arbitration clause. She didn't really know that or hadn't thought much about that when she signed her contract. She wrote of forced arbitration: It is “often argued to be a quicker and cheaper method of dispute resolution for employees” but, “instead [it] has silenced millions of women who otherwise may have come forward.”

The power of forced arbitration clauses to silence victims has allowed potentially millions of people to be harmed by big banks and other financial institutions.

Let's take another one, Wells Fargo. In 2013, Wells Fargo used a forced arbitration clause to silence a customer who had accused the company of opening fake accounts in his name. You will remember that Wells Fargo opened as many as 3.5 million fake accounts, meaning they opened an account that the Senator from Texas or that I or others had not given permission to do so. They opened accounts in people's names. Obviously, I am not saying that personally of the Senator from Texas and me, but they opened 3 million fake accounts of customers who didn't even know these accounts had been opened. They subjected their employees to harsh sales goals. They threatened to fire anyone who didn't keep up.

Think about how much damage could have been prevented if that customer was allowed to take Wells Fargo to open court 4 years ago, but they couldn't because of forced arbitration.

Well, Equifax pulled back its use of forced arbitration clauses after the public shaming of what they did, but Wells Fargo seems to have no shame in

continuing to hide behind arbitration following scandal after scandal. You will remember what Warren Buffet, who is a major stockholder in Wells Fargo, said: You rarely find just one cockroach in the kitchen. Well, with Wells Fargo, there was one case after they said: This is it. Then, there was another, and they said: Well, this is it. Then, there was another one. We don't know what is next.

We know that many of the victims of Wells Fargo's scandal were servicemembers. In 2015, Santander Bank illegally repossessed cars from servicemembers and, then, used a forced arbitration clause to silence their claims. So they are willing to go against servicemembers, in the case of Santander. Wells Fargo is willing to do it against servicemembers. Wells Fargo is willing to do it against up to 3.5 million customers for whom they opened fake accounts.

Servicemembers and all Americans deserve to be protected from this shady legal fine print. That is what the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau has done with its new rule on the issue of forced arbitration—a rule that some in this body want to overturn.

It is despicable that Congress is trying to cover for big corporations looking to cheat consumers and overturn this rule. Make no mistake. Voting to overturn the CFPB rule about forced arbitration is simply saying that we support corporations' ability and efforts to cheat their consumers. They simply don't have their day in court.

The American Legion adopted a resolution at its national conference last month opposing repeal of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's rule. They understand that the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau did the right thing to protect servicemembers from forced arbitration.

John Kamin, assistant director of the American Legion's veterans employment and education division, said: “Our membership has stated unequivocally that we will not accept a future where our military veterans' financial protections are chipped away to increase the margins of the financial sector.”

Let me say that again: “We will not accept a future”—this is from the American Legion—“where our military veterans' financial protections are chipped away to increase the margins of the financial sector.”

The right to have your day in court is enshrined in the Constitution that our servicemembers fight to uphold. The least we can do is to protect this right for the women and the men who protect our country—to protect this right for the men and the women who protect our country.

How can Members of this body, when this vote approaches, if they support the CRA to overturn the rule of the CFPB, look those servicemen and servicewomen in the eyes and explain that they chose to stand with Wall Street over these people who served their

country and over their families and over hard-working people all across America?

It is our job to protect the people we serve, not to protect Wall Street banks and corporations when they try to scam consumers. Big companies use small print to silence the hard-working Americans they have cheated.

When a resolution to repeal the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's rule comes to this floor, I urge my colleagues to speak up for the people whom we serve.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

HURRICANE HARVEY RECOVERY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I am particularly glad to see you presiding today because I came here to report on what you and I saw together in Texas during this last long weekend. Unfortunately, it didn't feel quite like home—not when parts of Texas battered by Hurricane Harvey aren't what they used to be and not when so many cities, towns, and wornout faces don't look like they otherwise would.

As of this weekend, more than 8 million cubic yards of debris still needed to be cleared in Houston alone—the Presiding Officer's hometown and the city of my birth. More than 800,000 people have registered with FEMA for individual assistance. More than 24,000 hotel rooms are still occupied by victims of the flood. Fifty-two public and charter schools sustained “catastrophic damage” and are awaiting funding for repairs. Worst of all, 82 lives were lost as a result of this terrible storm.

One news story that stuck with me came from Port Arthur, where the mayor, Mr. Derrick Ford Freeman, a man of truly steel resolve, can't stop yawning. Well, he is exhausted. He has a good reason. He has been sleeping upstairs in his child's second floor bunkbed because, unlike some other residents, he hasn't had time to strip the first floors of his house that flooded to remove the Sheetrock, destroyed furniture, and all of his personal effects. He has been too busy worrying about others and trying to help pull the pieces back together.

Mayor Freeman spoke of the smell in his house at night. First, it is the flood. Then, it is the mold. Then, it is the mosquitoes. He spoke about the challenges his community faces, and he spoke about the more than 100 schoolteachers and 100 city employees in Port Arthur who still did not have homes ready to return to.

What Mayor Freeman was most worried about, though, is that people will forget. Now, as other natural disasters and news stories begin to occupy the

coverage on television and turn people's gaze away from Texas, to Florida and now to the devastation in Puerto Rico, the mayor's concern makes some sense.

But I want to assure Mayor Freeman—as I know the Presiding Officer would, and as we would to our friends in Florida and the east coast, who were hit by Hurricane Irma, or our friends in Puerto Rico, who were devastated by Hurricane Maria—that we will not forget and that we will stand together to make sure that the Federal Government plays its essential role in helping them recover and in helping them restore their lives.

But I also remember another civic leader, Mayor Becky Ames of Beaumont, and what she said to me right after the storm. Smiling, she declared:

We had a downpour; now we have an outpour. The outpour is coming right into our city.

That is what we saw time and again. Yes, the Federal Government responded. Yes, the State responded, led by Governor Abbott and emergency operations. Yes, the mayors and the county judges responded. But the truth is neighbors helped neighbors. We talked again. I sort of chuckle when I think about the Cajun Navy, but our friends from around the country, including next door in Louisiana, came to help pluck people off the tops of their flooded houses and places of business, and of course many people have lent a helping hand.

I think it is best to combine Mayor Freeman's concerns with Mayor Ames's optimism. In other words, we need to make sure that outpour she was speaking about continues. I know the outpour hasn't dried up places like Friendswood, TX, where the Presiding Officer and I helped Team Rubicon clean up some of the houses that were trashed by Hurricane Harvey. We joined the Speaker of the House, PAUL RYAN—and we are delighted he saw fit to come join us in this effort—as well as the chairman of the House Appropriations Committee and virtually the entire Houston congressional delegation.

We also know the outpour has not stopped in places like Aloe Elementary in Victoria, a school that was severely damaged by the storm. There I saw second graders get packages from their counterparts in West Lafayette, LA. The school may have temporary walls. Certain classrooms and hallways had to be cordoned off as the building continues, but these “Aloe-gators”—the school mascot—are permanently grateful for the help they are getting from children from Lafayette, LA, and Cumberland Elementary in Indiana.

I think we owe it to these youngsters—and the many other Texans we met with in Victoria, Friendswood, and Houston—to explain what we here in Washington are doing to address the storm, which, let's not forget, rained down more water—34 trillion gallons—than any storm in U.S. history. I think

they are wondering if we remember the sheer scale of the disaster zone—an area larger than West Virginia, Delaware, and Rhode Island combined. We want to assure them that the answer is yes.

We have been working hard trying to match the scale of the storm with an appropriate congressional response. Here are just a few of the ways in which the Federal Government has responded:

First, the President—and we thank him for his leadership and initiative—issued a major disaster declaration under the Stafford Act, which is the trigger for the Federal Emergency Management Agency's, or FEMA's, public assistance grants to be provided. This is, to be clear, not a handout. Each State is responsible for part of the cost. Secondly, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers conducted infrastructure assessments and assisted with State debris management. Third, FEMA has coordinated with the American Red Cross and other local governments to find and provide temporary housing for the displaced.

As I said, these are just a few of the ways the administration has been responding. I realize they are just on the first step. That is why last week I led a bipartisan letter, along with my colleague in the Chair, calling upon the Department of Housing and Urban Development to speed up allocation of relief funds. We were able to appropriate, and the President signed into law, a \$7.4 billion allocation for community development block grants, or CDBG funds, that Congress has decided are appropriate as a downpayment on the recovery from Hurricane Harvey. These CDBG funds, community development block grant funds, will help Texas communities repair their infrastructure, rebuild schools, and reopen the businesses that are integral to recovery. I might add, given Texas's contribution to the national economy, it is really important not just to folks in Texas, this is important to the country that we get our businesses back on their own two feet, opening doors, and helping contribute to the economy while they continue to create jobs.

I am grateful to my colleagues for moving with such dispatch in appropriating the funds. I know Congress's quick action can quickly be undone by delays at the bureaucracy level. We need to make sure that doesn't happen. On the State level, Governor Abbott has announced the Commission to Rebuild Texas, which will be led ably by Texas A&M System Chancellor John Sharp. I met with Chancellor Sharp last week in Texas, and he assured me the commission will be traveling around the State and working to prioritize projects to help restore roads, bridges, schools, government buildings, and impacted communities. The Texas delegation will be working with him as we focus on our response. I know we all look forward to working with the commission and Governor Ab-

bott in the months to come. It will be months, if not years, before the recovery will be complete.

One additional way we can help victims is through targeted tax relief. I want to highlight in this regard a non-controversial section of the Federal Aviation Administration reauthorization bill that House Democrats blocked yesterday. It contained a number of disaster tax provisions, like those that were passed after Hurricane Katrina, that will help hurricane victims get back on their feet. It is unconscionable that the House minority leader held that relief hostage to cater to the most extreme elements of her own political party. If we were talking about earthquake victims in San Francisco instead of hurricane relief in Texas, Florida, and Puerto Rico, surely she wouldn't be playing politics like she is now with this important hurricane relief package.

Spearheaded by Chairman KEVIN BRADY, the legislation would have helped victims keep more of their paycheck, deduct more of the cost of their property damage, and have more immediate access to their retirement savings without penalty. It would also have encouraged even more Americans to generously donate to hurricane relief.

It is imperative the House act a second time later this week to overcome the objection of Ms. PELOSI, to make sure hurricane tax relief is delivered to those in need on a timely basis and without further delay. Shame on those who would play politics with the sort of relief the President and we have all committed would be forthcoming in response to these terrible hurricanes, whether it is Harvey, Irma, or Maria. The fact remains that Federal, State, and local actors will have to continue to work side by side to make sure Texas is made whole again.

Colleagues, let's keep Mayor Ames and Mayor Freeman in mind. Let's remember that those still recovering in their communities and elsewhere need and deserve our support. Let's make sure Texas resembles the home we all have come to know and love following this terribly devastating hurricane.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:37 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. PORTMAN).

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

HEALTHCARE

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I wish to talk about the latest attempt from my

colleagues on the other side of the aisle to upend our health care system. They have been trying to sell this as a new and better health care bill, but in fact they somehow have managed to come up with something even worse than the previous TrumpCare bills. It would repeal the Affordable Care Act, gutting key protections for people with pre-existing conditions and ending Medicaid as we know it.

I want to recognize some of my colleagues, however, on the other side of the aisle who already stood up to this effort, because no matter how many changes have been made to gain the support of Senators, this bill would be devastating to every State, including my home State of Rhode Island.

Senate Republicans are trying to hide the impact of the bill, potentially forcing a vote before the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office is even able to publish a full score and analysis of the bill, including estimates for how many people would lose coverage and how healthcare costs would be affected.

Late yesterday, we received a preliminary estimate from CBO saying that, similar to previous TrumpCare bills, this proposal would leave millions more Americans without health insurance because of massive cuts to Medicaid. We will not see a more detailed score for weeks. Yet the majority is attempting to rush this through in order to use budget rules that expire on Saturday that enable passage of this bill with just 51 votes.

Fortunately, a number of nonpartisan organizations are publishing data on the latest bill, and they all agree that this bill would have a similar impact as the previous TrumpCare bills. Tens of millions of Americans would lose coverage, State budgets would be decimated, and costs would increase—especially for those with pre-existing conditions, who would be priced out of the market entirely. According to one of these organizations, Avalere, Rhode Island is slated to lose \$3 billion by 2027, and the cuts only get worse from there. Medicaid would be cut drastically, meaning our most vulnerable citizens would lose access to health care, including children, people with disabilities, and seniors.

Over 60 percent of nursing home residents in Rhode Island access care through Medicaid, and half of Medicaid spending is on these long-term care services.

It would become impossible to protect these programs from the cuts projected under this bill. In fact, States would be forced to cut not only health care but also education and infrastructure and other priorities to make up or try to make up—and I think “try to make up” are better words to use—the difference. This would be nothing short of a crisis in every State in this country.

We have already spent so much time this year having this fight—time we could have spent working across the aisle to improve health care, to end se-

questration, and to ensure a stable Federal budget to improve our economy.

In fact, after the efforts to pass TrumpCare failed just 2 months ago, Republicans and Democrats on the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee joined together in a bipartisan fashion to come up with a bill that would improve our healthcare system and lower costs for everyone. Significant progress on this effort has been made.

However, by resurrecting this TrumpCare debate, we are again on the brink of voting on whether to kick millions of Americans off of their health insurance. With this effort, Republicans are taking our health care system hostage again, as deadlines approach this week for finalizing insurance rates for the next year. Health insurance commissioners and other experts have already said that the instability in Washington has caused rates to increase. Yet my colleagues on the other side of the aisle continue down this destructive path.

What is especially egregious is that in addition to the jettisoned ACA stabilization efforts, we also need to extend funding for other critical bipartisan health care priorities, such as the Children's Health Insurance Program and the community health centers, whose Federal funding expires in just a couple of days. In fact, the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Senate Finance Committee had come to a bipartisan agreement to extend funding for CHIP for 5 years, providing stability and assurances for States and families across the country. However, that work is now on hold, just like the critical ACA stabilization effort.

We must continue to make our voices heard and show the majority that this is not what the American people want. They want us to work together to strengthen health care, increase access, and keep costs down. The enormous outpouring of citizen opposition and health care experts criticizing TrumpCare over the summer was a very powerful statement about what the American people—my constituents and people across the country—believe should be the path forward on health care.

As my colleagues work to make last-minute changes to the bill and conceal the real impacts by refusing to hold substantive hearings and rushing new versions of the bill to the floor with little or no warning, my constituents are not fooled. They continue to write to me, urging me to keep up the opposition to TrumpCare.

Just a week or two ago, I heard from Barbara in Middletown, RI. Her mother has Alzheimer's diseases and relies on Medicaid for long-term care. Her sister has Down syndrome and has recently been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease as well. She also relies on Medicaid for her health care. This new proposal, just like the previous proposals, would be devastating to Barbara and her family.

I urge my colleagues to really think about who would be impacted by this legislation. Whether or not you like ObamaCare or voted for it 7 years ago, this latest TrumpCare bill is not the solution.

I will continue to oppose these efforts and hope to work with my colleagues to improve our health care system and lower costs for everybody.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

PUERTO RICO AND U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS

RECOVERY EFFORT

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, it was 6 years ago that Tropical Storm Irene tore through my home State of Vermont, and I remember it like it was yesterday. I remember going around the State the next day in a helicopter with the head of our National Guard and reviewing the damage. We are still trying to recover.

In the days after the storm, I came to this Chamber, and I asked for the support that Vermont needed to recover and rebuild. I remember with gratitude that Republicans and Democrats alike in the Senate, from across the country, stood with the people of Vermont. I remember how much the calls of support from Republican and Democratic colleagues meant to me.

Today, we have to do the same for the people of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. More than 3½ million Americans—remember, these are Americans—have seen their homes and communities destroyed by the double blow of Hurricanes Irma and Maria. The destruction is catastrophic. The details are still coming in.

The vast majority of Puerto Rico is without power and remains in the dark. At least 44 percent—almost half of its people—are without potable water, and some estimates put it even higher. The vast majority of hospitals in Puerto Rico are without power. The food supply is dwindling. Cell phone sites are down, crippling communication on the island. People can't find out what has happened to their families. We are on the verge of a humanitarian crisis right here on U.S. soil.

President Trump, leaders of FEMA, the Department of Homeland Security, and the Department of Defense have all got to act quickly. We have to put the full force of the United States behind these efforts, as we would in any State where this might happen.

Earlier this month, Congress approved \$15 billion in emergency funding for disaster relief following Hurricanes Harvey and Irma. As vice chairman of the Appropriations Committee, I was happy to support that. These resources should be put to work in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands as well. But it is not going to last for long. This money will run out within a couple of weeks. We have to sustain our commitments to rebuilding and recovering from all of these hurricanes for the long haul—not just in the continental United States but in all parts of the

United States, which include Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

I would ask the administration to prepare an emergency aid request as soon as possible. The Appropriations Committee is ready to move on it, but the Congress—the House and Senate—should act very quickly. We have to stand by each other in times of disaster. When there is a storm, one of us braces for it, and the others have to help pick up the pieces. That is who we are. That is why we act. That is why we are Americans. We are the United States of America—all of us. Now we must make sure that we respond not just in Texas, as we should, not just in Florida, as we should, but in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. They are part of our country.

HEALTHCARE

Mr. President, the Senate finds itself today in a familiar situation: Deeply partisan efforts to repeal and replace the landmark Affordable Care Act have hit a wall. By their own admission, the Senate majority has, with their backs against a wall and a looming deadline to advance legislation by a simple majority vote, put forward one last-gasp effort to roll back access to healthcare for millions of Americans—not because it is sound policy, but in an effort to meet a campaign promise, regardless of its harm to millions of Americans. It is as irresponsible as it is dangerous. These efforts put lives at risk. This zombie project should be abandoned, and we should get back to the constructive and promising bipartisan work toward strengthening troubled insurance markets.

Instead of working on a responsible budget, or disaster relief for Puerto Rico, Florida, and Texas, or on any of the many pressing issues facing our country, we began this week in a situation virtually identical to where we were in July. In fact, it reflects the state of the Senate for much of this year, where policymaking has been replaced by partisanship and politics.

When we considered a healthcare reconciliation bill in July, in spite of multiple drafts and a go-it-alone, hyperpartisan philosophy, the majority leader was still unable to garner enough support within his own Caucus to pass a sweeping healthcare bill. I joined with many Democrats to offer motions to get the Senate back to regular order and have the appropriate committees study the effects of these policies on Medicaid beneficiaries and those with disabilities, on women and children, on seniors, and the most vulnerable, but Republicans voted down those efforts and plowed ahead, seemingly unaware or willingly blind to the real-life impacts of what they were trying to do. During July's debate, the Senate also considered multiple amendments to rewrite the Affordable Care Act. Each of these amendments would have caused tens of millions of Americans to lose insurance and would have made it harder for those with pre-existing conditions to obtain coverage.

When those amendments failed, the Republican leadership attempted to fully repeal the Affordable Care Act. That did not work either.

Instead of learning from that painful process, the Republican leadership emerged from the August recess with a new plan. Released just last week and revised several times since, the proposal of Senators GRAHAM, CASSIDY, HELLER, and JOHNSON was intended to revive the healthcare reconciliation bill the Senate already defeated. Unfortunately, their bill contains all of the problems of previous versions and includes new, troubling provisions that would fundamentally change healthcare in this country for the worse.

This Graham-Cassidy-Heller-Johnson bill—just the latest version of TrumpCare—would make dangerous changes to our healthcare system resulting in millions of Americans losing health insurance coverage, including Vermonters. In fact, based on previous estimates, a provision in this bill would cause 15 million Americans to lose insurance and premiums to increase by an average of 20 percent on day 1.

This hasty proposal would allow insurance companies to charge seniors, those with disabilities, those with pre-existing conditions, and women more for coverage. These are all discriminatory policies that the Affordable Care Act changed.

Like previous versions of TrumpCare, this bill would end Medicaid as we know it by capping spending in the program and forcing States to cut eligibility, benefits, or both. What is worse, this new version of the bill would fully repeal the tax credits and subsidies created under the ACA and instead give States inadequately funded block grants with no requirement that the funding goes to those in need.

States like Vermont have done the right thing. Because of Vermont's Medicaid expansion, thousands of Vermonters now have access to life-saving health insurance and care. That is never been more critical than now as we continue to grapple with the opioid crisis.

This latest Republican proposal would hurt States like Vermont, simply for doing the right thing and expanding coverage. In the latest version of the Graham-Cassidy-Heller-Johnson proposal, there seems to be no consistency to how block grant funds are divvied between States, leaving some to conclude the formula is merely a ham-fisted attempt to appease some reluctant Republican Senators to support this measure. By 2027, all States lose under this proposal as the block grant funding created under this proposal runs out. You cannot consider legislation of this magnitude, with such far-reaching truly life-and-death consequences, with no debate and no meaningful consideration. This is not the way the Senate, the greatest deliberative body in the world, should con-

duct such expansive and impactful policies. This is not the Senate that I know and respect.

Yesterday, the Senate Finance Committee held the only hearing in the Senate on TrumpCare. We heard how devastating this bill would be for millions of Americans who depend on subsidies to purchase health insurance. We heard how reduced funding would force States to choose what services to cover for children, pregnant women, and those with disabilities who depend on Medicaid. Benefits like maternity coverage or homecare will be at risk as States choose to relax the insurance requirements under the ACA. Remarkably, experts disagreed with the authors as to what this amendment would mean for those with preexisting conditions.

One thing the hearing made abundantly clear is that this sweeping policy needs further examination. The Congressional Budget Office says it needs at least a couple of weeks to fully examine this proposal. How many will lose insurance? How much will premiums increase? How many will lose access to health care? These are fundamental questions to which we do not and will not have answers before the majority's arbitrary timeline is up. The preliminary estimate released late Monday by the CBO says that "millions" of Americans would be uninsured as a result of the Graham-Cassidy-Heller-Johnson proposal. What is more, I have not heard from a single health-related group that supports this measure.

So why does the majority insist on pushing forward? It seems they are so intent on voting on anything that they would have us consider an unexamined, hastily cobbled together bill solely to repeal the ACA—for the express purposes of fulfilling a crassly partisan campaign promise. This would be nothing more than legislative malpractice. Their desire to undo any of the success of the Obama administration, at any cost, would have them push forward a proposal that would devastate our health insurance markets, cause millions to lose insurance, and fundamentally change the Medicaid Program, and the best reason the Republicans can come up with for supporting this new attempt is "because we said we would."

In Vermont, the effects of TrumpCare would be disastrous. Since the passage of the Affordable Care Act, Vermont has made exceptional progress to cut the rate of uninsured Vermonters by half. The number of uninsured Vermonters is now below 4 percent. Because of the Medicaid Program and the Children's Health Insurance Program, known as Dr. Dynasaur in Vermont, 99 percent of children have health insurance in our State. TrumpCare, in any version, places Vermont's progress at risk.

Vermont has also worked on new and innovative ways of delivering healthcare, which has brought down

costs and increased coordination of care. One of the most significant ways Vermont has done this is through existing flexibility in Medicaid. It is through the Medicaid Program that Vermont has offered comprehensive treatment and counseling services for those suffering with opioid addiction. In Vermont, 68 percent of those receiving medication assisted treatment for opioid addiction are Medicaid recipients. If hundreds of billions of dollars are cut from the Medicaid Program, States will be forced to limit coverage, jeopardizing Vermont's ability to overcome this crisis. Provisions that cap Medicaid spending do not create "flexibility" in Medicaid. This policy would instead force States to ration care.

Let's talk about what that means to Vermonters. This week I heard from Deborah in Waterbury, VT, who wrote to me urging me to vote to protect Medicaid funding:

For a while Medicaid paid for medical care my son and I needed. Later Medicaid funding, and the cancer care it paid for, literally saved my life. It turns out many Americans find out that they or someone they love needs medical care or disability services that only Medicaid covers. Medicaid not only helps individuals and families who need medical care or disability services in the community; it also pays for approximately 64 percent of the people in nursing homes—financial help that is necessary because so many people spend down their life savings in the first few years of care. I am glad that over the years some of my tax dollars have paid for needed services for others. I believe we must and can improve the quality, affordability and effectiveness of health care in this country; but we won't do it by denying so many Americans basic health and disability services.

Consider this deeply personal story from Allyson in Brattleboro:

About a year ago, I got a migraine. It never went away. Instead, it got worse and worse, and turned into what is called a hemiplegic migraine. These migraines look and feel like strokes, but are 'just' migraines. I started having seizures soon after that; they would later be diagnosed as psychogenic nonepileptic seizures. I have also had rheumatoid arthritis for five years.

The saving grace in all of this has been Medicaid, made available to me through the Obamacare Medicaid Expansion. I have not had to worry about affording the care I've needed (probably close to \$100,000, plus \$80,000 in prescriptions), which has taken one huge worry off my plate. I could go to the seizure monitoring unit at DHMC for a week without stopping to wonder how I was going to pay for it. I could fill my prescription (\$4,000 a month) without worry, and continue to walk around and look after my kids. I could try several medications for migraine to try to get better. And I could get good, solid therapy for mental health treatment.

Without these things, and the Medicaid that pays for them, I would be far sicker than I am now. I would not be able to care for my children, or work even a little bit. I would likely die young. Instead, I am making it through, spending time with my children, and healing.

Please continue fighting for my healthcare, for my life.

Vermonters came to Washington Monday in their efforts to attend the sole hearing on the hapless Graham-

Cassidy-Heller-Johnson proposal. They waited in line for hours, and they were not granted access to the hearing, held in a smaller room despite the known public interest in this hearing.

Waiting in line for a hearing he was not allowed to attend, Drew from Readsboro said:

"[T]his is my second time down here. I'm here to finally kill this bill as it will result in the deaths of millions of Americans and significant losses to Vermont's funding."

Todd from Bennington said:

The reason I oppose the bill is being I'm a walking pre-existing condition. Diabetes, high blood pressure. It's getting under control, but it wouldn't without healthcare.

Mari from Lincoln said:

I'm here because I have to. Like Marcelle [Leahy], I've been a nurse for almost 30 years and if it weren't for the Affordable Care Act many of the patients that I'm caring for now in the inpatient cardiology unit at the University of Vermont Medical Center would either not be alive or would be in a much more devastating situation. Many of the young adults that I care for in the cardiology unit have opiate addiction and are there with serious infections because of that. And if it weren't for the part of the Affordable Care Act that allowed young adults up to 26 to still be covered by their parents insurance, many of these young adults would not be alive. So I've been fighting for health reform in Vermont for decades now. . . . This is THE most immoral bill I've seen in my 58 years of life. . . . I'm appalled and I'm angry, and I'm very motivated. I wish we didn't have to be here but I'm so proud to be here.

These are real stories, real lives. This matters.

These TrumpCare proposals are not healthcare bills. A true healthcare bill would not kick millions of Americans off health insurance. A true healthcare bill would not allow insurance companies to charge people more for less coverage. A true healthcare bill would not move us backwards to a time when healthcare was unaffordable.

Where there are deficiencies, let's fix them. Where we can find common ground, let's act. One of the first things we should do is stabilize the insurance market by making cost-sharing payments permanent. Earlier this month, the Senate was doing just that. The Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee held bipartisan hearings aimed at stabilizing our insurance market. This week, the Finance Committee reached an agreement on a 5-year extension of the Children's Health Insurance Program. This is important progress that should not be cast aside.

We should also be working to shore up funding for our health centers, which will see a 70 percent cut at the end of the month if we fail to act. One of the issues I hear most about is the cost of prescription drugs, which is why I have introduced a bill along with Senator GRASSLEY that would help reduce drug costs by helping generic alternatives come to market faster. The American people expect us to work on real solutions. We should not be pushing a plan that hasn't been vetted where the primary goal seems to be to

get to 50 votes, rather than actually improving our health insurance system.

Was the Affordable Care Act absolutely perfect when it was passed? No, and we acknowledged the need for continual improvement as the ACA would be implemented, but unlike with other important social programs that have been created over the years—such as Social Security and Medicare—Republicans have not allowed us the opportunity to improve, strengthen and perfect it over time. Those programs were also not perfect, but instead of playing partisan games, Republicans and Democrats came together to get something done, time and time again. We did not vote to repeal the Social Security Act. No, we came together, and we discussed what needed to be done to better help the American people, not unravel their safety net.

We must end this dangerous exercise of considering sweeping policy solely for the purposes of fulfilling a nearly decade-long partisan campaign promise. We should move forward in a responsible way. We should act in the best interests of our constituents and not resort to cynical, bumper-sticker politicking. At its best, the Senate has been able to act as the conscience of the Nation. I hope now is such a time and that the Senate will rise to the occasion and abandon these harmful efforts.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, after the rushed and secretive effort to repeal the Affordable Care Act failed earlier this year, I had hoped that we could finally turn the corner and move forward in a bipartisan fashion to find some real solutions to our Nation's remaining healthcare challenges.

I still believe that most of us here in the Senate—including Senators ALEXANDER and MURRAY in the HELP Committee—are willing to work across party lines to find consensus on pragmatic improvements. That is why I was so appalled that President Trump and Republican leadership are reviving a last-ditch effort to pass a disastrous bill that would upend our healthcare system and take away insurance coverage from millions of Americans.

Worse yet and even harder to believe, the bill that Republican leadership is rushing to the floor for a vote this week potentially is actually worse than any previous versions of this legislation. The so-called Graham-Cassidy bill they are hoping to vote on would mean higher premiums for worse coverage and millions of Americans losing their health insurance. It will permanently gut Medicaid. Let me say that again. It will permanently gut Medicaid. And despite promises to the contrary that Republicans have long made, it would end key protections for people with preexisting conditions, such as diabetes and heart disease. In short, it would throw our entire

healthcare system into chaos. That is just awful policy any way you look at it.

How did we get here? For over 7 years, Republicans in Washington have cheered shortcomings in our healthcare system and blamed the Affordable Care Act for every single problem, under the premise that they would do better if we only put them in charge. The trouble has been that their opposition to the ACA has been more rooted in bumper sticker politics than it ever was about actual policy or plans to do better for the American people. The long-lasting effort on display throughout this year in the Senate is only further evidence that President Trump and Republicans in Congress don't have any real solutions to improve our Nation's healthcare system.

After months of negotiations behind closed doors, when Senate Republicans released their secret TrumpCare bill in July, its contents proved too harmful for passage, even in their own caucus. Now they are hoping for one more last-ditch vote before the end of September to pass something, anything to follow through on their reckless mission.

One consequence of this legislation that is so important to my home State of New Mexico is that if we pass this bill, it will spell the end to any progress we have made in fighting our Nation's opioid and heroin epidemic. It is nothing short of hypocrisy for President Trump to say they are taking this major public health crisis seriously when they are supporting this bill.

Ironically, the bill before us actually does less to combat opioids than the bill that was too draconian and damaging to pass last time. It is not just the behavioral health system and opioid treatment that will be upended if we dismantle the Medicaid Program; Medicaid pays for seniors in nursing homes, for school nurses who care for our kids, and for Americans with disabilities, and Medicaid has been a financial lifeline for hospitals and health clinics in rural communities across this Nation. I know this because I have heard it directly from our rural health providers in New Mexico. If we pass these drastic cuts to Medicaid, some of our rural health providers in New Mexico may very well have to close up shop.

This is not some partisan assessment; this is what will happen according to many experts and people in the healthcare field who have nothing political at stake in this debate. The Medicaid directors for all 50 States and the Republican and Democratic Governors alike have come out against this bill.

Look, I am not outraged about all of this because I am a Democrat or because of what I think of President Donald Trump; I am outraged about this bill because of what it will do to New Mexico families and to the communities I represent.

If we can halt this mad rush, we could all—Democrats and Repub-

licans—get to work on the problems with healthcare that we all agree need attention. There is work to be done, no doubt about it. There is still time to do what is right for the American families who elected us to work together and make their lives better. The Graham-Cassidy bill simply does not do that. There is still time to change course—to go through regular order, to hold hearings—plural—and to build a consensus on fixes and improvements to the healthcare system. As Senator MCCAIN told us all earlier this year, “We’ve been spinning our wheels on too many important issues because we keep trying to find a way to win without help from across the aisle.” Well said.

There is a better way forward. I am confident that most of us would welcome a bipartisan, regular order approach. We need to remember that there are real people's lives that hang in the balance in this debate. I have heard so many New Mexicans talk about what health coverage means to them and their families. I don't know about you, but that is whose interests I am looking out for.

Real, bipartisan solutions to the challenges in our healthcare system are within reach if President Trump and the Republican leadership would just be willing to let us work together to find them.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

PUERTO RICO AND U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS
RECOVERY EFFORT

Mr. MARKEY. Thank you, Mr. President.

I would like to start my remarks today by offering my prayers and my support to the people of Puerto Rico and to their family members and friends here in the United States, many of whom have still not been able to get information about their loved ones.

Massachusetts is home to the fifth largest Puerto Rican community in the mainland United States. It is a vibrant community, an engaged community, and since Hurricanes Irma and Maria, it has been a mobilized community. They are horrified by the images that are emerging from the island, pictures and videos of destroyed homes and of the massive flooding and widespread devastation. These images are difficult for any of us to see, and for those who have family there, these scenes beg for immediate action. Thousands of families are homeless, infrastructure is almost beyond repair, and much of the population will be without power for an indefinite period of time going into the future.

We need to act now. We must treat Puerto Rico just like any other U.S. State that is experiencing a natural disaster. That means that the United States should continue deploying its military and civilian assets to provide lifesaving search-and-rescue, food, shelter, and power to residents of the island. Congress must also act to immediately provide additional aid and

funding so that the island can begin the long process of rebuilding.

Puerto Ricans, like Texans, like Louisianans, and like Floridians, are U.S. citizens. They are our sisters and brothers, and it is our moral obligation to provide them with help and relief in this time of their greatest need.

As we debate healthcare, let's remember that in the wake of these devastating storms, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands will have enormous public health needs. They will be subject to an increased risk of disease transmission from a lack of clean drinking water, to physical injury from the storm, and to mental and behavioral trauma from the remarkable losses they are suffering. For those who are suffering from chronic conditions, such as diabetes and cancer and heart disease, finding and accessing treatment will be a daily struggle. Puerto Rico is a medical tragedy that is happening right before our eyes. History will judge us by how quickly we respond to this catastrophe.

HEALTHCARE

Mr. President, we should remember that this debate over healthcare is not confined to just this week, and it is certainly not confined to this building or even to this mainland.

Yesterday, I held an emergency roundtable with the leading healthcare leaders in Massachusetts. These are the healthcare heroes who provide compassion and treatment each day to their patients. They all spoke poignantly about the devastation that would come from repealing and replacing the Affordable Care Act.

Dr. Peter Slavin, president of Massachusetts General Hospital, said: “To repeal the [Affordable Care Act] would be a horrible sin for this country.”

Yet that is exactly what the Graham-Cassidy bill is. It is a cruel and inhumane sin that would damn millions of American families.

In some cases, this most recent TrumpCare proposal is even worse than the failed bills before it. The bill proposed the use of a totally subjective formula which was changed at the whim of the bill's sponsors to entice more Republicans to vote in favor of it. The bill was nothing more than something that had political plastic surgery that had been performed, but it was fundamentally the same bill.

At the roundtable I held in Boston yesterday, Dr. Henry Dorkin, president of the Massachusetts Medical Society, said: “I fear that if Graham-Cassidy were to pass, we would go back to attending more funerals of children.”

There is simply no reason to go back to a time when people died of preventable or treatable conditions simply because they did not have access to insurance.

Just moments ago, we learned that the Republican leadership will not hold a vote on this disastrous bill. They simply did not have the votes. Right now, millions of Americans are again breathing a sigh of relief.

I applaud my colleagues Senator JOHN MCCAIN of Arizona, Senator SUSAN COLLINS of Maine, and others in this Chamber who are calling for a bipartisan process to strengthen and improve our healthcare system. We have done it before on the opioid crisis. We have done it on Alzheimer's and other medical research funding. I still believe we can do it here. We need to do what we have done so many times before and focus on bipartisan solutions instead of partisan exercises.

I hope we can put Graham-Cassidy and other TrumpCare proposals behind us and embrace bipartisan negotiations led by Senators ALEXANDER and MURRAY to stabilize the individual health insurance market.

Just last week, Senators WYDEN and HATCH introduced bipartisan legislation to reauthorize the Children's Health Insurance Program for 5 more years. There are a number of bipartisan healthcare issues that need immediate attention this week, such as the funding for community health centers and extending the number of Medicare policies.

This bill was not our only option. It is not even really an option, at least not for those Americans with pre-existing conditions, who are on Medicaid, or who need opioid treatment.

We need to work together in this Chamber to improve health in a way that works for all Americans regardless of where they live or who their Governor is. That is the responsibility of those who serve here, and now let us have a new beginning, where we begin to work together to solve those problems.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, while the Senator from Massachusetts is still with us on the floor and in other ways as well, I just want to say a couple of things.

One, good for the Senator. He just said a mouthful, and he said what needs to be said. What he said is that there is not just one or two choices. Somebody said to me yesterday: Well, it is a choice between either a single-payer or Graham-Cassidy. Those are our choices.

Uh-uh. No. No. I think a far better choice for us to take is in the example of leadership set by Senators ALEXANDER and MURRAY on the Committee of Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions. As the Presiding Officer knows, in a span of 2 weeks, they held four bipartisan roundtables with Governors from all over the country, insurance commissioners from all over the country, healthcare providers, insurance, and health economists to ask: What should we do? What should we do right now in our being faced with the challenge and maybe the possibility of repealing the Affordable Care Act? What should we do?

They all said the same thing—stabilize the exchanges. Every State has a

health insurance exchange, an individual marketplace. Stabilize them. They all basically said to do mainly three or four things to stabilize them:

No. 1, make clear that these cost-sharing subsidies, which help lower income people in the exchanges with their copays and deductibles, are not going away. Make it clear that they are going to be around for at least a couple of years.

No. 2, either give the States the ability to create their own reinsurance plans or create one for the Federal Government, by the Federal Government, involving the Federal Government.

The third thing they said is, if we are not going to enforce the individual mandate—I, personally, think we should—then make sure there is something that is just as effective as the individual mandate in order to make sure that young people—millennials like my sons—are getting their healthcare. They are in the exchanges, and they are helping to make sure there is a healthy mix of people to insure.

Those were almost word by word, panel by panel, what we heard in four different hearings by the HELP Committee during four different bipartisan roundtables that preceded those hearings. They all said to fix the exchanges.

I have an old friend who is now deceased. He was a Methodist minister for many years in southern Delaware. He used to give me this advice when I was Governor: Just remember this, TOM—the main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing.

That is what he said. The first time he said it, I didn't know what he was saying. It took me a while, but I finally figured it out. The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing.

Right now, the thing that we can do and ought to be able to agree on is to stabilize the exchanges. Premiums do not have to go up in the exchanges by 30, 40 percent. If we would simply do one thing and make it clear that these cost-sharing subsidies are not going away and give that green light to the insurance companies, insurance commissioners across the country will reduce significantly the increases in the premiums.

I have been told by more than a few health insurance companies that if we would do that and make sure there is some kind of reinsurance program in place, in effect, and also make it clear that the individual mandate must continue to be enforced—and if it is not, then replace it with something that is just as good—if we would do those three things, we would see premiums go down anywhere from 30 to 35 percent in the exchanges across the country. Who mostly benefits from that? Who benefits from a 30- or 35-percent reduction in premiums in the exchanges? The folks who are getting their insurance in the exchanges benefit, but do you know who else probably benefits even more? Uncle Sam. The reason is that most of the people who get their

coverage in the exchanges benefit from a sliding scale tax credit that buys down the cost of the premiums. If the premiums go down by 30 or 35 percent, that means that Uncle Sam, out of the U.S. Treasury, pays less money in the form of those tax credits. That is not a bad deal.

Our Republican friends like to talk about dynamic scoring. I am not sure I believe dynamic scoring is real, but I believe if we actually do help drive down the cost of premium increases, Uncle Sam is a big beneficiary of that.

The last two things I want to say are, No. 1, I thank Senator ALEXANDER and Senator MURRAY for the great bipartisan leadership they have shown. I had a chance to go to four bipartisan roundtables a couple of weeks ago. They welcomed people not on the HELP Committee. I am on the Finance Committee, as is the Presiding Officer. We have shared jurisdiction with the HELP Committee. But we have the opportunity in our committee to sort of follow the lead, if you will, of what they are doing on the HELP Committee and do bipartisan hearings and bipartisan roundtables of our own.

Why don't we sort of pick up where we were about a week and a half ago when the prospect of debating and voting on Graham-Cassidy came out of nowhere and led to yesterday's 5-hour hearing in the Finance Committee? Why don't we pick up where we left a week and a half ago and get to work again?

This is not something we ought to take weeks or months to do. Let's just do the main things; that is, stabilize the exchanges, and if we do nothing else in the next week or so, let's make it clear that these cost-sharing subsidies are not going to go away. We help people on the exchanges, the premium increases go down, and we actually help the Treasury. That is not a bad deal.

The last thing I want to say is for those people who say that Democrats believe the Affordable Care Act is perfect and nothing needs to be changed. That is just nonsense. The Presiding Officer and I can sit down and tick off a number of things that ought to be addressed and fixed. He and I probably, as smart as we are, are not smart enough to figure out all of them. We need to have a good hearing and good conversation amongst ourselves and with a broad section of shareholders and stakeholders across the country. As a recovering Governor and former chair of the National Governors Association, I want to hear the voices of the Governors. I want to hear the voices of the insurance commissioners and a whole lot of other people who are affected by this.

Every President, I think, since Harry Truman has called for providing healthcare coverage for just about everyone in our country—every President. Along the way we made some advances with Medicaid and Medicare with Lyndon Johnson. We made some

advances in the Clinton administration with ORRIN HATCH and Ted Kennedy's legislation creating the CHIP Program, the Children's Health Insurance Program. We are still a long way from where we ought to be for health insurance in this country.

Here is the trifecta of where we would like to go and where Presidents and leaders have said forever that we ought to go. No. 1, provide quality healthcare for people in this country; No. 2, do it in a cost-effective way; and No. 3, cover everybody. We are doing a lot better job of covering everyone. We have 20-some million people who don't have coverage. That is down from 50 million people years ago.

We still have people without coverage. We spend a lot more money in percentage of GDP in this country than most other advanced nations. We have to continue to get better results for less money and have a real focus on value.

There is a lot of encouraging work going on in my State. I know in Ohio there are places like the Cleveland Clinic. There are places like Christiana Care in my State. There is a lot of encouraging work going on, and we ought to build on it and find out what works and do that.

Lastly, I want to give a shout out to Senator GARY PETERS and Senators DUCKWORTH, STABENOW, myself, and a couple of others who have been focused on a veterans' health motion to commit. I want to say a few words about healthcare as it pertains to veterans. This has been lost sometimes in the shuffle.

The Medicaid Program in our country covers about 25 percent of the people who get healthcare in this country. Medicare is about 15 percent. The majority of people who get healthcare coverage in this country get it through their large group plan. We have 6 percent or 7 percent who get coverage through the exchanges.

As a navy veteran, an ROTC guy, retired Navy Captain, we know that not every veteran actually gets their healthcare coverage from the VA. A number of them aren't eligible for that. As it turns out, among the people who receive coverage under Medicaid today, a lot of them are old, a lot of them are like our parents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles. The reason they are eligible for Medicaid is they have spent down their resources and assets, and they are old. A bunch of them have dementia. Maybe the family is unable or unwilling to take care of them, and they end up in a nursing home, and Medicare picks up the tab.

I described it yesterday in our Finance Committee hearing. It is like a tsunami. My generation, the baby boomers, are moving into their retirement and moving into their seventies, eighties, and nineties, in some cases. A lot of them are old, and they have dementia. A couple million of them are veterans who get their healthcare coverage through Medicaid.

In Ohio and other places, and certainly in Delaware, we have huge problems with opioids and heroin. The biggest form of treatment, as the Presiding Officer knows, for people with drug addiction in this country is Medicaid. Those are some reasons we think it is important not to touch one hair on the head of Medicaid, if you will, but to try to figure out how to make changes in a smart and humane way.

Let me say a word or two about veterans' healthcare. My understanding is that the last version of the Republican healthcare proposal was pulled today, not to be voted on. It totally cut several hundreds of billions of dollars from Medicaid. I believe most everyone says that is true. Not every veteran has access to the VA for healthcare. Nearly 2 million veterans, as I mentioned earlier—that is 1 in 10 veterans in this country—rely on Medicaid for their healthcare, and that includes some 6,000 veterans who are living in my own State of Delaware.

The Affordable Care Act provided healthcare coverage to some 340,000 veterans in the States that expanded Medicaid. For our veterans who rely on Medicaid, the most recent TrumpCare proposal would significantly scale back benefits or cause them to lose their benefits altogether. Veterans who rely on those benefits would see higher healthcare costs and lower quality care if they could access it at all. All the while, we know veterans are at high risk for serious and complex issues because of their service.

I want to close by saying in a heartfelt way that we all know veterans. We have an obligation to those who have served us to make sure we take care of them later in their lives. We do that in a variety of ways.

The VA system is much maligned in my State. It is not perfect, but I think they do a darn good job. We have one big hospital in Northern Delaware and two community-based outpatient clinics—one in Dover and Centerville and another one in the southern part of our State. They do a very good job.

We are about to open a brandnew, 10,000-square foot community outpatient clinic in Georgetown, DE, the county seat of our southernmost county. Having said that, not every veteran in Delaware can access those facilities. For them, Medicaid is useful, and in some cases it is critical to having any care at all. We should keep that in mind. The challenges of the focus that were created by the possible vote here on this floor are now averted on the Graham-Cassidy proposal. As we go forward in a bipartisan way, let's work together to fix the things in the Affordable Care Act that need to be fixed and preserve those that need to be preserved, and for the aspects that need to be dealt with or dropped, let's figure out how to do that in a smart and humane way. We need to also keep in mind that a couple million people who use Medicaid are veterans themselves.

With that, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

PUERTO RICO AND U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS
RECOVERY EFFORT

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, I rise to speak about the humanitarian crisis in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. This is one of the worst disasters our country has ever seen.

The men, women, and children who live on these islands are American citizens. Do not forget that. They are suffering, and they need our help. They have no food to eat, no water to drink, no power, and no refrigeration. If we don't give them help now, then many more people there will die—far more than those who were killed during the hurricane itself.

I urge my colleagues to think about our fellow American citizens in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands and what they are suffering through right now. Listen to their cries for help. Listen to what one of my constituents said to me:

We need help getting my grandparents to come to New York. Their house is damaged and not safe. My grandfather is 93 with Alzheimer's. He is bed bound. He has not been able to walk for over 18 months. My grandmother is 92 and diabetic with a heart problem. My aunt is 68, and we think had a brain aneurism and needs medical care. Please help them. Help get them to New York. We can pay for the plane ticket. We need help getting them to the airport and putting them on the plane.

Another New Yorker told me that her father is a veteran of Vietnam and is a retired police department lieutenant who now lives in Puerto Rico. This veteran of the U.S. military told his daughter that he suffered from head trauma because he slipped and fell while clearing water from his house. He told his daughter that Puerto Rico is devastated and looks like an atomic bomb has struck the island. He is without power, cell phone use, and water. He told her that Mother Nature had unleashed a monster on them.

He said, "God have mercy on us," and then told his daughter that he loved her.

This man is a veteran. He served in our military alongside so many other Americans from Puerto Rico. He protected our country when we needed him, so we need to protect him now.

How would you respond if this humanitarian crisis happened in your State or in my State or any other State around the country?

Can the Presiding Officer imagine what this would be like if it were Ohio? Can you imagine what this would be like if it were New York? We would act as quickly as we could. We would give people there every resource they need to recover. We wouldn't hesitate even

for a moment. This is urgent and serious, and we have to help our fellow citizens now.

Congress must provide the funding necessary to send every resource available. Help them clean up. Help them recover without further delay. That includes providing disaster community block grant funding, just as we did for the people of Texas and Florida. We cannot turn our backs on our fellow citizens.

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

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

HEALTH CARE

Mr. UDALL. Thank you, Mr. President, for your recognition.

I rise today with my colleagues from the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, Senator HEITKAMP and Senator CORTEZ MASTO, to talk about how the Republicans' latest and most heartless healthcare bill hurts American Indians and Alaska Natives.

I have just heard some good news that this bill might not be brought up for a vote this week, but Republicans insist that they will continue their efforts to repeal the Affordable Care Act and raid the Medicaid expansion program, which will devastate Indian Country. So this latest withdrawal is great, but they are saying that it is not going away. So we have to maintain vigilance on this issue.

We came together before, in July, when Republicans' Better Care Reconciliation Act threatened to roll back healthcare for Native communities. With that bill's defeat, we hoped the debate over legislation that jeopardized healthcare for Native communities was behind us, and we hoped we could begin to work in earnest in a bipartisan way to address the real healthcare problems that Americans face.

Given this new threat, my Indian Affairs Committee colleagues and I must remind this Chamber, once again, that the Federal Government bears a solemn trust, treaty responsibility, and obligation to ensure that Native Americans receive quality healthcare. Each version of the Republican repeal we have seen so far violates that trust responsibility by taking healthcare away from hundreds of thousands of Native Americans and abdicating the Federal Government's Native healthcare responsibilities. If any of these proposals pass, Native Americans' health and lives will be in danger. These efforts must be stopped.

Everyone familiar with Indian Country knows that the Indian Health Service is severely underfunded. "Don't get sick after June" was a familiar refrain on many reservations, pueblos, and vil-

lages. Limited funding meant medical services were often rationed to only emergency care or life and limb. IHS patients were not guaranteed access to comprehensive medical services, specialized services, or preventive care.

The Affordable Care Act and the Medicaid expansion changed this equation and changed it dramatically. The ACA alone has increased third-party billing revenues to IHS more than 25 percent, and Medicaid funding for IHS has increased nearly 50 percent. Tribal and urban health facilities have been able to move away from healthcare rationing.

Medicaid expansion has provided health insurance to an additional 290,000 Native Americans from 492 Tribes—almost 90 percent of all Tribes. This includes 45,600 Tribal members from my home State of New Mexico.

Uninsured rates in Indian Country have decreased from 53 percent to 39 percent, and many Tribal communities' uninsured rates are even lower. At the Santa Domingo Pueblo in New Mexico, 22 percent of Kewa Pueblo Health Corporation's patients were uninsured in 2013. In 2016, the uninsured rate was down to 7 percent. At the IHS Sante Fe Service Unit in New Mexico, 84 percent of our patients now have some sort of insurance. On the Turtle Mountain Reservation in North Dakota, they have seen a 14-percent reduction in uninsured Tribal members. At the Portland Urban Indian Health Center, the rate of uninsured has gone from 56 percent to 8 percent, solely due to Medicaid expansion. This is impressive. Let me just say that again. It has gone from 56 percent uninsured to 8 percent.

Medicaid expansion has helped to make up for this historic underfunding in IHS services. Third-party billing revenue through Medicaid is now up to 35 percent of the Kewa Pueblo Health Corporation's total budget. For the Jicarilla Apache Tribe in New Mexico, Medicaid makes up more than 75 percent of their third-party billing revenue. At the Navajo Crownpoint IHS hospital, 50 percent of their budget comes from Medicaid third-party billing revenue. For Seattle's urban Indian health clinic, operated by the Seattle Indian Health Board, Medicaid and Medicare expansion have resulted in a revenue increase of 146 percent since 2012.

Medicaid expansion has allowed IHS to expand services and build new facilities. Kewa Pueblo Health Corporation has used some of its third-party billing to offer new specialty-care services, like obstetrics and podiatry, and to build new clinic space. Santa Fe IHS used its additional funds to build new examination rooms for Santa Clara Pueblo, establish a mobile health unit for San Felipe Pueblo, and update outpatient rooms at the main clinic in Santa Fe. The Seattle urban Indian clinic uses its additional revenue to expand patient services to include a pilot opioid addiction program.

In the words of the National Council on Urban Indian Health, Medicaid ex-

pansion has been an "unqualified success." The ACA brought new hope to Native families and communities.

But this latest Republican plan will undo this success. Thank goodness it has been withdrawn. In that plan, they claim they will preserve Medicaid expansion eligibility rules for Tribes. This offers a false hope.

Like most people on Medicaid, Tribal members go on and off the rolls as their income fluctuates. Proposals like Graham-Cassidy would require that they be continuously enrolled in Medicaid expansion and work to receive benefits. If not, they would be dropped permanently from the program.

Section 128 of Graham-Cassidy is also being pushed as helpful to Indian Country. This section expands IHS's Federal reimbursement rate to non-Native providers, but really it is a veiled attempt to buy off State leaders concerned about massive cuts to the Medicaid Program. It will not improve Tribal healthcare facilities. It will undercut the IHS, and it will undermine the Tribal self-determination by bypassing Tribal input in the Federal Medicaid reimbursement process.

There are 30,000 Native Americans who now have private individual health insurance thanks to the ACA. Every Republican plan so far strips away the ACA's cost-sharing subsidies and tax credits, which help make private insurance affordable for many of these Tribal members and for millions of working Americans. The Republican bill does nothing to help these Native Americans keep their health insurance.

The sponsors can try to dress this bill up, but the glaring reality is that TrumpCare 2.0 would be terrible for Indian Country. In fact, it is worse for Tribes than any other proposed repeal plan so far.

It is no surprise that prominent Native organizations—the National Indian Health Board, the National Congress of American Indians, and the National Council of Urban Indian Health—oppose Graham-Cassidy and proposals like it. They join virtually all major patient advocate organizations and medical organizations in their opposition, including the American Heart Association, the American Cancer Society, the American Lung Association, and the American Medical Association.

Eighty percent of the American people disapprove of the Republicans' attempts to undermine healthcare. Graham-Cassidy is woefully out of touch with the American people and, especially, with Indian Country. I am glad this bill will not receive a vote this week.

Just like tens of millions of our fellow Americans, Tribes, Tribal organizations, and individual Native Americans all around the country are worried about what Republicans will do to their healthcare. I have received a record 15,000 calls, emails, and letters from constituents about healthcare this year. Almost all of them have been

opposed to the Republicans' relentless attacks on healthcare, and not a single Tribe has reached out to my office in support of this bill.

These attacks are happening behind closed doors. There was only one rushed hearing, and it was yesterday. There is no formal Congressional Budget Office analysis, and there has been no meaningful consultation with Tribes. Although many of us have called for that, there has been no consultation. It is difficult to adequately describe the recklessness, cruelty, and cynicism in the Republicans' rush to tear down the ACA.

The Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee started a bipartisan effort to address the real healthcare needs in this country, but Republicans froze it once Graham-Cassidy was introduced. I am really hoping now that Chairman LAMAR ALEXANDER and Vice Chairman PATTY MURRAY can get back to the bipartisan work that needs to be done. Other time-sensitive legislation with broad, bipartisan support—like reauthorization of the Children's Health Insurance Program and the Special Diabetes Program for Indians, which need to be enacted before the end of September—was pushed aside.

Congress needs to change focus. We need to work across the aisle to meet the needs of the American people, and we need to improve Native American healthcare. We have come a long way under the Affordable Care Act and the Medicaid expansion, but we are far from being able to declare victory. I echo our colleague from Arizona, Senator McCAIN. Given the enormous impact of healthcare on the lives of Americans and our economy, we need to find bipartisan solutions through the regular order.

Partisan repeal of the ACA is not right for Indian Country or for America.

Now, Mr. President, I would yield the floor to my colleague from North Dakota, Senator HEITKAMP. I worked for many years as attorney general with Senator HEITKAMP. She was a great champion during those years for Native Americans and, specifically, for Native American children. She has been an incredible advocate on the Affordable Care Act and the good that it has done for Native Americans.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota is recognized.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Thank you, Mr. President.

To my great colleague and one of the nicest people here, Senator UDALL, who always leads with his brain, we know that his heart isn't far behind, and he has been a tremendous leader, a tremendous advocate, and a tremendous collaborator on this all-important issue.

I think first that we have to acknowledge how grateful and thankful we are that the Republican bill, known as Graham-Cassidy, will not be advanced this week. I don't think it is

the last that we have heard of it, but it is critically important that now we have time to talk about the impacts and we have time to talk about why it is that we found this bill so objectionable, and we have an opportunity to raise the issues that may have been forgotten. I think one of those issues is the unique challenges that Native American people have in receiving and affording quality healthcare in America.

All of the Tribes in my State have a treaty right to healthcare. It is kind of like when they say that, under the Affordable Care Act, you have access to care, but if the care is low quality, if the care is unavailable, if the care is not something you can afford or that will actually provide the kinds of services that you need, it is really not fulfillment of the treaty obligation.

One of the things we know is that many of the programs within the Affordable Care Act have gone a long way toward meeting the Federal Government's treaty responsibility to provide healthcare to Native American people. We talk about how Graham-Cassidy would hurt seniors, children with disabilities, individuals with preexisting conditions like asthma or cancer, those receiving treatment for opioid abuse, and many more. But too often in those statistics, which would encompass many Native American people who unfortunately have high rates of chronic conditions, the specific and unique needs of Native populations are forgotten during debates in the Congress. It happened when Republicans tried to pass their initial healthcare bill over the summer, and it nearly happened again.

Here we are on the Senate floor to make sure that Native communities are not left behind during these discussions in the future. We will be watching to make sure that communities in our State, unique and discreet, and, in fact, treaty Tribes, which are entitled to healthcare by contract, by treaty with the U.S. Government—that their interests are heard and that their voices are heard.

In July, when the Senate was discussing the last Republican healthcare bill that would have taken healthcare away from North Dakota families, I worked with Senator UDALL, vice chairman of the Senate Indian Affairs Committee, to hold a discussion on Tribal healthcare. The purpose was to hear directly from Tribal leaders, including the chairman of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians from North Dakota, about how bad that bill would have been for Indian Country.

During that discussion in July, we lamented—those of us who are on the committee, especially the minority members—that what happens in the Indian Affairs Committee all too often stays in the Indian Affairs Committee. What do I mean by that? I think the stories we hear and the challenges we hear about Native people, which we re-

spond to many times with great empathy, are never taken out of that committee room. They are never understood broadly by Senators in this Chamber. We vowed that day that we are never going to leave those challenges in that committee room. We are going to take those challenges to this forum and to this floor. We want to share our concern about the lack of Tribal consultation in the healthcare debates so far.

Unfortunately, the Graham-Cassidy healthcare bill still does not remotely or adequately protect Native people. Just look at the opposition to the bill from the National Congress of American Indians, the National Indian Health Board, and the National Council of Urban Indian Health. This bill is just as bad as, if not worse than, the previous bill. To push it through without adequate consultation in ways that would fundamentally change our healthcare system is in no way putting the healthcare needs of people first; it is putting politics first. It is irresponsible and unconscionable.

Those of us on the Indian Affairs Committee know undoubtedly that the Indian Health Service is severely underfunded and, some of us would argue, inappropriately managed. It has been that way since I have been here. We have experienced those challenges of lack of leadership, lack of funding, and, really, an attitude that this is the way we have always done it. It has resulted in very many of our institutions losing their CMS certification. That is unacceptable.

The stories are unacceptable, but we also cannot just pin it on Indian health. We have to recognize and understand that this is also a funding problem. So it is essential that we find resources to fill those gaps and enter the Affordable Care Act, where we not only have traditional Medicaid eligibility, but we also have expanded Medicaid, which now has given extra hope to Indian healthcare providers that this resource can be made available without constantly having to beg for additional resources for Indian health. So it is particularly because of these severe challenges at the Indian Health Service that traditional Medicaid, Medicaid expansion, and private health insurance access have been critical for Indian Country, making sure Native Americans can access quality, affordable care to keep them and their families healthy.

Thanks to the increase of third-party payments, we are no longer limited to life and limb care at Tribal and IHS facilities in the Great Plains IHS service area. But the Graham-Cassidy healthcare bill would undo all of that progress. It would slash Medicaid expansion and cap the Federal contributions to traditional Medicaid, pushing those remaining costs onto States and counties that can ill afford it.

Medicaid expansion has significant impact on IHS services at Turtle Mountain, increasing the funding and

resources available to its patient population by increasing healthcare services, increasing Purchased/Referred Care, or PRC, services, and increasing revenue generation.

Here are just some of the statistics that show how Turtle Mountain's IHS hospital has been impacted by the Medicaid expansion: a 13-percent decrease in uninsured patients; a 30-percent increase in Medicaid coverage; a 13-percent increase in traditional Medicare coverage; a 57-percent increase in private insurance coverage; a 9-percent increase in the number of individuals served; a 43-percent increase in revenue generation, i.e., collections; and a 32-percent increase in Purchased/Referred Care referrals. That may sound as if it is good for the institution, but when it is good for the institution—the healthcare provider—it is good for the families who get their services there.

Third-party billing revenue has also allowed the hospital to make renovations to emergency rooms and clinics, purchase new medical equipment, including neonatal monitors, recruit and hire additional staff, including licensed professionals, increase staff training and education, provide Wi-Fi throughout the hospital, and expand its all-important behavioral healthcare facility to serve more patients.

But the Republican healthcare bill would have eliminated these cost-sharing payments that make private health insurance affordable and accessible to American Indian families and North Dakota Indian families for the first time. All through the country you hear this over and over again, in pockets of poverty in this country. For the first time in people's lives, they have an insurance card, and that is a ticket to a future. Without an insurance card, many times people are left behind. This is an issue I have spoken about multiple times because it is so important.

In North Dakota, the Republican bill would have caused an estimate of almost 1,000 Native Americans to lose their cost-sharing reduction payments. The Republican healthcare bill would also jeopardize all-important mental health services for Native youth and could remove a trauma-informed approach to students' education. The Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara Nation from my State is working to set up a mental health pilot program in their schools by next year in this partnership with Nexus and PATH in North Dakota, which will bring social workers and a satellite clinic to school campus. This pilot program will be paid for by Medicaid.

The Graham-Cassidy healthcare bill would cut \$5.5 billion from traditional Medicaid in North Dakota by 2036, affecting 36,000 low-income—not people—but low-income children. The Tribe and the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction are relying on those Medicaid dollars to keep this mental health program possible, which will keep kids in the classroom and in the communities while they are provided

services. Quite honestly, keeping children with their families is a longstanding challenge, as we see the history of childhood trauma beginning at the time of not only the westward movement of families, like my ancestors, but the trauma that was experienced when children were ripped out of their homes and taken to boarding schools—a trauma from which many Native American communities have not yet recovered.

Sadly, this plan would take a significant step backward in healthcare for all Americans and certainly fall short on our promises and our treaty obligations to Native Americans. With so much at stake in our healthcare system, it is critical that we take a thoughtful and inclusive approach to healthcare—in fact, healthcare reform that considers the needs of all Americans, including, in my case, the first Americans, Native Americans.

Republicans need to work with Democrats. I was saddened when I heard last night during the debate a discussion about how there isn't any opportunity for bipartisanship. I, like 30 of my other colleagues, attended meetings held by the HELP Committee before their hearings. Think about this. Thirty U.S. Senators, at 8 in the morning, without a mandate, with no obligation to be there, completely voluntary, came together during three mornings to talk about how we can work together as a bipartisan group on healthcare. So when people say it is not happening, it clearly is happening. It is happening, and we can, in fact, get to yes on many of the challenges that we have in healthcare. But we can't get to a lasting system if it is something that is done in a back room in the dead of night without consultation, not just with other Members of this body but without consultation for groups like Native American Tribes and Native American people.

Over the past 4½ years, I have offered reasonable reforms that should be bipartisan to make the current healthcare system work better for Dakotans and better for those citizens and my constituents in Indian Country. Over the past few months and years, I have met with a group of Republican and Democratic Senators to talk about reasonable reforms that would make healthcare work better if we just focus for a minute on what unites us and what we can do if we just set aside partisanship, if we simply believe that we can, in fact, bury partisan hatchets and begin the work of working together.

I want to mention one last discussion item. Many times, when you hear people talk about treaty obligations for healthcare or education, it is usually people on this side of the aisle who are talking about Tribal sovereignty, Tribal treaty rights. Well, I was saddened to hear my colleague from South Dakota talk about a treaty right that Tribes in his State have to healthcare. The solution there was to ask the Fed-

eral Government—if, in fact, the citizen of that State were Native American enrolled—to say that really is a Federal treaty right. So the Federal Government should pay 100 percent of that, even though your State match would be 50-50. That makes sense. I can buy that. But do you know what? That does nothing to expand healthcare to Native people—nothing. What that does is say that 50 percent that you are currently paying is because these are citizens of your State, not some kind of nonresidents. These are residents of your State, citizens of your State, whom you pay that additional 50 percent for. If the argument had been that we are going to take that additional 50 percent, the Federal Government is going to pay it, and we are going to augment what we do in healthcare for this population, then we are actually getting somewhere. Then we are actually accomplishing something for Native American people and Native American children.

I want you to understand that this is a population that suffers diabetes at record rates—hypertension, behavioral and mental health, including serious addictions, with record and epidemic suicides among young people all through Indian Country, record and epic amounts of opioid and meth addiction, children being born addicted.

We need interventions now. We do not need to see a reduction in support to healthcare—both behavioral and mental healthcare—right now, at this time. It is a crisis, and we need to do everything we can to consult with the Tribes, to consult with Indian healthcare leaders, to consult with the people who do this work for a living, and fashion a system that will expand and grow access to healthcare. It is critically important.

Make no mistake, these are the first Americans, and way too often, the “asterisk Americans.” What do I mean by that? They are not large enough to have a demographic category, so their challenges are not tracked, whether it is human trafficking, whether it is addiction. If we do not begin to focus on this, we will fail in our treaty obligations.

The United States of America signed a treaty with Indian people. Let's keep our word. Let's work together. Let's work in collaboration with many of the people in my State who are struggling to make ends meet. Let's not reduce services and resources. Let's not take a step backward.

Thank you.

I yield the floor back to the Senator from New Mexico.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, let me thank my colleague Senator HETKAMP for her great advocacy today for Native Americans. I have known her for a long time. In every public service job she has had—whether it was the State tax commissioner of North Dakota or the

attorney general and now U.S. Senator—she has always been a great advocate for the Tribes. We so much appreciate that. I can tell you, she is one of the hardest working members of the Senate in the Indian Affairs Committee. She really brings what you talked about—a great bipartisan approach to this. We look forward to doing more of that in the future.

I also wish to say to the Presiding Officer that he has shown bipartisanship on opioids, and we have an epidemic. So we can show that there is bipartisanship.

With that, Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for myself and Senator CORTEZ MASTO to engage in a colloquy and then yield to her.

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

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, I thank Senator UDALL, the ranking member of the Senate Indian Affairs Committee. I am honored to be working with him on that committee in a bipartisan way, as he talked about.

I am also very honored to represent the great State of Nevada, a State that is home to civically active Tribes. Nevada's Tribal communities deal with many of the same challenges that plague Native communities throughout the United States. Indigenous people suffer from higher rates of poverty, illness, and substance abuse than the general population.

I recently received this communication from the Walker River Paiute chairman, Amber Torres, about the importance of the Medicaid expansion for her community. Chairman Torres wrote:

I feel that the impacts on cutting Medicaid expansion for Nevada would be detrimental to the people. With this coverage we have been able to obtain services for our male and childless adult population. Our people have been able to obtain services that have not been approved or do not qualify through Indian Health Services.

She then goes on to say:

A large portion of our reservation is covered by the expansion and have seen their health ailments being addressed in a timely manner due to alternative means of coverage.

She said:

We have seen our covered recipients percentage go from 20 percent to 45 percent, with our numbers continuing to rise daily. If Medicaid expansion is repealed, what is the alternative for these people . . . ?

Historically Indian Health Services has only been at a Medical Level Priority 1 for our service delivery area, which means bleeding, blind, broken or dying. Is this what we need to look forward to going back to?

Chairman Torres's question is one a lot of Native Americans are asking right now and a question I wish to pose to Ranking Member UDALL.

The Federal Government has a sacred trust and responsibility to the Native communities of Nevada and throughout the country. I ask the vice chairman, would rolling back Medicaid expansion in Nevada and other States like mine result in pre-ACA Indian Health Serv-

ice coverage and care, as Chairman Torres discussed?

Mr. UDALL. I say to Senator CORTEZ MASTO, thank you so much. Thank you for bringing the statements forward from Chairwoman Torres. She has every right to be concerned.

The short answer to her question is, yes, we don't want to go back. Chairwoman Torres is right to be concerned. Tribal leaders across the country want to know how this bill would impact their members, but, as Senator HEITKAMP highlighted, Republican leadership has not engaged in any meaningful Tribal consultation.

I know that is something that concerns you a lot. Working with you on our committee, you always raise that issue—Tribal consultation and how important that is. That did not occur before these proposals were put before us.

Repeal of the Medicaid expansion would pull millions of dollars out of critical funding at the Indian Health Service and would return the entire system to life or limb. Medicaid funding at IHS has increased by over \$240 million since the Affordable Care Act passage, and that is an increase of 43 percent.

Under the ACA, Tribes and urban Indian health facilities have started offering a much wider range of healthcare services to Native Americans, such as OB-GYN, podiatry, and behavioral health.

I have mentioned the old official IHS motto several times: "Don't get sick after June." This was a motto because the Indian Health Service would run out of money after June. So what people would say with regard to their healthcare in Indian Country is "Don't get sick after June"—a pretty outrageous situation. In practical terms, that motto translated to exactly the sort of healthcare rationing Chairwoman Torres described in her letter.

Imagine living in that sort of healthcare system, where diabetics are told that help is only available once their kidneys start to shut down, where expectant mothers can't access prenatal care.

The reality is that Graham-Cassidy—and we hope another proposal doesn't come forward like Graham-Cassidy; we know they buried that today—would turn back the clock in Indian Country, taking us from this current era of Tribal healthcare innovation back to the days of life and limb.

I thank Senator CORTEZ MASTO for her great advocacy for Native Americans. I know very well her work as State attorney general. I know she worked with Tribes and wanted to try to work through problems rather than litigate them all the time.

I wanted to say to your chairwoman in Nevada that we really appreciate her hard work on behalf of her Tribal members and other Tribes around the country.

I yield to the Senator from Nevada.

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. I thank the vice chair.

It is true that Indian Country made significant gains under the Affordable Care Act. Before the ACA, the Indian Health Service regularly denied Tribal members' claims for basic care and preventive services, such as mammograms, women's health screenings, or diabetes management care.

Because of the chaos the Trump administration has created in the healthcare markets, this problem is not being confronted, it is being exacerbated across the country. We have seen it in Nevada. Insurers are pulling out of the ACA exchanges in rural areas, thanks to the uncertainty these continued efforts to repeal the ACA, such as Graham-Cassidy, are creating in the healthcare market.

Democrats are ready to work with Republicans to fix the problems with the Affordable Care Act. We want to provide certainty that brings insurers back into the health insurance marketplaces, lower premiums and prescription drug prices, and improve healthcare. We can't kick millions of people—including the members of the Walker River Paiute Tribe and the 27 other Tribes and community organizations in the State of Nevada—off of their healthcare.

No one in this country should be forced to choose between paying their medical bills and putting food on their table. All too often, our Tribal members are confronted with that very choice.

I will not stop fighting to oppose these efforts to take away the healthcare of Native communities in Nevada and millions more Americans throughout our country. It is time we work together.

I thank the vice chair.

I yield the floor back.

Mr. UDALL. Thank you very much, I say to Senator CORTEZ MASTO. Today, you can at least tell your chairwoman that this bill has been withdrawn. There is not going to be a further vote on it. But I would urge her—and I know you know this well—we need to stay vigilant. This can be brought up at any time. It can be attached to a major piece of legislation moving forward. So urge her to continue this great advocacy. We really appreciate your advocacy.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

HURRICANE RECOVERY EFFORTS

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I want to express my appreciation to the fellow Senators who have come up innumerable times to express their regrets for what has happened to Florida, as we did with our colleagues from Texas with regard to the hurricane in Texas. Indeed, that was an unusual storm.

The almost gold standard storm of Hurricane Andrew 25 years ago crossed the State of Florida in 4 hours. It was small in diameter compared to this present hurricane that hit Florida and traveled right up the peninsula and, therefore, covered up the entire State.

For the past few weeks, in my traveling all around, there was vast devastation either by the wind or by flooding. It is really hard to believe that a State as large as ours could be virtually covered up by a storm. There was limited access to critical supplies like gasoline, and some places sustained considerable damage. I remember down in the Keys, in the part that hit the northeastern quadrant of the eye wall, in Big Pine Key, I went to a trailer park—a place of mobile homes—and there was not one mobile home that was sitting upright. They were all turned on their sides or turned over on their roofs. It was something that you just cannot believe—the force of the wind.

The cost of rebuilding is going to be in the billions. We have passed a temporary measure of \$15 billion, and that is running out. We are going to have to do something immediately for the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico, but there is going to be a continuing cost in Texas and a huge cost in Florida. Many people have been dislocated, and they are unable to move back into their homes.

Take people in the Florida Keys. There is a tourism economy there, and to have a tourism economy, you have to get the service personnel back in. Well, they don't have any homes. So you have to bring in temporary housing. In the Keys, there is one way in and one way out. So that is going to take some time.

Then, sadly, in the tragedy of all tragedies, 11 frail, elderly seniors died in a hot box that was a nursing home that had lost power, and the generators that were required under the existing law and existing regulations of the State of Florida were for putting the lights back on. They were not generators that were sufficient in order to run the air conditioning systems. The 11 senior citizens perished after there were a number of calls that had been made to the Governor's cell phone and calls that were made to Florida Power & Light.

There is a criminal investigation that is underway that will answer some of the questions of why, as they pled for help to come and get back on the power, those calls were never answered. As a result, 11 people died. Something like that simply just shouldn't happen in America, a country that has the resources and the compassion that our people have.

I want to state that, if people can't get through in an emergency like this to a Federal or State agency, I want them to call me at my office at 407-872-7161 or on the WATS line at 888-671-4091 or to visit the website at billnelson.senate.gov. We will get to

the bottom of it, because in an emergency situation like that, with people's lives on the line, that should never happen again.

I am so proud of the people who worked in our office so diligently. We had many of the employees here in the Washington office go to Florida as eyes and ears out there in the community before FEMA could get in to register people for individual assistance because they couldn't get through. If they had cell phones and the cell phone service was spotty, they couldn't get through. We had people out there in the field signing people up and getting it to FEMA for individual assistance.

Our folks on the Florida staff as well as the Washington staff who went down there did a wonderful job. They worked their fingers to the bone, and they worked their hearts out. I want them to know how much I appreciate that, serving the people of Florida in need.

It is important that those of us in public service respond with urgency and purpose when somebody calls for help. That applies to all of us in public service. I was really heartened when I saw all over Florida people helping people. I saw frail and elderly persons who had no place to go who were taken into a girl's dormitory that had air conditioning. They took care of them for 4 nights—eight frail, elderly women.

I saw people helping people in Belle Glade. Senator RUBIO and I went to Belle Glade together and served food. We went and thanked those students in that dorm near Immokalee. We thanked them together for people helping people.

Now what we need to do is to take that same effort that we saw in Texas and that we have seen in Florida of people helping people and we have to help the people of the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. Over the weekend, the full scale devastation of the third hurricane became clearer. The first was in Texas, the second was in Florida and on up into the Southeast, and now the third one was not only hitting the Virgin Islands, like the former one did, but was just ripping up Puerto Rico.

I have talked to the Governor, and he says the island faces a humanitarian crisis. The devastation over this past week has become a lot clearer to us as we start to see all of the devastation on our TV screens. According to one report, "Hurricane Maria whipped Puerto Rico with Irma-level winds, drenched the island with Harvey-level flooding, crippled communications, decimated buildings and damaged the dam that puts the downstream residents at risk of catastrophe."

That is what our fellow Americans are facing right now down in the Caribbean. We need to act with urgency and purpose to aid Puerto Rico in their time of need. I will have a chance to go down there on Sunday. I want to see it firsthand. I will continue to carry this message: The U.S. Congress has to come to the aid of our friends and our

fellow citizens in the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico.

I have talked to the Department of Defense and said: Do everything that you can do to assist. They are trying. I talked to the FAA Administrator. There is just the simple thing of being able to have instrument landings after so many of the radars got knocked out. Here is one example of just a practical problem facing the island, as if they didn't have enough practical problems to begin with.

Look at the financial crisis. The Medicaid funds are going to run out. That is before the hurricane. Look at the Zika crisis in Puerto Rico. That is before the hurricane. Think what it is like now.

Here is an example. One of the radars on the top of a mountain gets taken out by the storm. All right, we need to get it back up there. We need a helicopter, and can get a helicopter to take a radar up to place it there, because the roads are impassable, but now there is cloud cover up in the mountain, and they can't fly up. So one problem compounds another, just so we can get instrument landings coming into Puerto Rico instead of the visual flight rules where we have to keep so much more distance from the planes. Just think if we end up having to have an airlift in order to get food and supplies into Puerto Rico to keep them alive.

Now is not the time to talk about the former financial problems or about the debt payments to bondholders. In a crisis, all that matters is saving lives and giving the people the resources they need to get back on their feet. I am hopeful that our colleagues will see the urgency of the situation in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, in addition to the ongoing troubles in Florida and, I expect, Texas, as well, which will continue for some time.

I hope we can work together to get an aid package soon that helps all of those affected by the storms as soon as possible. Why? Because we are all Americans, and we need to act like it. We need to come together and get on the long road to recovery.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DAINES). The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Florida for the report from his State and for his words about the devastation in Puerto Rico. Our hearts go out to those in Florida, Texas, the Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico. We do have a responsibility to respond quickly. They are responding to some devastating storms, especially when they are combined.

Our thanks also go to the first responders and the many volunteers, including some in the State of Ohio and those from my hometown, who stepped forward to help the people in need. It is extraordinary.

Again, I look forward to working with my colleagues to come up with additional assistance as we have done

already for some of the initial damage in Texas. There is so much more now that we must do.

TRIBUTE TO TIM O'NEILL

Mr. President, I rise today to talk about one of our colleagues here in the Senate, who has an inspiring story and is celebrating an important anniversary this week.

I want to mention this week Doorkeeper Tim O'Neill, who works with us in the Senate and celebrates 27 years of Government service. He has been a doorkeeper since 2010, during which time I have had the pleasure of getting to know him, as have many of my colleagues in the Senate.

His career has been a remarkable journey. He started in the Senate as a legislative director, and he later went on to work in the White House—not during one Presidential administration but during four Presidential administrations. Tim worked for President Ronald Reagan, President George H.W. Bush, President Bill Clinton, and President George W. Bush.

He worked in the Department of Treasury and at the Federal Housing Finance Board, eventually becoming the chairman of that agency. After that he went to the House of Representatives, where he was senior legislative counsel for the Financial Services Committee. We are happy to have Tim back here on the Senate side, where he works today.

Tim has had an impressive career which I outlined, but the most amazing thing about his career doesn't reside in what he has done but what he has overcome.

One weekend in January of 1989, when Tim was at the Treasury Department, his life was altered forever. Tim's life had first changed on Friday morning when he found out his wife Ginny was pregnant with their first child. But later that weekend, on a Sunday, as he was putting on his shoes to go jogging, at 34 years old, he suffered a major stroke that affected two-thirds of his brain.

The doctors didn't immediately tell Ginny how serious it was. Later she would find out that they did not believe he would live through the night, and, if he did, they believed his lasting brain damage would mean he would never walk again and never talk again.

Despite this very grim prognosis, Tim had a few things going for him. First, there was an incredible positive attitude that we all see in the Senate. Second, he was young and athletic, which improved his chances of recovery. He also talks about his Irish determination, which made him resilient. And he had the knowledge of knowing that Ginny was pregnant, and he was absolutely committed to being part of his daughter's life. In fact, one of the few things he said he remembered in his initial stages of recovery was that Ginny was pregnant and that he had a daughter coming. And when he began regaining his speech, the first thing he told Ginny was that he was going to recover.

The path was not easy. In those first few months, he worked 8 hours a day, trading his government job for a rehabilitation facility. He worked with speech and physical therapists. And with Ginny at his side, he put in overtime every day. The extensive road to recovery was daunting. Tim, a Harvard-educated lawyer in the middle of a successful career, had to totally relearn things. He had to relearn how to read, and he had to relearn how to write.

I know Tim will agree with me that his wife Ginny was the unsung hero of this story of recovery.

The O'Neills felt the support and generosity of those around them. As I mentioned, he worked at the Treasury Department. Those close to Tim—and some who hardly knew him at all—donated their personal leave time to allow him to keep receiving a paycheck during this recovery process, and the Treasury Department assured him that his job would be waiting when he was ready and able to return.

Shortly after the stroke that he wasn't supposed to ever recover from, Tim was home, self-mobile in a wheelchair. Soon he taught himself how to walk again. He never regained use of his right hand at all—one of his only lasting handicaps to this day—so do you know what he did? He learned to write with his left hand. His resilience and determination are really amazing.

He went back to work. His stroke was in January of 1989. Again, that Sunday, doctors didn't think he would live through the night, and if he did, they thought his life would be in a wheelchair. In 1995, only 6 years later, he was sworn in as a Director of the Federal Housing Finance Board, a position he was nominated for by President Clinton. Later, in 2001, President George W. Bush elevated him to Chairman of that Board. In 2005, he became a senior legislative counsel to the House Financial Services Committee, until his first retirement from government in 2007. He had 20 years of service.

He had had a good career and a recovery story that was respected by everyone who knew about it. He could very well have sat back and enjoyed that retirement after those 20 years, but Tim's life is defined by purpose and service and people. So after trying retirement for a little while, Tim returned to the place he loved and the people he knew, coming back here to the U.S. Senate as a doorkeeper in 2010.

Tim's extensive knowledge of Capitol Hill has benefited the U.S. Senate, and I will tell you what—his good spirits have had an effect on countless Senators, including me, countless members of our staff, and many visitors. His attitude is infectious. He exemplifies the power of positive thinking. He certainly brightens my days, and I know he has inspired many.

By the way, I just heard today that he is also a leader among doorkeepers, including organizing periodic team-building events at the Nats games with his fellow doorkeepers.

This month, as we recognize Tim's 27 years of public service, we also recognize his incredible life journey and his resilience in the face of adversity. Strokes can affect people in a variety of ways. In Tim's case, I must say I think it made him a stronger person.

Guided by his love for his wife Ginny and their three children now and his dedication to public service, Tim has had a career and a life worthy of celebration and recognition.

So, Tim, today, this week, we all congratulate you on 27 years of honorable service and wish you many more to come.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

PUERTO RICO AND U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS
RECOVERY EFFORT

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I want to talk about the terrible humanitarian crisis faced by the people of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, as well as the gulf coast and the people of Florida, who have endured the fury and ferocity of Mother Nature at its worst.

All of the people who live in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands are Americans. First and foremost, they are Americans who are going through one of the toughest periods of their lives, a time that no American wants to face alone.

My message to the people of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands: You are not alone. You are not alone in this humanitarian crisis. Congress will act. We will provide the kind of relief package—food, medicine, whatever supplies are necessary not only to endure and survive but to eventually thrive.

That is more than just rhetoric; that is a promise this Senate must make to our fellow Americans. These Americans citizens in Puerto Rico, for example, have lost their homes, their businesses, their livelihoods, and, some of them, loved ones.

I come to this floor on this issue that has preoccupied me and others because it is truly a story of two storms. It is a tale of two catastrophes—one of them resulting from nature's fury but the other manmade.

We know very visibly and dramatically about the storm that directly hit Puerto Rico, and it is called Maria. It was side-glanced by an earlier storm that missed it with its full fury, but Maria was a direct hit, leaving more than 60,000 American citizens without power, passing within miles of San Juan, home to 400,000 people. It was the strongest storm to hit the island in 80 years. The winds tore off the trees and dumped more than 2½ feet of rain on the island. It razed houses there and on the U.S. Virgin Islands, leaving a wasteland, crumpled structures, scarred concrete, shells of buildings, no electricity, and virtually no telecommunications for most people.

There are 3.4 million people in dire need of housing, food, water, medicine,

diesel, gasoline—the necessities of life. There is a humanitarian crisis in Puerto Rico that requires an immediate and unconditional response from Congress—not from just the Senate but from the House and from the President.

One area where the President had made an announcement today concerns the potential matching amounts of money that Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands may have to provide. There should be no match. There should be no requirement that Puerto Rico or the U.S. Virgin Islands provide a share of the money needed for rebuilding and recovery, and the President should waive every bit of the required matching share. Every dime, every nickel should be waived.

That leads me to talk about the second storm that has hit Puerto Rico. It is less visible and less recent. It is the result of a continually building set of headwinds, a financial storm that had built over many years and has now reduced Puerto Rico to a state of near insolvency, virtual bankruptcy—\$74 billion in debt that would have been a severe storm for the people of Puerto Rico—not of their making—even without the hurricane that directly hit the island.

We have an obligation as immediate and dire with respect to rebuilding and recovering from that second storm as we do for the first. That is the reason I have been involved over a period of many months in seeking to construct solutions, beginning with the PROMESA Act. And I intend—and I commit that I will continue seeking that kind of solution, not just solutions to the buildings that have been collapsed but to an economy that will collapse if we do not act. That is an important obligation that we share to fellow Americans, because this storm is not due to their neglect or profligacy; it is due to the tax laws and healthcare laws that unfortunately failed to treat them fairly.

Delay in meeting the astronomic costs of Hurricane Maria would be unacceptable and unconscionable. We must act promptly. I am hopeful that it will be this week. I am talking to our leader, Senator SCHUMER, who has provided such strong vision and courage in this area. He has been a champion of Puerto Rico, and I hope he will help us craft a solution that is immediate, vigorous, and prompt.

The administration and Congress must ensure as well that the Federal Government plays a robust and responsible role in funding and financing these recovery efforts so that no additional damage is done to Puerto Rico's already fragile economy. It is time to forgo the miasma and bureaucratic rigmarole of Federal redtape and financing constraints, while flooding is still an acute risk to life and health and recovery efforts are just beginning.

The Puerto Rican Government must be granted direct and instant tools to bring electricity back to the people, to feed the hungry, to provide drinking

water and shelter to lives that have been upended by this unforgiving storm. All arms of the Federal Government should be brought to bear to help our fellow citizens in Puerto Rico.

This morning, I asked the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joseph Dunford, whether he would be ready, willing, and able to help and provide additional assistance on behalf of the Department of Defense and the military that he commands, and his unequivocal response was yes. I commend and thank him for that willingness to help our fellow Americans. And he affirmed they are our fellow Americans, they serve in our military, and they give back to communities in this country.

I am proud to represent 300,000 fellow Americans who have come from Puerto Rico to Connecticut, and they, in turn, reflect families there. I have spoken to friends in Puerto Rico who described to me the dire images outside their window—similar to the images we have seen on national television.

Puerto Rico's debt troubles are no secret to anybody here today. We have discussed them, debated them, and failed to provide adequate assistance to meet them. We must work on two tracks—the immediate recovery effort in the face of this truly destructive hurricane but also the financial peril that continues to put Puerto Rico's economy at risk, jobs in jeopardy, and the island's precarious financial position as much at risk as its water and roads are.

Puerto Rico's infrastructure, energy, water, schools, hospitals, transportation, and other vital facilities necessary for a functioning economy must be rebuilt and made whole. That is our obligation. And the same is true of the Virgin Islands, where fellow Americans are equally at risk, their safety in jeopardy, and their economy potentially struggling.

We owe it to our fellow Americans and friends and families—there are people in Connecticut who have friends and family there—and all of us who share a love for these islands that are populated by patriotic Americans dedicated to our country.

Thank you.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 312, Ralph Erickson.

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 Ralph R. Erickson, of North Dakota, to

be United States Circuit Judge for the Eighth Circuit.

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 Ralph R. Erickson, of North Dakota, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eighth Circuit.

Mitch McConnell, Orrin G. Hatch, James Lankford, Jerry Moran, Johnny Isakson, John Thune, Thom Tillis, Shelley Moore Capito, Mike Crapo, James E. Risch, Mike Rounds, John Barrasso, John Cornyn, Chuck Grassley, John Boozman, John Hoeven, Rob Portman.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 251, Ajit Pai.

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 Ajit Varadaraj Pai, of Kansas, to be a Member of the Federal Communications Commission for a term of five years from July 1, 2016.

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 Ajit Varadaraj Pai, of Kansas, to be a Member of the Federal Communications Commission.

Mitch McConnell, Joni Ernst, Thom Tillis, Ben Sasse, Steve Daines, Mike Crapo, Jerry Moran, Tom Cotton, John Thune, Pat Roberts, James M. Inhofe, Johnny Isakson, John Cornyn, James Lankford, John Boozman, James E. Risch, Roger F. Wicker.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum calls for the cloture motions be waived.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate resume legislative session.

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

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. JOHNSON). The Senator from New Jersey.

PUERTO RICO AND U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS RECOVERY EFFORT

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, I appreciate the words from all the colleagues I have seen. It is great to see bipartisan sentiments about dealing with the most powerful hurricanes in recorded history. These hurricanes have left thousands of families homeless, destroying infrastructure, and leaving most people without power for the foreseeable future. There are thousands of individual stories of loss of life, of loss of possessions, of everything people own, devastated by this storm.

What is important to me now is that we turn these words into action. I am grateful for the leadership we are seeing from the State of Texas and the State of Florida, but I want to focus in on what is happening in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. We know, right now, close to 31.5 million American citizens on these islands are on the brink of a humanitarian catastrophe, including the 3.4 million people who live in Puerto Rico and over 100,000 Americans on the U.S. Virgin Islands. The American citizens living in Puerto Rico are part of a population that is bigger than the States of Wyoming, Vermont, North Dakota, and Alaska combined, but they don't have eight Senators representing them in this body—working for them, fighting for them.

When Superstorm Sandy hit New Jersey, I know the constant work Senator MENENDEZ, I, and my predecessor Senator Frank Lautenberg put into working on making sure our communities could recover. We don't have direct Senators representing this incredible population of Americans. They don't have folks here every single day who are pressing for the interests of these Americans, for their safety, their security, their lives. We have to—the 100 of us—step up to make sure that we are focusing on the interests of our fellow Americans after what has been one of the worst storms in recorded history.

The Americans in Puerto Rico pay taxes. They love this country. They serve in the military. In fact, they serve in the military at a rate almost twice as high as the general U.S. population. These are patriots. They are our

brothers and our sisters. These Americans deserve action from this body and from the President of the United States.

Puerto Rico's Governor has spoken directly to this crisis, noting that just 40 percent of the residents of Puerto Rico have access to drinking water—meaning that 2 million American citizens right now in Puerto Rico do not have access to clean drinking water. This is a serious crisis.

More than this, we know the vast majority of Puerto Rican residents still don't have electricity. They are struggling to access food. They do not have basic means of communications on the island, even to family here. They can't access bank accounts. Their sanitation systems have come to a complete standstill. Access to basic medications—often urgently needed medication and healthcare—is under threat.

It is estimated that it is going to take months before power comes back, and recovery and rebuilding will take years for the islands. The next few weeks of recovery are critically important in the effort to save lives.

I saw in Superstorm Sandy how it wasn't just the hurricane itself that took lives; in fact, in my city, it was in the hours and days after that people lost lives. We know that right now in Puerto Rico, every minute, every hour, every day we wait to get critical aid—necessary aid—our failure to act could mean the difference between life and death or between grave suffering and relieving that suffering for hundreds of thousands of people in Puerto Rico, as well as the U.S. Virgin Islands.

We cannot afford to wait any longer to better mobilize support and resources and help our fellow Americans in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands right now. I hope that over time we are able to develop larger and more comprehensive aid packages, such as those being discussed for survivors of the hurricanes in Florida and Texas. The urgency we have in Puerto Rico right now, the urgency we have to provide vital security, energy, food, and health needs—we must answer that urgency with action.

Puerto Rico needs U.S. military, disaster, and humanitarian assistance to maintain order and provide security, water, food, and fuel. Puerto Rico needs additional first responders, and they need generators, emergency vehicles, and fuel. Also, Puerto Rico needs to see that its government—the U.S. Government—will respond the way we have for other disasters.

There cannot be a double standard when it comes to Americans. We are one country. We are one Nation. Whether it was Hurricane Sandy in New Jersey and New York or Hurricanes Harvey and Irma that ravaged Texas and Florida, when our Nation sees a natural disaster destroy the homes of thousands, take lives, knock down power—when a challenge like that comes to the United States of

America, we must be there for our citizens. Yet I have read so many heart-breaking stories. This shows the lack of urgency, the lack of being present, the lack of being there when we are needed.

The Washington Post reported that when journalists were looking to go and provide coverage—somehow journalists are making it there to report on the extent of the damage—they were in a remote area of Puerto Rico when local residents saw them. Their first response was simply to ask: Are you FEMA? Are you our government? Are you coming to address the crisis?

Right now Americans are suffering. Right now Americans are facing devastation and potentially death in these hours and these days.

I worry about this body now heading toward Thursday or Friday. How can we in good conscience go back to our homes this weekend, knowing that hundreds of thousands of American citizens in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands may be homeless, may not have shelter, may not have food, and may not have water? We cannot allow our fellow Americans to fall deeper into this crisis.

Nosotros somos gente de esperanza; somos gente de fe. Pero nuestra historia siempre ha sido una que conecta oraciones y palabras con acciones. Necesitamos actuar ahora.

We are a people of hope; we are a people of faith. But our history has always been one of matching prayers and words with actions. We must act now.

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. STABENOW. Mr. 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. STABENOW. Mr. President, first of all, I rise with a sigh of relief that the decision has been made not to go forward with a vote on a very divisive healthcare bill.

More importantly today, I rise to say this is really an opportunity for us to work together to get something done—something very positive—as it relates to healthcare costs and healthcare coverage for the people whom we all represent in our States and the people across the country. I am hopeful we will see action soon, and I am hopeful it will be this week when we can come together around very good work that is being done in the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee with our two great leaders—Senator ALEXANDER and Senator MURRAY.

They have been holding a number of committee meetings and forums, and I am very pleased to have participated in those. We have had great bipartisan participation in focusing on how to stabilize the current insurance marketplace. We know that has to be step one

if we are going to bring down rates, bring down costs, and create a path forward so more insurance companies are participating in the current system. I have great confidence that we can come together and get that done. It needs to get done immediately because decisions are being made about rates this week, and I am hopeful we can take action on that this week.

Mr. President, we have two other things that are very important—open dates that are looming by the end of the week. One is for the Children's Health Insurance Program, which covers 9 million American children across the country. In Michigan, we call it MICHild. We have children today who can go to the doctor and parents who can take their children to the doctor because of the MICHild Program. The Federal funding for that ends on September 30, this weekend, if we do not take action.

This is another piece of good news because the distinguished chairman of the Finance Committee, Senator HATCH; the distinguished ranking member, Senator WYDEN; others; and I have introduced a bipartisan bill that will extend that program for an additional 5 years. It needs to get done this week. It is a bipartisan effort, and I am hopeful that can get done as well.

We have community health centers in our country—our federally qualified community health centers—whose funding runs out, again, this weekend. Funding health centers has strong bipartisan support. Senator ROY BLUNT and I, along with a total of 70 out of 100 Members of the Senate, have joined in a letter to continue the funding for health centers. That needs to get done right away. In addition to that, there are what we call certain health extenders or policies that are bipartisan that can be done together as well.

We see a picture of important efforts of stabilizing the insurance markets to bring down costs, creating more opportunity for competition in the marketplaces, continuing the Children's Health Insurance Program, continuing the funding for health centers, which are so critical in communities in every one of our States, where people are getting the care they need at their local health centers.

Bringing those things together can be done. Now, it is a lot of work to do that in a couple of days, but these are bipartisan efforts that can be done together to show that in fact we can come together and get things done. I know the people in Michigan want us to do that. They want us to work together to get things done. They want us to focus on lowering costs for healthcare and increasing coverage, and they are anxious to see that we can come together to do that.

I am hopeful. It is only Tuesday, and I am hopeful, with the remaining days of the week, given the bipartisanship that is there and the agreements that have been made on legislation already, that we could go into high gear in the

next few days and come together and have a positive story, a good news story to tell at the end of this week about what we are able to do, working together, to be able to fix problems in the healthcare system and to be able to continue very important programs that provide healthcare for children and for families in local communities around the country.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

PUERTO RICO RECOVERY EFFORT

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I had the opportunity yesterday, along with the Coast Guard and the Resident Commissioner of Puerto Rico, JENNIFER GONZÁLEZ, to visit San Juan, Puerto Rico, to see firsthand some of the devastation that has impacted this U.S. territory. I would summarize it by saying that what I saw were more than 3.5 million American citizens potentially on the verge of a serious and growing humanitarian crisis.

There are a lot of reasons for this. The first is that Puerto Rico has been in the eye of not one but three storms. The first was Hurricane Irma, which impacted it a few weeks ago, followed by the devastation of Hurricane Maria, and preexisting these two things was a very significant fiscal crisis that placed extraordinary constraints on the ability of the territory's government both to prepare for the storm and now to respond to it.

Our traditional model of hurricane response—one that, unfortunately, because of numerous storms, I have come to know well as a resident of Florida—is that FEMA basically arrives in support of the State. When Florida gets hit by a storm and Texas gets hit by a storm, FEMA comes in to the State and tells the State: We are here to help. Tell us where to go, tell us what you need, and we will provide those resources to the places you want. It works that way. The President issues an emergency declaration, and it opens up FEMA and other disaster relief, and then the State government directs that assistance and tells them: This is what we need, this is where we need it, and this is what we can handle on our own. This model will not work in Puerto Rico. It will not work foremost because, as I stated earlier, the financial and fiscal constraints have limited its capacity to build its own internal ability to respond.

They had just finished repairing the damage from Irma a few weeks ago. So, literally, there are not nearly enough basic things like those wooden poles to hold up the electric lines or the transformers that are attached to them or

even the lines themselves, and, in many cases, the fuel, power, and crews to get to the work sites.

It will not work because, in many cases, the government of Puerto Rico still does not have a full assessment of the damage of the storm. While communication in San Juan is severely limited, in most of the other areas of the big island and smaller islands, communication is nonexistent.

Something was brought to my attention firsthand yesterday when we visited one of the Coast Guard centers and watched. Much of the response they are conducting there is limited to a paper map on the wall with some sticky note pads and four landlines on which they hope people can call in and get updates on what they are seeing in the field from a satellite phone. Hopefully, that has improved over the last 24 hours as more Coast Guard vessels have come in to support communications. But we still have large parts of Puerto Rico that have not communicated with the rest of the island, the government, or the outside world, for that matter, going on to today.

There are also logistical challenges. In most of the 50 States—certainly in my home State of Florida, we saw the largest power restoration effort in the history of the world. At least that is what they are claiming. Literally, we saw hundreds of those bucket trucks from all over the United States—all 50 States and even Canada—coming in with prearranged contracts and their crews to restore power. Even with that dramatic level of response, there were people without power until late this weekend, and there are still a couple thousand people in Florida who have no power.

You can't drive a convoy of trucks into Puerto Rico. They have to come in on a barge, and those barges take 7 days from Jacksonville and 5 days from Miami, plus whatever time it takes to travel and position those crews to get there. You not only have to deliver the crews, you have to deliver the supplies in order to be able to restore power.

What is the practical impact of not having power? Having no power is not simply an inconvenience; for many people it is life and death. Imagine an area outside of San Juan where someone is a diabetic and depends on insulin that needs to be refrigerated. That medicine has gone bad by now if they haven't run out. Imagine someone who needs dialysis twice a week. It has been longer than that since they have had it. Imagine if someone needs chemotherapy if they have cancer. That is not going to happen this week or next unless things change.

These are real challenges, and I raise them only because this is a disaster that will require an intensity of effort on behalf of the Federal Government that you would not traditionally see in a storm that impacts the mainland for the reasons I have outlined—and many more.

Now, the good news is, earlier today you saw the White House engage even

more in terms of some of the things they are doing. There are more Department of Defense assets and, as a result of some restoration at the airport, the ability to land more planes more quickly. So, again, more things are coming in. The port opened fairly quickly, but the challenges remain.

Even if today we could approve \$10 billion in assistance and somehow figured out a way to deliver it to Puerto Rico in the next 24 hours, they would still be challenged to take it from the airport to the seaport and deliver it to the places that need it the most because there are roads that are still not clear, because we still don't have a full assessment of where the damage is and where the need is most and, quite frankly, because there are probably roads and bridges in parts of Puerto Rico that will collapse if one of these big trucks drive over them.

I say this because there is only one entity in the world with the capacity to respond to all these various issues; that is, the Federal Government of the United States. Leveraging the power of the Department of Defense and an assortment of other agencies, it remains the only institution certainly in our country—and probably in the world—with a capacity to respond quickly and effectively to the crisis at hand.

While response to this storm will take a significant amount of patience, it will also take a significant amount of urgency. For each day that goes by, this crisis will get worse, not better. I fear that if, in fact, there is not enough urgency in the response, we will be talking about a very different set of stories in the days to come.

I hope I am wrong, with all of my heart, but I fear that when communication lines come back up and when we start getting more access to some of these areas that have been cut off, we are going to start learning that the toll and the impact of the storm is far worse than we had imagined. I pray with all my heart that someone will watch this video on YouTube one day and say: Oh, look, he was exaggerating. It wasn't that bad after all. I hope that is what happens, but I fear it will not, and every day that goes by, it will only get worse.

I don't believe it is fair to say that the response up to this point is because some people don't care or because they haven't paid enough attention to it. I honestly think it is just a challenge that is unique and that requires us to respond to it in ways we wouldn't traditionally respond, for the factors I have just pointed out.

In most places on the mainland, if not all, the States have a certain capacity internally to address this, but Puerto Rico, for the challenges I have just outlined—and particularly because of the storm that just passed—has already had many of those resources depleted.

There is positive news today. The USS *Comfort*, a ship that is a hospital ship, is on its way, but again it will

take it a number of days to get there. The Federal Government has agreed to a 100-percent Federal match. It usually means the Federal Government paid a portion of it and the States pay the rest. The Federal Government, for the next 180 days, has agreed to 100 percent payment of these services, and that will be critical because these restoration crews are going to want to know how their costs are going to be paid if they show up and begin to restore power.

I just think it is imperative that we don't lose focus and don't lose sight of what is at hand because there are over 3 million American citizens in danger. A number of them—perhaps in the thousands—already have existing vulnerabilities and are in severe danger of losing their life and extraordinary human suffering.

I thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle who, throughout the day, have expressed a tremendous amount of interest in wanting to know how they can be helpful and what they can do. I think the most important thing we need to do now is to continue to drive the sense of urgency, to do all we can to bring to bear all of the resources the Federal Government can bring to assist in this recovery. Then we will be able to work together on not just rebuilding Puerto Rico but helping her to rebuild so she is stronger, more prosperous, and more stable than ever.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I am not sure exactly what those words mean, but I know it allows me to speak so I am glad to have done it.

I thank you for your leadership on the natural disasters we are having, particularly in Puerto Rico. There are 3.4 million American citizens who are living in conditions that nobody in this country should have to tolerate. They are without fuel, they are without food, they are without water, they are without energy, and they are without electricity. Some reports have said it is going to be months before that electricity is repaired. We have to do everything we can in this body to make sure these American citizens are supported and that they can rebuild, and I know the Presiding Officer feels the same way. We have to work together to do this.

HEALTHCARE

Mr. President, that is not the reason I am coming to the floor today. I wanted to say a word about healthcare now that the decision has been made, apparently, to not even have a vote on this latest version of the repeal and replace

bill. This was going to be, I think, the fourth time we had a vote to repeal the Affordable Care Act. The House of Representatives, over the last 7 years, has voted to repeal the Affordable Care Act somewhere on the order of 67 times or almost 70 times. They have gone back to their constituents year after year after year saying they voted to repeal the Affordable Care Act; that it was a Socialist takeover of the United States of America that they were trying to correct. They distorted what the Affordable Care Act actually was. I am not going to litigate that today.

It is clear, from my perspective in Colorado, whether people support the Affordable Care Act or whether they don't, it often turns on—not always—what party they are in or whether they supported President Obama or whether they didn't. I say not always because I get a lot of email and have people in my townhalls who aren't Democrats but who have preexisting conditions or whose children have preexisting conditions who have health insurance for the first time as a result of the Affordable Care Act.

Having said all that, whether they support the Affordable Care Act or whether they don't, in my State—and I bet it is true all over the United States of America—people are deeply dissatisfied with the way they interact and their families interact and their small businesses interact with the American healthcare system. They should be because it doesn't work very well. I am not talking about the Affordable Care Act. I am talking about the Affordable Care Act, plus our healthcare system. They are not the same thing, and we should be addressing that.

We should be addressing the costs in our system. We should be addressing the lack of transparency in our system. We should be making sure people in the richest country in the world have access to health insurance, but they also have to have access to quality care. In too many rural areas in Colorado—and it is true all over America—there are not enough primary care doctors, not enough primary care nurses. We are not delivering healthcare in those places very efficiently, and we are not delivering it well enough, especially when we know a lot of our veterans live in those communities, and we know increasingly there is a profound opioid addiction that needs to be dealt with.

After 7 years of saying repeal, repeal, repeal and then some years of saying repeal and replace, we have now wasted 7 months of the American people's time on an entirely partisan effort to try to pass two bills that could not have been more unresponsive to the critics of ObamaCare in Colorado, to say nothing of the supporters. So it is not a surprise to me that the last attempt failed, and it is not a surprise to me that people weren't even going to vote on this bill because it is such a terrible bill that they didn't want to vote on it. So they have withdrawn it, which is

good for the American people, except the people in Colorado are still facing challenges in healthcare, including challenges from the Affordable Care Act. There, I said it. I voted for it.

There are things we should fix, and one of those things is a problem that is common—I heard both Members of the Republican Party on the Finance Committee and Democrats on the Finance Committee yesterday at the hearing talk about it—which is the problem that people have in the individual market affording insurance. They say to me, as somebody who voted for the Affordable Care Act: Hey, Michael. You have required us to buy something—insurance because of the individual mandate—that in my area is too expensive because there is not enough competition of insurers, and the deductible is so high it is of no use to me and my family. Why would you make me buy something like that?

I think that is a completely legitimate criticism of the bill. It is important to recognize that when we are talking about this group of people who are very important, it is 7 percent of the population that is covered in America—7 percent. Ninety three percent of the people are getting their insurance someplace else—from their employer, from Medicare, from Medicaid. This is 7 percent we are talking about.

By the way, the issue around that 7 percent—not the people—the issue around that 7 percent, that is what has consumed our politics for the last 7 years. It is not how to make it less expensive for 100 percent of the American people, not how to make it more transparent for 100 percent of the American people, more predictable for 100 percent of the American people but what are we going to do to cover 7 percent. Of those, the folks who aren't getting subsidies, are about 1 percent of people who are insured in America. I say that not to diminish those people at all because they are struggling—and I meet them all the time in my State—I say it to show just how small that set of issues is and how easily they could be resolved by the U.S. Congress if we could work together instead of having this pitched battle about healthcare, instead of calling each other names and Bolshevik takeover and all the rest.

Fortunately, there is a solution that is being worked on not in the Finance Committee but in the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee. The two leaders of that committee—LAMAR ALEXANDER, who is the Republican chair, and PATTY MURRAY, who is the Democratic ranking member, are among two of the finest legislators in this body. Time after time after time, even when Washington has not worked, they have managed to lead that committee to what LAMAR ALEXANDER refers to as a result. It has come to the floor after going through a process in our committee, an amendment process. It has come to the floor for an amendment process, whether we were reforming the FDA or rewriting the El-

ementary and Secondary Education Act, which used to be known as No Child Left Behind. That bill actually got a unanimous vote in our committee—a committee that has on it BERNIE SANDERS from Vermont and RAND PAUL from Kentucky. That is quite an achievement.

So I have absolute confidence in their ability to deal with this set of issues related to this 7 percent of our population. And I hope that bipartisan process will then become a model or a foundation for the work we need to do on healthcare going forward. We have to turn the page on the last 7 years or 8 years of these repeal votes.

From my perspective, having failed to repeal, the answer can't be to say: We will not help you fix the Affordable Care Act because if we participate in the process to fix the Affordable Care Act, it somehow legitimizes the Affordable Care Act.

You should not hold the position that if you fail to repeal, you can't fix it. If you are going to repeal it, repeal it. And I think we know where that has gone. If you are not going to repeal it, you better be part of fixing it, or you are going to own the problem.

There are a lot of people on this side who want to address that issue, and I believe there are a lot of Republicans who want to address that issue. We are now out of excuses for why we can't do it because Graham-Cassidy has been pulled, as it should have been because that bill, far from stabilizing our insurance system, would have actually made it worse, would have injected even more volatility.

Sometimes people say: Well, don't you think there is already volatility in the system? My answer to that is yes, I do. That is why we have to fix it. The last thing we need to do is make it more volatile. The last thing we need to do is make matters worse. We should stabilize it, based on the bipartisan testimony we have had in the HELP Committee.

The other thing it does—and the Senator from Minnesota is here, so I am going to stop—the other thing it does is it throws millions of people off of insurance. This is not a healthcare bill. It is not a healthcare bill; it is “we are going to take your healthcare away” bill. It couldn't be sustained in front of the American people. They wouldn't even vote on it because they knew how bad it was. We had no hearings before yesterday's Finance Committee. It is like watching “Veep.” It is not the way the government ought to work. So they have an excuse for a hearing. They decide to have the hearing. The Congressional Budget Office report, which we should have had months to look at, if not weeks, comes out in the middle of the hearing and tells us that millions of people are going to lose their health insurance as a result of this bill—flying completely in the face of President Trump's promises.

Let's get this short-term thing done, let's stabilize the individual market,

which we need to do, and then let's address healthcare in a bipartisan way, and I will accept President Trump's goals for what it should look like. Let's make sure everybody is covered at a lower price, with higher quality. That is what he promised on the campaign trail, and we have the opportunity to deliver that if we are willing to work in a bipartisan way.

I know that is what people in Colorado want out of this place. They are so tired of the Affordable Care Act being litigated in this way, and it is clear that the repeal effort has failed. But that is not enough. We have to continue to fix the system. And I wish LAMAR ALEXANDER and PATTY MURRAY all the best as we try to do this in the HELP Committee, and then I hope Democrats and Republicans will support that effort on this floor, and we can actually do something useful, after all of these years, for the American people and their families and their small businesses.

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

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

MS. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I first rise today to thank my colleague for his comments. I am very pleased that this process may now move forward—the one that was stymied because of a bill that, as my friend from Colorado just pointed out, would kick millions of people off of healthcare, jack up their premiums, and really was an effort to pass the buck to the States without the bucks. I think that is one of the reasons we saw our Republican Governors in Nevada and in Ohio opposing this effort. I thank him for his leadership on the relevant committees and his passion for this issue.

I would agree with him that people in my State, the State of Minnesota, just like the State of Colorado—we have a lot of independent sorts in both our States, and they want to see us get things done. We now have the opportunity to do that.

MR. BENNET. Mr. President, might I interrupt?

MS. KLOBUCHAR. Is there a question?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

MR. BENNET. I want to observe—I don't know how to phrase this question, but the Senator from Minnesota made such an excellent point about dropping this on the States. I hadn't made that point. That was one of the things that came up over and over again in the Finance Committee hearing, was that in the name of federalism, we were basically imposing on all of the States the obligation to decide that they had to reinvent their healthcare system over the next 2 years whether that was something they wanted to do or not. I am glad the Senator raised that. I also want to thank her for her leadership.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Thank you.

As we wait for those bipartisan negotiations—and we hope we will get something soon, because I have seen reinsurance be a positive force in my State for bringing some of the rates down in the exchange. The average for the preliminary rates was 20 percent when our Republican legislature joined with our Democratic Governor to get this passed—20 percent reduction. We would like to see that rolled out on a national basis.

(The remarks of Ms. KLOBUCHAR pertaining to the submission of S. Res. 268 are printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

CLIMATE DISRUPTION

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, climate disruption is the seminal challenge of our generation. It affects everything from our farms to our forests, to our fisheries. We see the impact from disappearing ice sheets and melting permafrost and glaciers. We see it in the coral reefs. We see it in the moving insect populations. We see it in the more powerful storms.

In response, communities across our globe are transforming their energy economies. They are working on energy efficiency, certainly—more efficient appliances and a little more mileage in their cars. Yet many are also working to transform their energy economies from a fossil fuel energy economy to a renewable energy economy.

How much do you know about the changes that are underway? Let's find out.

Welcome to episode 5 of the Senate Climate Disruption Quiz. Here we go. Here is the first question.

This August, an electric 500 horsepower Tesla Model X SUV raced a 740 horsepower Lamborghini Aventador SV in a quarter-mile drag race. Who won? Was it the 500 horsepower electric Tesla or the 740 horsepower Lamborghini? Was the race called off or did they tie?

Take a moment. Feel free to lock in your answer.

The answer is, the Tesla won the race. The Tesla won the race, despite the fact that it had far less horsepower. In fact, it set a record for an SV in a quarter mile. It beat the Lamborghini by about 500ths of a second.

It just goes to help demonstrate the incredible torque and acceleration that comes with electric power, and if you have ever tried driving a Tesla and had it accelerate so fast that it pinned you against the back of the seat, you would know what I am talking about.

OK. Let's turn to question No. 2. Taking a page from the white roof movement, which city in America has begun painting its streets white in order to lower temperatures? Is it the city of Phoenix, AZ? Is it Austin, TX? Is it Kansas City, MO, or perhaps Los Angeles, CA?

The answer is, among those cities, Los Angeles, CA. You may have seen this in the news. After a heat wave and recordbreaking temperatures, Mayor Eric Garcetti announced plans to cut the average temperature in L.A. by 3 degrees Fahrenheit over the next two decades.

One of the keys to doing this is to coat the city's roads in something called CoolSeal, which is a light-colored paint. Originally, it was a paint that was developed by engineers for military air bases so as to keep spy planes cool while they were resting on the tarmac. CoolSeal keeps streets and parking lots 10 degrees cooler than does black asphalt.

This is an interesting innovation, and I am sure the work L.A. does will help create information for other cities because cities are heat islands. Because of the asphalt, they are often much hotter than the surrounding countryside.

OK. Question No. 3. In which State do 31 communities face an imminent threat of destruction from climate disruption? Is it 31 communities in Utah or in Michigan or in Alaska or in New Hampshire?

The correct answer is Alaska. Alaska is experiencing a tremendous increase in the vulnerability of towns, which is the result of melting ice sheets; therefore, the storms closer approach. There are higher seas and more violent storms so we are seeing a real assault on those ocean communities. For one community of 600 people, it is estimated it would cost about \$180 million to relocate all of the residents.

Meanwhile, the Trump administration is moving to dismantle climate adaption programs, like the Denali Commission, which have provided Federal assistance to safeguard or relocate communities that are at risk from rising sea levels, storms, and disappearing sea ice.

This takes us to question No. 4. Of the following statements, which statement is not true; that is, which of these four statements is false? Is it that July 2017 was the second hottest month on record? Is the false statement that only one country is not signed on to the Paris climate agreement? Is it statement C, that climate disruption played no part in the devastation of Hurricanes Harvey and Irma? Is it statement D, that the United States is now producing 43 times as much solar energy as it did in 2007?

Three statements are true, and one is false. The false statement is statement C. It is, in fact, July 2017 that was the second hottest month on record. In fact, we had a recent period during which each month was the hottest month on record in the calendar year. That extended for about 16 months in a row not so long ago.

Then, indeed, only one country is not signed on to the Paris climate agreement. That country is Syria, which is in the grip of a ferocious civil war. Nicaragua had not signed on, but it has

signed on now. The United States has withdrawn or expressed its intention to withdraw, but it will not actually go off the Paris accord until the year 2020. So there is just one country, and that is also true.

It is true that solar power has increased 43 times in a 7-year period. We certainly know climate disruption does not cause hurricanes, but we also know the hotter temperature of the ocean causes the hurricanes we have to be much more powerful and much more destructive.

In the days leading up to Harvey, the sea surface temperatures in Texas were 3 to 7 degrees Fahrenheit above average. We saw this same phenomenon when Hurricane Sandy struck the Atlantic coast, where temperatures were 5 degrees or more above average.

Let's turn to question No. 5. Some scientists say we need to invent a device to pull carbon out of the air. Which of the following would accomplish that task? Would it be permafrost, wind turbines, glaciers, or trees? We do not think of any of these as an invention by humankind, but one of these processes that exists currently in nature does have a big impact in pulling carbon out of the air.

The answer is D, trees. Of course, that is a process we see during which, every year, the carbon dioxide level in the air surges when the leaves come off the trees and then decreases in the spring when the leaves are on the trees because they start pulling more carbon dioxide out of the air. So we need a lot more force in order to reduce carbon pollution.

The challenge is, worldwide, we are not adding to our forests. We are, in fact, losing our forests. In 2015, we lost about 47 percent more forested land than we did in 2001. The rate of deforestation is actually increasing so we need to be doing the reverse. We need to be ending deforestation and adding forests. Unfortunately, that is not the case.

In 2015, we lost about 49 million acres of forest around the world. We lost it because of wildfires, because of logging, and because of expanding agriculture. That is about the size of Nebraska. Picture it. In a single year, we lost forests that were the size of Nebraska. That is bad news in the fight against climate disruption because deforestation accounts for more than 10 percent of global carbon dioxide emissions, not to mention that forests play an incredibly important role in supporting diversified ecological systems around the globe.

So there we have it—this week's episode 5 of the Senate Climate Disruption Quiz. These are questions ripped right from the headlines. The facts on the ground are changing rapidly as the pace of climate disruption increases. This is the single biggest test facing humankind. It is a test that calls on every one of us to respond.

It is simply a fact that the devastation we have witnessed recently in

Houston, TX, is far more dramatic because of climate disruption and carbon pollution. It is simply a fact that the devastation we just witnessed in Florida is far worse than the disruption and the devastation that would have occurred otherwise. That is why we all need to keep working to tackle this challenge. The United States should be in the lead in taking on the seminal challenge of humankind in our generation.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

HEALTHCARE

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise in strong opposition to the Republican healthcare bill known as Graham-Cassidy. You would expect that Republicans' fourth attempt to repeal the Affordable Care Act would be better than the previous three. In fact, the opposite is true. This bill is the worst of the four bills.

This is especially personal for me because the bill hurts California more than any other State. Before I get to this attack on my home State, I would like to list just a few of the many ways this bill harms millions of Americans and puts countless lives at risk.

This bill boots at least 32 million Americans off healthcare. There is no sugarcoating it; Graham-Cassidy cuts health insurance subsidies and slashes Medicaid funding. That will mean fewer people with healthcare, plain and simple.

The bill ends guaranteed protections for those with preexisting conditions. Anyone who says otherwise is not telling the truth. This bill says that States can allow insurance companies to charge those with preexisting conditions whatever they want. That means an end to guaranteed coverage because people with health conditions would be charged so much they wouldn't be able to afford coverage. Arguments to the contrary are just wrong.

This bill not only eliminates the Medicaid expansion, it ends Medicaid as we have known it since 1965. The Medicaid expansion in the Affordable Care Act has meant 15 million more vulnerable Americans have gained insurance. With those funds gone, they lose coverage. By radically changing traditional Medicaid, States would have to either cover hundreds of billions in additional costs or kick people off Medicaid. Again, fewer people with coverage, more lives at risk—these are facts, and they are indisputable.

This bill is also devastating for women's health. It ends the guarantee that

maternity care, contraception, and other critical services women need will be covered and bars women on Medicaid from accessing Planned Parenthood, which is the primary healthcare provider for millions of American women. We hear so much from the other side about the importance of being able to choose your doctor. This bill says that, if you have chosen a doctor at Planned Parenthood, too bad. It doesn't matter how much you like that doctor; you need to find someone else.

The bill also takes us back to the days of junk plans, when you could faithfully pay your premium and then discover you weren't covered when you got sick. The Affordable Care Act required all insurance companies to cover essential health benefits like cancer treatment, maternity care, prescriptions, and mental health. Graham-Cassidy says States can waive that protection.

Those items I described affect all Americans, but as I said, this bill is also a direct attack on California and other Democratic States. When the Supreme Court ruled that the Affordable Care Act couldn't require States to expand Medicaid to cover more families, some Republican States used that as a way to attack President Obama's legacy. Never mind that they were risking their own constituents' lives, it was a political win for them.

Now, Graham-Cassidy proposes taking Federal funds away from those States that did expand Medicaid and give it to those that refused. In California alone, 4 million have health insurance today because my State decided to accept the Federal Government's 90 percent contribution for a small 10 percent buy-in. Graham-Cassidy would end that, pulling the rug out from under those Californians. To say this is unconscionable is an understatement.

What is worse, the bill's authors openly admit this is their strategy—to redirect money from States like California and New York to Republican States. Senator CASSIDY said he is just trying to create "parity," but the reason there isn't parity is because Republican Governors and legislatures chose to put politics over people's health. States can choose at any time to opt-in and receive the 90 percent match for Medicaid expansion. Candidly, it is a revolting way to get a bill passed.

The one part of this bill that is the same as past versions is the dire cuts to Medicaid. This needs to be repeated: The only thing congressional Republicans have agreed on throughout this entire process is that children, pregnant women, people with disabilities, and seniors in nursing homes get too much healthcare.

For any of my colleagues who don't realize the full extent of what Medicaid does for this country, allow me to explain. Gutting Medicaid would devastate care for children, particularly those with disabilities and complex healthcare needs. If anything in Wash-

ington were untouchable, I would think it would be providing healthcare to sick children, but apparently not.

Each Republican healthcare bill in the House and Senate goes far beyond just repealing the Affordable Care Act. It essentially ends Medicaid as we have known it since 1965, the year President Lyndon Johnson created the program. Today, Medicaid covers 36 million children, including 5 million in California. That is nearly half of all children in this country. The program has always been a partnership between the States and the Federal Government. The Federal Government has paid a fixed share of all healthcare costs for Medicaid beneficiaries.

Republicans want to end that partnership. Their plan would place strict limits on Federal payments, with States responsible for all costs above that limit. We don't have a full CBO score of this bill, so we don't have the exact numbers, but outside estimates of the total cuts in this bill show States losing over \$4 trillion over the next two decades. Let me repeat that figure: over \$4 trillion of cuts to Medicaid and health insurance subsidies within a generation.

California alone would be required to pay \$139 billion more between 2020 and 2027, and over the next 20 years, it would cost my State \$800 billion. These cuts would be backbreaking and force many States to make extremely hard choices. If California couldn't come up with tens of billions of dollars more each year, millions of residents could lose their Medicaid coverage. California's Medicaid director said, "Nothing is safe—no population, no services."

In July, I visited UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital in San Francisco. I met with three mothers—Kristin, Sally, and Nina. Their children—Maggie, Megan, and Drew—have struggled with extraordinary healthcare needs including cerebral palsy, a congenital heart defect, and VATER syndrome, which is a set of complex birth defects. If it weren't for the first-class care they received at Benioff, they wouldn't have survived.

These mothers are heroes. They have dedicated their lives to their children, doing all they can to ensure they lead full, happy lives in the face of such significant adversity. When I asked them how they and their children cope, Nina told me that you simply do your best to live the life you have.

All three of these families are middle class. They are covered by employer-sponsored private insurance, but Medicaid fills the significant gaps in coverage. It covers in-home nurses to provide around-the-clock care, as well as first-rate medical equipment—services that private insurance doesn't cover. Without in-home care, their children would have been placed in institutions to ensure access to critical around-the-clock care.

If the Senate passes a bill that guts Medicaid, mothers like these may not be able to keep their children at home.

That is a stunning indictment of a party that proclaims its commitment to “family values.” One of the first areas where these cuts could show themselves would be our country’s 220 top-rate children’s hospitals. On average, 60 percent of patients at these hospitals are covered by Medicaid. In some facilities, that number is as high as 80 percent. Those hospitals would inevitably need to reduce services and consolidate locations. Their ability to stay open would be threatened.

You don’t need to take my word on this point. The doctors and healthcare professionals who run children’s hospitals have made this point crystal clear. Dr. Michael Anderson, CEO of Benioff Children’s says, “Graham-Cassidy will be devastating to sick children and their families. If Graham-Cassidy is implemented, children with complex illnesses will be more likely to have less funding available to them than what they actually need.”

Dr. Paul Viviano, CEO of Children’s Hospital Los Angeles—one of the country’s top 10 children’s hospitals—said previously that the cuts like this to the Medicaid Program would “threaten” their programs and “put at risk life-saving services.” The reach of these cuts would extend far beyond patients who rely on the Medicaid Program. That is because the research and training of specialists at children’s hospitals improves care for children nationwide. If specialists aren’t available or are never trained, that hurts all children. Todd Suntrapak, CEO of Valley Children’s in Madera, CA, told me that gutting Medicaid “threatens the very viability of pediatric health care in this country.”

Gutting Medicaid also threatens the wide range of supplemental services like speech and physical therapy that allow children with disabilities to thrive. Many of the letters and calls I have received in opposition to the bill have been from mothers advocating on behalf of their children with disabilities because they know these cuts would hurt their families.

Beth from Davis, CA, has a son named Patrick with Down syndrome. Patrick also battled leukemia as a child. Despite the challenges he has faced, Patrick will soon graduate from high school. His mom expects him to secure a job and live independently because of the support he receives through California’s regional center programs.

Medicaid provides the vast majority of the \$2.5 billion in Federal funding that our 21 regional center programs receive to facilitate job-training, physical therapy, and other supports for those with disabilities. Beth wrote to me that her family has “every reason to believe that Patrick will be a tax-paying Californian and we can’t wait!” Gutting Medicaid puts the services that have allowed Patrick to be in a position to graduate from high school on the chopping block.

I would like to close by reminding my Republican colleagues that, if they

pass this bill, they are effectively abandoning families during the most painful and difficult times in their lives—telling them they are on their own. I don’t believe that is the type of country we are, and it is up to Senate Republicans to prove it. Stop advocating the dangerous repeal of the Affordable Care Act. Instead, let’s stabilize its funding and improve it so it works for all Americans.

CLIMATE WEEK

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, today I wish to voice my support for the eighth annual Climate Week NYC, which took place in New York City from September 18 to 24. The 2017 Climate Week brought together businesses, governments, academics, civil society, and other stakeholders to advance international action and cooperation to better understand the science and challenges of climate change and to plan and execute actions to address this ever-evolving crisis facing humanity. Climate Week traditionally occurs during the U.N. General Assembly in support of enhanced dialogue to advance international cooperation between nations and, since 2015, to ensure the success of the Paris agreement.

As the ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, I strongly believe climate diplomacy must be a top priority for U.S. foreign policy. Climate change poses an imminent and long-term threat to not only our national security and economic success, but also the long-lasting prosperity of this country. Addressing this crisis requires collective action and cooperation by local and national representatives, small and large businesses, and every one of us. If the U.S. is to maintain our status as the world’s superpower, it is in our best interest to lead the global effort to address the serious challenges posed by climate change. When America leads, we not only protect and enhance our own interests, but we have the unique ability to bring others along and help forge consensus, but regardless of whether the U.S. continues to lead or if we retreat, as the President’s decision to withdraw the U.S. from the Paris agreement suggests he is interested in doing, the rest of the world has made it quite clear that they plan to press ahead with or without us.

That is a sad day for America’s global leadership. Moreover, it is foolish to believe that the collaborative policies and multilateral efforts around reducing global emissions will not affect the United States simply because we choose not to participate.

For example, the Trump administration refused to participate in the development of the G20’s “Hamburg Climate and Energy Action Plan for Growth,” which outlines a global economic partnership plan for a clean energy future. This week, Canada, the EU, and China are hosting a climate ministerial meeting of 30 major and emerging economies in Montreal to develop multilat-

eral actions to advance the implementation of the Paris agreement. Fortunately, the administration will be represented at this ministerial event, but not at the same levels of power as most other countries participating. Moreover, the U.S. is merely participating, when it would best serve of our interests to lead an engagement like this, where we could be steering the agenda, as opposed to ceding such leadership to China.

Increased global demand for clean energy and the incorporation of carbon accounting into world markets are clear signals that the global economy is on a low-carbon trajectory. If we stand on the sidelines as these changes in international economics take shape—with Syria and Nicaragua as the only other nations not party to the agreement—we will be the loser.

Denying the scientific and real world evidence of climate change is irresponsible, and it is equally irresponsible to deny or ignore the economic shifts occurring around the world as a result of international efforts to combat climate change.

Climate change is real. The science is indisputable. While hurricanes have always happened this time of year over the North Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico, changes in the global climate—because of increased carbon emissions into the atmosphere from human activity—have created warmer atmospheric and surface water conditions that are increasing the likelihood of intensely powerful hurricanes.

We have seen the destruction caused by Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria and the devastating effects they have brought to millions of Americans. My thoughts and prayers go out to all those affected. First and foremost, our country must assist and provide relief to those affected. That includes our citizens and their neighbors in the Caribbean.

As we come together as a nation to help survivors in need now, we must also act to reduce future risks and protect more people from becoming victims in the future. That means acknowledging the reality of climate change and acting to reduce pollution that has been scientifically proven to be changing our environment and causing the increased intensity of extreme weather events like hurricanes, droughts, and wildfires.

In addition to the rises in sea levels, record-breaking droughts are plaguing regions in the Mediterranean, Middle East, and East Africa. NASA’s ongoing research on climate change shows the significance of human-induced climate change, threatening our national security and our socioeconomic and diplomatic ties across the world. Reviewing the evidence we are presented with, it is clear the only way we can tackle climate change is through global leadership and action based on science and based on the urgency of preserving our way of life.

Here at home, every city and State bears some risk from the effects of climate change. Fortunately, many State and local and private sector leaders recognize this reality. Despite the absence of leadership from the Trump administration, these individuals and the States, localities, and businesses they represent across many sectors are taking a stand against the national security threats posed by climate change.

Even though the President's actions on the Paris agreement are demoralizing, this by no means equals defeat for our Nation and the rest of the world.

One way to show other nations we are indeed committed to this global cause is to join them by building on the progress we have made here in our own country from the local to national level. Domestic climate change and clean energy policy, including substantial investments in clean energy research, development, and production, have made the U.S. an incubator for investment and entrepreneurship. Creating a robust domestic market helps companies develop credible track records, skilled workforces, and scalable products to export around the world to a market hungry for clean energy solutions. This is where domestic action intersects with U.S. "climate diplomacy."

We should look toward U.S. corporations that are shifting to cleaner technology as an illustration of our continued fight against climate change. U.S. political leadership in innovation and technology combined with increased global demand for clean energy technology can help create transformational job growth opportunities across the United States. Each day we dither on making the right political choices on clean energy is a day we lose global clout to China, India, and other nations who are racing to fill the void our current retreat has created.

As we look to be more resilient to climate change, our global partners have already started to combat the issues through innovation and adaptation. For example, Holland's recent shift to innovate against flooding is a good example of how other nations are actively working to adapt to climate change and create financial opportunities.

Holland's shift to high-tech water management systems will protect against future flooding and scarcity of freshwater sources. These are technologies that the Dutch will likely export to other nations and regions at risk of flooding, so the Dutch will profit from the investments they have made and the experiences they have gained taking prudent measures to protect themselves against the effects of sea level rise.

This strategic measure sets an example for how the U.S. should work collectively with businesses and local governments to set aside funding proactively for future climate change mitigation and adaptation. Taking this

sort of action would not only benefit my home State of Maryland because of its low coastal geography, but also States like New York and South Carolina.

According to the New York City Department of Environmental Protection, Manhattan and the other boroughs have experienced a significant increase in flooding events, attributable to local sea levels having risen an average of 1.2 inches per decade since 1900, a trend that will only worsen without decisive action to stabilize Earth's climate. There is no doubt that adapting our infrastructure to withstand the effects of climate change will provide substantial benefits to our communities and our economy.

We are fortunate that some corporations such as the members of the Beverage Industry Environmental Roundtable, BIER, are stepping up to reduce carbon emissions. BIER's commitment to reduce energy consumption and better manage water resources are important examples of how U.S. industry is demonstrating leadership in advancing environmental sustainability and addressing environmental challenges.

More than 900 U.S. businesses support keeping the U.S. in the Paris agreement, including more than 20 Fortune 500 companies. American businesses need the U.S. Government at the negotiating table to represent their interests. Acting to prevent the worst effects of climate change holds tremendous economic and job growth opportunities for Maryland and our Nation. Such an ambitious global goal can only be achieved through strategic action starting at the local level, supported by a Congress and President through policy and political courage.

Fighting climate change is essential to U.S. national security interests and to growing U.S. economic opportunities. Meanwhile, the world continues to look to us for leadership. I remain motivated to join my colleagues and people across the country to fight global climate change so that we can demonstrate our Nation's commitment to leading climate diplomacy and to maintain the American private sector's strength in a changing global economy.

REMEMBERING ALAN HUTCHINSON

Mr. KING. Mr. President, today we remember the life of Alan Hutchinson, who passed away earlier this year at the age of 70. As a beloved family man, veteran, author, and tireless environmental advocate, Alan dedicated his life to preserving Maine's most precious land, water, and wildlife. Future generations of Americans will enjoy all that the Maine outdoors has to offer thanks in part to Alan's dedication to conservation.

Originally from Rhode Island, Alan first came to Maine as a student at the University of Maine at Orono, where he earned his bachelor and master's degrees in wildlife management. During the Vietnam war, he served his country

as a biological research aid at Walter Reed Medical Hospital in Washington, DC. Upon returning to Maine, he began an illustrious career in environmental conservation, as a civil servant and leader of one of the largest land trusts of the United States, the Forest Society of Maine.

In his career as a civil servant, he led the acquisition and conservation of 250 coastal islands and headed Maine's newly formed Endangered Species Group. With leadership, patience, and perseverance, he worked with diverse partners to protect our coast and wildlife. In 1997, Alan became the first executive director of the Forest Society of Maine, FSM. During his tenure, the FSM grew from a one-person operation into a national leader in forestland conservation, helping to conserve over 1 million acres of forestland. Just as he did leading the Endangered Species Group, Alan achieved this success by bringing together diverse groups under a common purpose of protecting our forests. His notable conservation achievements include the 20,000-acre Nictaus Lake easement, protecting 6 miles of the beautiful Moosehead Lake shore, the 329,000-acre West Branch Project, and the unprecedented 360,000-acre Moosehead Region conservation easement.

In addition to his conservation work, Alan also authored two books, "Just Loons: A Wildlife Watcher's Guide," 1998, and "Just Eagles: A Wildlife Watchers Guide," 2000. These books reflect his passion for Maine's outdoors that embodied his life's work. Alan will be remembered for his thoughtful leadership, dedication, and passion. Above all that, nothing exceeded his deep love for his family and his devotion to his friends. Alan will be sorely missed by all, and we owe him an enormous debt of gratitude.

TRIBUTE TO CATHY GLENN AND DAVE AHART

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, today I want to honor the service of two outstanding individuals who have dedicated their careers to serving the American people.

Cathy Glenn and Dave Ahart have worked for nearly 30 years in the Senate, many of which have been behind the scenes in the Senate Recording Studio, ensuring that the public had access to their elected leaders.

Every day, Cathy and Dave showed up to work early and sometimes stayed so late that they kept a cot tucked away in the corner of their studio.

Together these two never missed a beat as they ran back and forth between soundboards, helping Senators from both parties connect with folks back home and communicate the latest happenings from the Nation's Capital.

Cathy and Dave worked as a team. This body could certainly learn a thing or two from them.

They conducted their careers with professionalism and selfless service,

going above and beyond to make our jobs easier.

Cathy and Dave exemplify what it means to serve. While civil service can be a thankless profession, these two worked hard with grace and always with a smile on their faces.

I can't imagine what the Senate Recording Studio will be like without them, but it is only fitting that Cathy and Dave ride into the sunset together.

Although many of us in the Senate are sad to see them trade in their headphones for baseball caps and spend their afternoons watching "Veep" instead of committee hearings, we wish them both the very best in a well-deserved retirement.

Today I want the RECORD to show that Cathy Glenn and Dave Ahart made the Senate a better place, and I join all of the Senators and staff to thank them for their incredible service.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO CAROLINE CELLEY

• Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Caroline for her hard work as an intern for the Senate Republican Policy Committee. I recognize her efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Caroline is a native of Arizona. She is a graduate of Pepperdine University, where she studied integrated marketing communication. She has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made her an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of her work is reflected in her great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Caroline for the dedication she has shown while working for me and my staff. It was a pleasure to have her as part of our team. I know she will have continued success with all of her future endeavors. I wish her all my best on her next journey.●

TRIBUTE TO BETTY SCHOENBAUM

• Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, I wish to recognize a prolific philanthropist, successful businesswoman, and extraordinary friend to the people of West Virginia, Betty Frank Schoenbaum, on the occasion of her 100th birthday. Countless West Virginians, Americans, and people all over the world have benefited and continue to benefit from the endeavors of Betty and her late husband, Alex Schoenbaum.

Betty received her degree in commerce from the Ohio State University in 1939; it was there that she met Alex, and the two would begin their lifelong proclivity toward helping the underprivileged. They would marry and move to Charleston, WV, soon after, beginning a successful business career that would increase the impact of their generosity.

Starting with the Parkette Drive-In on Charleston's West Side, the

Schoenbaums built a prosperous restaurant chain that would eventually be known as Shoney's. The chain grew into over 1,000 locations across dozens of States, employing many West Virginians as it became an iconic American brand. Not content to rest on their success, Betty and Alex sought to share their good fortune with the world.

The philanthropic gifts made by the Schoenbaums are too numerous to list individually. During Alex's lifetime, he and Betty established the Schoenbaum Fund at the Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation in Charleston, which was used to purchase sports and recreation equipment for over 200 public schools in the Kanawha Valley. They also established the Schoenbaum Scholarship Foundation and the Schoenbaum Family Foundation, which continues to give to numerous organizations, including the Boy Scouts of America, the Children's Home Society of West Virginia, Mountaineer Food Bank, Mountaineer Habitat for Humanity, and the United Way of Kanawha Valley.

Since Alex's passing, Betty has continued to give, establishing the Schoenbaum Family Enrichment Center, funding the construction of a Library at the University of Charleston and an undergraduate college of business building at the Ohio State University, and endowing scholarships at West Virginia University and the Ohio State University.

Betty may be celebrating her 100th birthday, but age has not slowed her down. She continues to serve as the president of the Schoenbaum Family Foundation and as a board member for several foundations, committees, and organizations. She is also an active member of the Sarasota, FL, community. According to Betty, there is great joy and purpose to be had from a life of giving to your fellow man. I believe I speak for many when I say we can all benefit from her example. I wish her many more years of health and happiness.●

55TH ANNIVERSARY OF ACCUWEATHER

• Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, today I rise to celebrate the 55th anniversary of AccuWeather, the worldwide weather service headquartered in State College, PA.

AccuWeather was founded by Dr. Joel Myers, who received his Ph.D. from the Pennsylvania State University and is currently a fellow of the American Meteorological Association. Dr. Myers got his start weather forecasting for gas and utility companies in Pennsylvania. In the 1960s and 1970s, Dr. Myers taught at Penn State and continued to expand his weather forecasting business to include highway departments, utility companies, construction companies, and ski resorts.

The name "AccuWeather" was first used in 1971 to service the WARM-AM radio station in the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton region. In 1972, AccuWeather

served its first television station, WPVI-TV in Philadelphia. Many of AccuWeather's first customers are still customers today.

In the 1980s, AccuWeather developed the USA TODAY weather page and became the official weather forecaster at the World Fair in Kentucky. The company also produced the weather maps for the Associated Press.

AccuWeather has been a global name since the 1970s. Having first established an international presence serving customers in Canada, AccuWeather has expanded to providing services all around the world for customers in locations such as South Asia, the Middle East and South America. Some of these global services include providing forecasts to help with crop rotation and forecasts for major ports, television stations, and newspapers. AccuWeather currently serves over 43,000 Zip Codes and over 1.5 billion people.

Dr. Myers and AccuWeather have been recognized on the State and national level, receiving the Pennsylvania Association of Broadcasters Pride in Pennsylvania Business Award, an Outstanding Job Generator Award from the Chamber of Business and Industry of Centre County, PA, and five Telly Awards. This year, AccuWeather received an award as the No. 1 most accurate forecaster by ForecastWatch, an industry tracker. Dr. Myers was honored as one of the 528 greatest entrepreneurs in American history with his biographical inclusion in Entrepreneur Magazine's Encyclopedia of Entrepreneurs.

In Centre County, PA, AccuWeather employs over 400 people in a facility that houses 23 radio booths and a TV studio with state-of-the-art equipment. AccuWeather is also a family business, with Dr. Myers' brothers serving as officers—Barry Lee Myers is the CEO and Evan Myers is the COO and senior vice president. I wish AccuWeather the best and look forward to its continued success serving Pennsylvania and many others around the world.●

REMEMBERING HAROLD DEAN WILCOXSON

• Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, Livingston, MT, lost an incredible member of the community on August 30 when Harold Dean Wilcoxson, son of Carl and Harriett Esther (Swingley) Wilcoxson, passed away at age 94. Harold spent much of his life operating the family-owned business and Montana institution, Wilcoxson's Ice Cream shop. Wilcoxson's Ice Cream has provided delicious ice cream and fond memories for Montanans for over 100 years.

Harold was born on April 15, 1923, and graduated from Park County High School in 1941. He pursued a certificate in electronics repair at Kinmen Business University in Spokane, WA, and used his electronics expertise for the rest of his life.

On September 15, 1942, Harold joined the U.S. Navy and served aboard the

U.S.S. *Quincey* as an electronics chief during World War II. His ship was located off of the French coast during the D-Day invasion of Normandy in 1944 and was anchored in Sagami Wan during the signing of the Japanese Instrument of Surrender in 1945.

Following his service, Harold returned to Montana to continue building Wilcoxson's Ice Cream. Amidst long hours of building the family business, Harold also enjoyed racecars. His love and passion for fast cars lasted a lifetime.

From cleaning cream cans as a boy to fixing electrical issues and managing new plant projects, Harold ensured Wilcoxson's Ice Cream shop would continue in its legacy of gourmet ice cream and service to Montanans for generations. Harold Dean Wilcoxson, beloved businessowner and mentor, brought much to the Livingston community through his quiet leadership and commitment to service and will be missed by many.●

RECOGNIZING THE FOSTER GRANDPARENT PROGRAM

● Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, today I have the honor of recognizing the administrators and volunteers of the Western Montana Area VI Agency on Aging Foster Grandparent Program. Based in the small town of Polson, MT, the program covers six mainly rural western Montana counties and the area's lone Indian reservation. Every year, the lives of dozens of children across Montana are changed for the better by the Foster Grandparent program, and dozens of senior citizens are able to use their time and skills to make a difference in the life of a child.

Foster grandparents are able to volunteer in many different settings, including schools, afterschool programs, Head Start programs, teen mentorship programs, and correctional facilities. With many communities in western Montana facing high unemployment, as well as meth and opioid drug crises, the Foster Grandparent program has a particular focus on at-risk children. Foster grandparents support children who have been abused or neglected, provide mentorship to teens, and help children with disabilities.

This week, community members and the Western Montana Area VI Agency on Aging are gathering to honor foster grandparents. Included in that group is Navy veteran Karl Paddock, who is receiving a special award for his service to the program. Our communities need more people like Karl and all of the foster grandparents who are willing to step up and make a difference in the lives of our most precious resource: our children.

It is my hope that the Western Montana Area VI Agency on Aging Foster Grandparent Program will continue to grow in the years to come. I congratulate everyone involved in its success and the difference it is making for the communities of western Montana.●

REMEMBERING BRYAN A. STRONG

● Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. President, today I wish to commemorate the life of Bryan A. Strong, a caring husband, loving father, and dedicated police officer with the Chicago Police Department.

Mr. Strong passed away from a heart attack on March 27, 2014. We remember him for his compassion, sympathy, and love of life. As a policeman, Mr. Strong put the needs of others above his own. He served his community with pride, selflessness, and honor.

Mr. Strong leaves an admirable legacy in his community and family. His son, Brian, and wife, Janette, remember him as their adventurous best friend who filled their lives—and many others—with excitement and love.

I am grateful for Mr. Strong's service. May his life and legacy serve as an inspiration to all.

Thank you.●

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:06 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, without amendment:

S. 810. An act to facilitate construction of a bridge on certain property in Christian County, Missouri, and for other purposes.

S. 1141. An act to ensure that the United States promotes the meaningful participation of women in mediation and negotiation processes seeking to prevent, mitigate, or resolve violent conflict.

The message further announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1235. An act to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in recognition of the 60th Anniversary of the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame.

H.R. 2061. An act to reauthorize the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2519. An act to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint commemorative coins in recognition of the 100th anniversary of The American Legion.

H.R. 3819. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to extend certain expiring provisions of law administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 12:33 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 3110. An act to amend the Financial Stability Act of 2010 to modify the term of the independent member of the Financial Stability Oversight Council.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 1235. An act to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in recognition of the 60th Anniversary of the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame; to the Com-

mittee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

H.R. 2061. An act to reauthorize the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

H.R. 3354. An act making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018, and for other purposes.

PRIVILEGED NOMINATION REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

On request by Senator PETERS, under the authority of S. Res. 116, 112th Congress, the following nomination was referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs:

Frederick M. Nutt, of Virginia, to be Controller, Office of Federal Financial Management and Budget, vice David Arthur Mader.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-2891. A communication from the Acting Administrator of the Specialty Crops Program, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Apricots Grown in Designated Counties in Washington; Decreased Assessment Rate" (Docket No. AMS-SC-17-0033) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2017; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-2892. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Anthony J. Rock, United States Air Force, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-2893. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General James B. Laster, United States Marine Corps, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-2894. A communication from the Chairwoman of the Nuclear Weapons Council, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the President's budget requests for the National Nuclear Security Administration for fiscal year 2018; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-2895. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the issuance of an Executive Order to take further steps with respect to the national emergency originally declared in Executive Order 13466 of June 26, 2008, with respect to North Korea; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-2896. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Insular Affairs, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, reports entitled "Report to the Congress: Compact Impact Analysis of the

2016 Report from Guam” and “Impact of the Compacts of Free Association on Guam FY (Fiscal Year) 2004 through FY 2016”; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-2897. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “NRC Regulatory Issue Summary 2017-06: Nuclear Regulatory Policy on Use of Combination Dosimetry Devices During Industrial Radiographic Operations” (RIS 2017-06) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2898. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Reactor Regulation, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Final Safety Evaluation of Technical Specifications Task Force Traveler, TSTF-546, Revision 0, ‘Revise APRM Channel Adjustment Surveillance Requirement’” (NUREG-1433 and NUREG-1434) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2899. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Relief for Victims of Hurricane Irma” (Announcement 2017-13) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 20, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2900. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Guidelines for Good Faith Determinations of Qualifying Public Charity Status” (Rev. Proc. 2017-53) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 20, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2901. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safe Harbor for Inadvertent Normalization Violations” (Rev. Proc. 2017-47) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 20, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2902. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Treatment of Amounts Paid to Section 170(c) Organizations under Employer Leave-Based Donation Programs to Aid Victims of Hurricane and Tropical Storm Irma” (Notice 2017-52) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 20, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2903. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Listing of Color Additives Exempt From Certification; Spirulina Extract; Confirmation of Effective Date” ((21 CFR Part 73) (Docket No. FDA-2016-C-2570)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2017; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-2904. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, trans-

mitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled “Report on the Ninth Review of the Backlog of Postmarketing Requirements and Commitments”; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-2905. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled “Assets for Independence Program - Status at the Conclusion of the Sixteenth Year, Fiscal Year 2015”; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-2906. A communication from the Acting Chief Privacy and Civil Liberties Officer, Office of Privacy and Civil Liberties, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Privacy Act of 1974; Implementation” (CPCLO Order No. 008-2017) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 21, 2017; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-2907. A communication from the Deputy General Counsel, Office of Investment and Innovation, Small Business Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Small Business Investment Companies: Passive Business Expansion and Technical Clarifications” (RIN3245-AG67) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 19, 2017; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-2908. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Diamond Aircraft Industries GmbH Airplanes” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2017-0638)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2909. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Viking Air Limited (Type Certificate Previously Held by Bombardier, Inc.; Canadair Limited) Airplanes” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2017-0474)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2910. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Dassault Aviation Airplanes” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2017-0502)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2911. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Dassault Aviation Airplanes” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2017-0475)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2912. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2017-0472)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2913. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2016-9518)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2914. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2016-7264)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2915. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Defense and Space S.A. (Formerly Known as Construcciones Aeronauticas, S.A.) Airplanes” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2016-9521)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2916. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2016-9517)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2917. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2017-0503)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2918. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2017-0337)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2919. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2017-0128)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2920. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2017-0559)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2921. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal

Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2017-0247)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2922. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2016-7270)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. HOEVEN, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, without amendment:

S. 607. A bill to establish a business incubators program within the Department of the Interior to promote economic development in Indian reservation communities (Rept. No. 115-163).

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. McCAIN for the Committee on Armed Services.

Army nomination of Col. Michael R. Fenzel, to be Brigadier General.

Air Force nomination of Maj. Gen. Jacqueline D. Van Ovost, to be Lieutenant General.

Army nomination of Brig. Gen. John E. Cardwell, to be Major General.

Army nomination of Col. Joseph D'Costa, to be Brigadier General.

Army nomination of Maj. Gen. Michael A. Bills, to be Lieutenant General.

Army nomination of Brig. Gen. Daniel J. Christian, to be Major General.

Army nomination of Brig. Gen. Kenneth H. Moore, to be Major General.

Army nomination of Col. Matthew P. Easley, to be Brigadier General.

Army nomination of Col. Johnny R. Bass, to be Brigadier General.

Army nomination of Col. Tony L. Wright, to be Brigadier General.

Air Force nominations beginning with Col. Jeffery D. Aebischer and ending with Col. Daniel S. Yenchesky, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on September 5, 2017.

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, for the Committee on Armed Services I report favorably the following nomination lists which were printed in the RECORDS on the dates indicated, and ask unanimous consent, to save the expense of reprinting on the Executive Calendar that these nominations lie at the Secretary's desk for the information of Senators.

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

Air Force nomination of Stephen J. Augustine, to be Major.

Air Force nomination of William J. Vit, Jr., to be Major.

Air Force nomination of Theresa A. Jones, to be Major.

Air Force nominations beginning with James S. Shigekane and ending with Andrew H. Stephan, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on September 5, 2017.

Air Force nominations beginning with Marc Aalderink and ending with Joseph R. Zito, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on September 5, 2017.

Air Force nominations beginning with Ian S. Anderson and ending with Joan Diaz Zuniga, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on September 5, 2017.

Air Force nominations beginning with Jennifer L. Baker and ending with Dorian R. Williams, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on September 5, 2017.

Army nomination of Derrick C. Long, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Natalie E. Vanatta, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nomination of John F. Lopes, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nomination of Terrance R. Latson, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nomination of Robert P. L. Bailey, to be Major.

Army nomination of Mariah C. Smith, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nomination of Mark W. Canary, to be Major.

Army nomination of David E. Meacher, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Christopher D. McDevitt, to be Colonel.

Army nominations beginning with Bruce M. Coccoli and ending with Scott J. Sheridan, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on September 5, 2017.

Army nominations beginning with Thomas A. Brooks and ending with D012739, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on September 5, 2017.

Army nominations beginning with Edward A. Jarrett and ending with Casey T. Schober, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on September 5, 2017.

Army nominations beginning with Curtis J. Allen and ending with Bradley A. Wright, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on September 5, 2017.

Marine Corps nomination of Megan L. Bustin, to be Major.

Marine Corps nomination of Robert M. Barclay, to be Major.

Navy nomination of Jason A. Tews, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nomination of Christopher P. Carroll, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nominations beginning with Gabriel Perez and ending with Eric R. Truemper, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on September 5, 2017.

Navy nominations beginning with Anton A. Adam and ending with Ying P. Zhong, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on September 5, 2017.

Navy nominations beginning with Adrienne T. Benton and ending with Aaron R. Wesson, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on September 5, 2017.

Navy nominations beginning with Salahhudin A. Adenkhali and ending with Victor T. F. Wong, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on September 5, 2017.

Navy nominations beginning with Santiago A. Abadam II and ending with Jaime M. York, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on September 5, 2017.

Navy nominations beginning with Sarah A. Aguero and ending with Dennis E. Westman, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on September 5, 2017.

Navy nominations beginning with Joko A. Abubakar and ending with Yui Y. Wong, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on September 5, 2017.

Navy nominations beginning with Brooke T. Ahlstrom and ending with Mark C. Warner, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on September 5, 2017.

Navy nominations beginning with Miguel M. Alampay and ending with Zachary A. Zafes, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on September 5, 2017.

By Mr. CORKER for the Committee on Foreign Relations.

*Jon M. Huntsman, Jr., of Utah, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Russian Federation.

Nominee: Jon M. Huntsman, Jr.

Post: US Ambassador to Russia.

Nominated: July 20, 2017.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: None.

2. Spouse: Mary Kaye Huntsman: \$2,600, 4/19/2014, Rob Wasinger.

3. Children and Spouses: Mary Anne Huntsman: None. Evan Morgan: \$1,000, 2/11/2014, Seth Moulton. Abby Huntsman: None. Jeff Livingston: None. Elizabeth Huntsman: None. Eduardo Hernandez: None. Jon M Huntsman III: None. Morgan McKenna: None. William Huntsman: None. Gracie Huntsman: None. Asha Huntsman: None.

4. Parents: Karen Huntsman: \$2,700, 6/5/2015, Ronald Wyden; \$2,700, 6/5/2015, Ronald Wyden; \$2,500, 9/30/2014, Mia Love; Jon M. Huntsman, Sr.: \$100,000, 2/17/2015, Right to Rise USA; \$2,700, 6/5/2015, Ronald Wyden; \$2,700, 6/5/2015, Ronald Wyden; \$2,500, 9/30/2014, Mia Love; \$5,000, 1/15/2013, HPAC; \$2,600, 6/17/2013, Gabriel Gomez.

5. Grandparents: Alonzo Blaine Huntsman—deceased; Sarah Kathleen Robison—deceased; David Bruce Haight—deceased; Ruby Olson—deceased.

6. Brothers and Spouses: Mark Huntsman, None; Peter Huntsman, \$2,700, 9/13/16, Douglas Owens; \$2,700, 10/22/2015, Ronald Wyden; \$2,700, 10/22/2015, Ronald Wyden; Brynn Huntsman, \$2,700, 10/22/2015, Ronald Wyden; \$2,700, 10/22/2015, Ronald Wyden; James Huntsman, \$2,700, 10/22/2015, Ronald Wyden; \$300, 10/22/2015, Ronald Wyden; \$2,700, 6/27/2016, Douglas Owens; Marianne Huntsman, \$2,700, 6/27/2016, Douglas Owens; David Huntsman, \$2,700, 6/5/2015, Ronald Wyden; \$2,700, 6/5/2015, Ronald Wyden; Michelle Huntsman, None; Paul Huntsman, \$2,300, 6/11/2015, Ronald Wyden; \$2,700, 6/11/2015, Ronald Wyden; Cheryl Huntsman, \$2,300, 6/10/2015, Ronald Wyden; \$2,700, 6/10/2015, Ronald Wyden.

7. Sisters and Spouses: Christena Durham, None; Richard Durham, None; Jennifer Parkin, None; David Parkin, None; Kathleen Huffman—deceased.

*Justin Hicks Siberell, of Maryland, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of

the United States of America to the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Nominee: Justin Hicks Siberell.

Post:

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date and donee:

1. Self: none.
2. Spouse: Arnnavaz Motiwalla Siberell: none.

3. Children (3) and Spouses (N/A): Samuel Emet Huston Siberell: none. Emeline Anahita Siberell: none. Benjamin Cyrus Siberell: none.

4. Parents: George Edwin Peter Siberell—deceased; Anne Hicks Siberell—none.

5. Grandparents: Reese Siberell—deceased; Nolene Siberell—deceased; Estill Hicks—deceased; Bernice Cornell Hicks—deceased.

6. Brothers (2) and Spouses (2): Peter Dickson Siberell, none; Marianne Monachino Siberell, none; Brian Siberell, \$200.00, 03/2017, DCCC; \$120.00, 10/2016, Act Blue; \$100.00, 02/2016, Act Blue; \$500.00, 10/2015, Hillary for America; \$1500.00, 04/2015, Hillary for America; \$500.00, 08/2013, Booker for Senate; Patricia Dryden, none.

7. Sisters and Spouses: N/A.

*A. Wess Mitchell, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (European and Eurasian Affairs).

*J. Steven Dowd, of Florida, to be United States Director of the African Development Bank for a term of five years.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

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 Mrs. CAPITO (for herself, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. MANCHIN, and Mr. SHELBY):

S. 1857. A bill to establish a compliance deadline of May 15, 2023, for Step 2 emissions standards for new residential wood heaters, new residential hydronic heaters, and forced-air furnaces; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Ms. WARREN, Mr. REED, Mr. MERKLEY, and Mr. SANDERS):

S. 1858. A bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to empower the States to set the maximum annual percentage rates applicable to consumer credit transactions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. GARDNER (for himself, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. COTTON, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. HELLER, and Mr. SCOTT):

S. 1859. A bill to extend the moratorium on the annual fee on health insurance providers; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. INHOFE (for himself and Mr. HEINRICH):

S. 1860. A bill to amend section 203 of the Federal Power Act; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE:

S. 1861. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand personal saving and retirement savings coverage by enabling employees not covered by qualifying retirement plans to save for retirement through automatic IRA arrangements, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CORKER (for himself, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. CARDIN):

S. 1862. A bill to amend the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 to modify the criteria for determining whether countries are meeting the minimum standards for the elimination of human trafficking, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. LEE (for himself, Mr. HATCH, and Mr. PAUL):

S. 1863. A bill to clarify that noncommercial species found entirely within the borders of a single State are not in interstate commerce or subject to regulation under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 or any other provision of law enacted as an exercise of the power of Congress to regulate interstate commerce; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. FRANKEN, and Mr. KING):

S. 1864. A bill to expand the use of open textbooks in order to achieve savings for students; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Mr. NELSON, and Mr. CORNYN):

S. 1865. A bill to provide temporary direct hire authority for certain emergency response positions; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. ALEXANDER:

S. 1866. A bill to provide the Secretary of Education with waiver authority for the reallocation rules and authority to extend the deadline by which funds have to be reallocated in the campus-based aid programs under the Higher Education Act of 1965 due to Hurricane Harvey, Hurricane Irma, and Hurricane Maria, to provide equitable services to children and teachers in private schools, and for other purposes; considered and passed.

By Mr. DAINES (for himself, Mr. MORAN, Mr. UDALL, and Mr. WARNER):

S. 1867. A bill to amend title 40, United States Code, to eliminate the sunset of certain provisions relating to information technology, to amend the Carl Levin and Howard P. "Buck" McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 to extend the sunset relating to the Federal Data Center Consolidation Initiative, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. HEINRICH (for himself, Mr. HELLER, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. KING, Ms. HIRONO, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. REED):

S. 1868. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide tax credits for energy storage technologies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. CARDIN):

S. Res. 268. A resolution recognizing September 26, 2017, as "National Voter Registration Day"; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 198

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 198, a bill to require continued and enhanced annual reporting to Congress in the Annual Report on International Religious Freedom on anti-Semitic incidents in Europe, the safety and security of European Jewish communities, and the efforts of the United States to partner with European governments, the European Union, and civil society groups, to combat anti-Semitism, and for other purposes.

S. 253

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 253, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to repeal the Medicare outpatient rehabilitation therapy caps.

S. 281

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 281, a bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to eliminate the per-country numerical limitation for employment-based immigrants, to increase the per-country numerical limitation for family-sponsored immigrants, and for other purposes.

S. 294

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) 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. 298

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 298, a bill to require Senate candidates to file designations, statements, and reports in electronic form.

S. 349

At the request of Ms. HARRIS, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 349, a bill to clarify the rights of all persons who are held or detained at a port of entry or at any detention facility overseen by U.S. Customs and Border Protection or U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

S. 407

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) 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. 479

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 479, a bill to amend title

XVIII of the Social Security Act to waive coinsurance under Medicare for colorectal cancer screening tests, regardless of whether therapeutic intervention is required during the screening.

S. 568

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 568, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to count a period of receipt of outpatient observation services in a hospital toward satisfying the 3-day inpatient hospital requirement for coverage of skilled nursing facility services under Medicare.

S. 718

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 718, a bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to make college affordable and accessible.

S. 816

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 816, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow rollovers from 529 programs to ABLE accounts.

S. 856

At the request of Mrs. McCASKILL, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 856, a bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 and the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act to combat campus sexual assault, and for other purposes.

S. 872

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 872, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to make permanent the extension of the Medicare-dependent hospital (MDH) program and the increased payments under the Medicare low-volume hospital program.

S. 896

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 896, a bill to permanently reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

S. 911

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 911, a bill to direct the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to issue an order with respect to secondary cockpit barriers, and for other purposes.

S. 946

At the request of Mr. FLAKE, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 946, a bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to hire additional Veterans Justice Outreach Specialists to provide treatment court services to justice-involved veterans, and for other purposes.

S. 1022

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from Arkansas

(Mr. COTTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1022, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to facilitate assignment of military trauma care providers to civilian trauma centers in order to maintain military trauma readiness and to support such centers, and for other purposes.

S. 1028

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1028, a bill to provide for the establishment and maintenance of a Family Caregiving Strategy, and for other purposes.

S. 1050

At the request of Ms. DUCKWORTH, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1050, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Chinese-American Veterans of World War II, in recognition of their dedicated service during World War II.

S. 1064

At the request of Mr. UDALL, the names of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) were added as cosponsors of S. 1064, a bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to prohibit the stigmatization of children who are unable to pay for meals.

S. 1568

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1568, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of President John F. Kennedy.

S. 1595

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the names of the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) and the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) were added as cosponsors of S. 1595, a bill to amend the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015 to impose additional sanctions with respect to Hizballah, and for other purposes.

S. 1706

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1706, a bill to prevent human health threats posed by the consumption of equines raised in the United States.

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1706, *supra*.

S. 1718

At the request of Mr. KENNEDY, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1718, a bill to authorize the minting of a coin in honor of the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II, and for other purposes.

S. 1719

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1719, a bill to eliminate duties on imports of recreational performance outerwear, to establish the Sustainable Textile and Apparel Research Fund, and for other purposes.

S. 1721

At the request of Mr. UDALL, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1721, a bill to amend titles 10 and 37, United States Code, to provide compensation and credit for retired pay purposes for maternity leave taken by members of the reserve components, and for other purposes.

S. 1730

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the names of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN), the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN), the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1730, a bill to implement policies to end preventable maternal, newborn, and child deaths globally.

S. 1742

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 1742, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for an option for any citizen or permanent resident of the United States age 55 to 64 to buy into Medicare.

S. 1774

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1774, a bill to provide protections for workers with respect to their right to select or refrain from selecting representation by a labor organization.

S. 1783

At the request of Ms. DUCKWORTH, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1783, a bill to amend the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 to require each State to implement a process under which individuals who are 16 years of age may apply to register to vote in elections for Federal office in the State, to direct the Election Assistance Commission to make grants to States to increase the involvement of minors in public election activities, and for other purposes.

S. 1808

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the names of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) and the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) were added as cosponsors of S. 1808, a bill to extend temporarily the Federal Perkins Loan program, and for other purposes.

S. 1827

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1827, a bill to extend funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program, and for other purposes.

S. 1854

At the request of Mr. GRAHAM, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1854, a bill to amend chapter 44 of title 18, United States Code, to enhance penalties for theft of a firearm from a Federal firearms licensee.

S. RES. 263

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 263, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that President Juan Manuel Santos has restructured and significantly strengthened the environmental sector and management capacity of the Colombian Government and has led the country to become a global environmental leader.

S. RES. 266

At the request of Mr. COONS, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 266, a resolution reaffirming the United States-Liberia partnership, calling for free, fair, and peaceful elections in Liberia in October 2017.

S. RES. 267

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the names of the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) and the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 267, a resolution designating September 2017 as "National Workforce Development Month".

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 267, supra.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. FRANKEN, and Mr. KING):

S. 1864. A bill to expand the use of open textbooks in order to achieve savings for students; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. DURBIN. 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. 1864

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 "Affordable College Textbook Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) The high cost of college textbooks continues to be a barrier for many students in achieving higher education.

(2) According to the College Board, during the 2016-2017 academic year, the average student budget for college books and supplies at 4-year public institutions of higher education was \$1,250.

(3) The Government Accountability Office found that new textbook prices increased 82 percent between 2002 and 2012 and that although Federal efforts to increase price transparency have provided students and families with more and better information, more must be done to address rising costs.

(4) The growth of the Internet has enabled the creation and sharing of digital content, including open educational resources that can be freely used by students, teachers, and members of the public.

(5) According to the Student PIRGs, expanded use of open educational resources has

the potential to save students more than a billion dollars annually.

(6) Federal investment in expanding the use of open educational resources could significantly lower college textbook costs and reduce financial barriers to higher education, while making efficient use of taxpayer funds.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) **EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE.**—The term "educational resource" means an educational material that can be used in postsecondary instruction, including textbooks and other written or audiovisual works.

(2) **INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.**—The term "institution of higher education" has the meaning given the term in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001).

(3) **OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE.**—The term "open educational resource" means an educational resource that either resides in the public domain or has been released under an intellectual property license that permits its free use, reuse, modification, and sharing with others.

(4) **OPEN TEXTBOOK.**—The term "open textbook" means an open educational resource or set of open educational resources that either is a textbook or can be used in place of a textbook for a postsecondary course at an institution of higher education.

(5) **RELEVANT FACULTY.**—The term "relevant faculty" means both tenure track and contingent faculty members who may be involved in the creation of open educational resources or the use of open educational resources created as part of the grant application.

(6) **SECRETARY.**—The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of Education.

SEC. 4. GRANT PROGRAM.

(a) **GRANTS AUTHORIZED.**—From the amounts appropriated under subsection (i), the Secretary shall make grants, on a competitive basis, to eligible entities to support projects that expand the use of open textbooks in order to achieve savings for students while maintaining or improving instruction and student learning outcomes.

(b) **ELIGIBLE ENTITY.**—In this section, the term "eligible entity" means an institution of higher education or group of institutions of higher education.

(c) **APPLICATIONS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Each eligible entity desiring a grant under this section, after consultation with relevant faculty, shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the Secretary may reasonably require.

(2) **CONTENTS.**—Each application submitted under paragraph (1) shall include a description of the project to be completed with grant funds and—

(A) a plan for promoting and tracking the use of open textbooks in postsecondary courses offered by the eligible entity, including an estimate of the projected savings that will be achieved for students;

(B) a plan for evaluating, before creating new open educational resources, whether existing open educational resources could be used or adapted for the same purpose;

(C) a plan for quality review and review of accuracy of any open educational resources to be created or adapted through the grant;

(D) a plan for assessing the impact of open textbooks on instruction and student learning outcomes at the eligible entity;

(E) a plan for disseminating information about the results of the project to institutions of higher education outside of the eligible entity, including promoting the adoption of any open textbooks created or adapted through the grant; and

(F) a statement on consultation with relevant faculty, including those engaged in the creation of open educational resources, in the development of the application.

(d) **SPECIAL CONSIDERATION.**—In awarding grants under this section, the Secretary shall give special consideration to applications that demonstrate the greatest potential to—

(1) achieve the highest level of savings for students through sustainable expanded use of open textbooks in postsecondary courses offered by the eligible entity;

(2) expand the use of open textbooks at institutions of higher education outside of the eligible entity; and

(3) produce—

(A) the highest quality open textbooks;

(B) open textbooks that can be most easily utilized and adapted by faculty members at institutions of higher education;

(C) open textbooks that correspond to the highest enrollment courses at institutions of higher education; and

(D) open textbooks created or adapted in partnership with entities, including campus bookstores, that will assist in marketing and distribution of the open textbook.

(e) **USE OF FUNDS.**—An eligible entity that receives a grant under this section shall use the grant funds to carry out any of the following activities to expand the use of open textbooks:

(1) Professional development for any faculty and staff members at institutions of higher education, including the search for and review of open textbooks.

(2) Creation or adaptation of open educational resources, especially open textbooks.

(3) Development or improvement of tools and informational resources that support the use of open textbooks, including accessible instructional materials for students with disabilities.

(4) Research evaluating the efficacy of the use of open textbooks for achieving savings for students and the impact on instruction and student learning outcomes.

(5) Partnerships with other entities, including other institutions of higher education, for-profit organizations, or nonprofit organizations, to carry out any of the activities described in paragraphs (1) through (4).

(f) **LICENSE.**—Educational resources created under subsection (e) shall be licensed under a nonexclusive, irrevocable license to the public to exercise any of the rights under copyright conditioned only on the requirement that attribution be given as directed by the copyright owner.

(g) **ACCESS AND DISTRIBUTION.**—The full and complete digital content of each educational resource created or adapted under subsection (e) shall be made available free of charge to the public—

(1) on an easily accessible and interoperable website, which shall be identified to the Secretary by the eligible entity; and

(2) in a machine readable, digital format that anyone can directly download, edit with attribution, and redistribute.

(h) **REPORT.**—Upon an eligible entity's completion of a project supported under this section, the eligible entity shall prepare and submit a report to the Secretary regarding—

(1) the effectiveness of the project in expanding the use of open textbooks and in achieving savings for students;

(2) the impact of the project on expanding the use of open textbooks at institutions of higher education outside of the eligible entity;

(3) educational resources created or adapted under the grant, including instructions on where the public can access each educational resource under the terms of subsection (g);

(4) the impact of the project on instruction and student learning outcomes; and

(5) all project costs, including the value of any volunteer labor and institutional capital used for the project.

(i) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section such sums as are necessary for each of the 5 fiscal years succeeding the fiscal year during which this Act is enacted.

SEC. 5. PRICE INFORMATION.

Section 133(b) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1015b(b)) is amended—

(1) by striking paragraph (6);

(2) by redesignating paragraphs (7), (8), and (9), as paragraphs (6), (7), and (8), respectively; and

(3) in paragraph (8), as redesignated by paragraph (2)—

(A) by striking subparagraphs (A) and (B); and

(B) by striking “a college textbook that—” and inserting “a college textbook that may include printed materials, computer disks, website access, and electronically distributed materials.”.

SEC. 6. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that institutions of higher education should encourage the consideration of open textbooks by faculty within the generally accepted principles of academic freedom that establishes the right and responsibility of faculty members, individually and collectively, to select course materials that are pedagogically most appropriate for their classes.

SEC. 7. REPORT TO CONGRESS.

Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall prepare and submit a report to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives detailing—

(1) the open textbooks created or adapted under this Act;

(2) the adoption of such open textbooks;

(3) the savings generated for students, States, and the Federal Government through the use of open textbooks; and

(4) the impact of open textbooks on instruction and student learning outcomes.

SEC. 8. GAO REPORT.

Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall prepare and submit a report to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives on the cost of textbooks to students at institutions of higher education. The report shall particularly examine—

(1) the change of the cost of textbooks;

(2) the factors that have contributed to the change of the cost of textbooks;

(3) the extent to which open textbooks are used at institutions of higher education;

(4) the impact of open textbooks on the cost of textbooks; and

(5) how institutions are tracking the impact of open textbooks on instruction and student learning outcomes.

By Mr. ALEXANDER:

S. 1866. A bill to provide the Secretary of Education with waiver authority for the reallocation rules and authority to extend the deadline by which funds have to be reallocated in the campus-based aid programs under the Higher Education Act of 1965 due to Hurricane Harvey, Hurricane Irma, and Hurricane Maria, to provide equitable services to children and teachers in private schools, and for other purposes; considered and passed.

S. 1866

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 “Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria Education Relief Act of 2017”.

SEC. 2. ALLOCATION AND USE OF CAMPUS-BASED HIGHER EDUCATION ASSISTANCE.

(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) **AFFECTED AREA.**—The term “affected area” means an area for which the President declared a major disaster or an emergency under section 401 or 501, respectively, of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170 and 5191) as a result of Hurricane Harvey, Hurricane Irma, Hurricane Maria, Tropical Storm Harvey, Tropical Storm Irma, or Tropical Storm Maria.

(2) **AFFECTED STUDENT.**—The term “affected student” means an individual who has applied for or received student financial assistance under title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070 et seq.), and who—

(A) was enrolled or accepted for enrollment on August 25, 2017, at an institution of higher education that is located in an affected area;

(B) is a dependent student who was enrolled or accepted for enrollment on August 25, 2017, at an institution of higher education that is not located in an affected area, but whose parent or parents resided or was employed on August 25, 2017, in an affected area; or

(C) suffered direct economic hardship as a direct result of Hurricane Harvey, Hurricane Irma, Hurricane Maria, Tropical Storm Harvey, Tropical Storm Irma, or Tropical Storm Maria, as determined by the Secretary.

(3) **INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.**—The term “institution of higher education” has the meaning given the term in section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002).

(4) **SECRETARY.**—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Education.

(b) **WAIVERS.**—

(1) **WAIVER OF NON-FEDERAL SHARE REQUIREMENT.**—Notwithstanding sections 413C(a)(2) and 443(b)(5) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070b–2(a)(2) and 1087–53(b)(5)), with respect to funds made available for award years 2016–2017 and 2017–2018—

(A) in the case of an institution of higher education that is located in an affected area, the Secretary shall waive the requirement that a participating institution of higher education provide a non-Federal share to match Federal funds provided to the institution for the programs authorized pursuant to subpart 3 of part A and part C of title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070b et seq. and 1087–51 et seq.); and

(B) in the case of an institution of higher education that is not located in an affected area but has enrolled or accepted for enrollment any affected students, the Secretary may waive the non-Federal share requirement described in subparagraph (A) after considering the institution’s student population and existing resources.

(2) **WAIVER OF REALLOCATION RULES.**—

(A) **AUTHORITY TO REALLOCATE.**—Notwithstanding sections 413D(d) and 442(d) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070b–3(d) and 1087–52(d)), the Secretary shall—

(i) reallocate any funds returned under such section 413D or 442 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 that were allocated to institutions of higher education for award year 2016–2017 to an institution of higher education that is eligible under subparagraph (B); and

(ii) waive the allocation reduction for award year 2018–2019 for an institution of

higher education that is eligible under subparagraph (B) returning more than 10 percent of its allocation under such section 413D or 442 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 for award year 2017–2018.

(B) **INSTITUTIONS ELIGIBLE FOR REALLOCATION.**—An institution of higher education is eligible under this subparagraph if the institution—

(i) participates in the program for which excess allocations are being reallocated; and

(ii)(I) is located in an affected area; or

(II) has enrolled or accepted for enrollment any affected students in award year 2017–2018.

(C) **BASIS OF REALLOCATION.**—The Secretary shall—

(i) determine the manner in which excess allocations will be reallocated pursuant to this paragraph; and

(ii) give preference in making reallocations to the needs of institutions of higher education located in an affected area.

(D) **ADDITIONAL WAIVER AUTHORITY.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, in order to carry out this paragraph, the Secretary may waive or modify any statutory or regulatory provision relating to the reallocation of excess allocations under subpart 3 of part A or part C of title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070b et seq. and 1087–51 et seq.) in order to ensure that assistance is received by institutions of higher education that are eligible under subparagraph (B).

(3) **AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS DATE EXTENSION.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law—

(A) any funds available to the Secretary under sections 413A and 441 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070b and 1087–51) for which the period of availability would otherwise expire on September 30, 2017, shall be available for obligation by the Secretary until September 30, 2018, for the purposes of the programs authorized pursuant to subpart 3 of part A and part C of title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070b et seq. and 1087–51 et seq.); and

(B) the Secretary may recall any funds allocated to an institution of higher education for award year 2016–2017 under section 413D or 442 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070b–3 and 1087–52), that, if not returned to the Secretary as excess allocations pursuant to either of those sections, would otherwise lapse on September 30, 2017, and reallocate those funds in accordance with paragraph (2)(A).

(c) **EMERGENCY REQUIREMENT.**—This section is designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 4(g) of the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 (title I of Public Law 111–139; 2 U.S.C. 933(g)).

(d) **REPORT.**—Not later than October 1, 2018, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives information on—

(1) the total volume of assistance received by each eligible institution of higher education under subsection (b)(2); and

(2) the total volume of the non-Federal share waived for each institution of higher education under subsection (b)(1).

(e) **SUNSET.**—The provisions of subsection (b) shall cease to be effective on September 30, 2018.

SEC. 3. PROJECT SERV AND EQUITABLE SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND TEACHERS IN PRIVATE SCHOOLS.

Section 8501(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7881(b)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (D), by striking “and”;

(2) in subparagraph (E), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:
 “(F) section 4631, with regard to Project SERV.”.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 268—RECOGNIZING SEPTEMBER 26, 2017, AS “NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY”

Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. CARDIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Rules and Administration:

S. RES. 268

Whereas the right to vote is a fundamental right that—

(1) is guaranteed to the people of the United States; and

(2) constitutes the core of the democracy of the United States;

Whereas countless people of the United States have struggled to obtain and protect the right to vote;

Whereas each eligible United States citizen who would like to vote should be able to do so without encountering unnecessary barriers to the ballot box;

Whereas eligible United States citizens who are 18 years of age or older have the legal rights—

(1) to register to vote; and

(2) to vote;

Whereas the Bureau of the Census estimates that over 20 percent of eligible United States citizens are not registered to vote;

Whereas many United States citizens are not aware that they must register to vote before they may cast a ballot;

Whereas, because United States citizens must register in order to vote, many political campaigns, nonprofit organizations, religious organizations, and other groups conduct voter registration drives;

Whereas despite the efforts to register United States citizens to vote, the Pew Charitable Trusts have found that more than 60 percent of adult United States citizens have never been asked to register to vote;

Whereas, while some States allow same-day voter registration, many other States require registration as many as 30 days before the date of the election in which a person seeks to vote;

Whereas if a voter has changed names, moved, or not voted in recent elections, the voter registration of the voter must be updated;

Whereas 1 of 9 United States citizens moves each year, rendering outdated the former voter registration of the individuals who have moved;

Whereas updating voter registration ensures an easier experience at the polls on election day;

Whereas increased voter registration may lead to a higher participation rate in elections, which would strengthen the democracy of the United States; and

Whereas the many organizations and individuals who encourage voter registration and civic participation have promoted National Voter Registration Day on the fourth Tuesday of each September, which in 2017 falls on Tuesday, September 26: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes September 26, 2017, as “National Voter Registration Day”; and

(2) encourages each voting-eligible citizen of the United States—

(A) to register to vote;

(B) to verify with the appropriate State or local election official that the name, ad-

dress, and other personal information on record is current; and

(C) to go to the polls on election day and vote if the voting-eligible citizen would like to do so.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise to discuss my resolution, S. Res. 268, calling on the Senate to formally recognize September 26 as National Voter Registration Day.

National Voter Registration Day is a celebration of our democracy and our Nation’s most fundamental right—the right to vote.

Today, thousands of volunteers and organizations in all 50 States are hitting the streets to register voters. Their goal is to create awareness about the registration process and register people who may not register on their own or don’t have the time or don’t know how to do it. It is really to reach out to people way ahead of an election. Last year, their hard work paid off, and more than 750,000 Americans registered to vote on National Voter Registration Day.

These volunteers understand that voting is a fundamental right, but not everyone agrees. There are still people who seem to see it as a privilege that not all eligible voters should enjoy. That is not the way we should see this.

The right to vote is clearly under attack in the United States. We have seen discriminatory voting laws spring up across the country, and those who want to prevent people from voting are making it harder and harder for people to get to the polls.

I do not see this as a partisan issue. My State last year had the highest voting rate in the country. And we have seen a number of States that do things like have same-day registration, mail-in ballots, things like that, and they tend to have higher voting rates. They are not just Democratic States or Republican States; they are Independent States. And when you look at the list, it doesn’t necessarily mean that a certain party is going to win. We had Independent Governor Jesse Ventura win in our State; Governor Tim Pawlenty. But what our States share is a higher voter turnout. What does that mean? Well, it means that people have some trust in their government when they participate. Even when their candidate doesn’t win and the other candidate wins, at least they know they had a say and that it mattered and that they went to the voting booth.

That is what I am talking about today because in some States, we have seen discriminatory voting laws spring up, and they have literally made it harder for people to vote. We have heard reports of problems with equipment. We had 3-hour lines in Arizona. We had 100 miles to the nearest polling station in Nevada and Utah, photo ID requirements in Wisconsin, where we now know it can really be hard to get an ID in the first place. In North Carolina, a Federal court found that the State’s laws to prevent voter access—and this is a more conservative court, the Fifth Circuit—they said the voter

laws had been crafted with “surgical precision” to discriminate against minorities.

Now we have an administration that is abandoning efforts to uphold voting rights. In many States, this is a truly bipartisan effort. The Commission on “Election Integrity” looks to be making it harder, rather than easier, to vote. States are reporting that some Americans are actually unregistering to vote because of the Commission’s request for personal data from across the country. We have had Democratic and Republican secretaries of state band together to say this is something they don’t want to do.

Taken together, these efforts to suppress the vote represent a concerted strategy to ensure that fewer people make it to the polls. This is not about one party or the other party; this is about our democracy. Our very freedoms are built upon the freedom to vote.

So what else do we see? Well, we see attacks from without on our election. I remember the Presiding Officer had an excellent quote on this matter when he said: One election, it will be one candidate in one party; and the next election, it could be the other candidate from the other party. That is why, when we look at interference from foreign governments, we must also protect the sacred right to vote, and that means everything from the amendment I have with Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM, which is now a bill, to make sure our cyber security is strengthened as we head into the 2018 election and make sure that our States have the ability to protect their own voting equipment. The reports now—I just found out that in my own State, an attempt had been made to hack it. In 21 States, we have seen attempts at hacking.

All our bill does is say: Let’s help the States to shore up their equipment, to make sure they have backup paper ballots and other commonsense measures.

This bill in the House—the amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act—was carried by MARK MEADOWS, the head of the Freedom Caucus. That is right. It is a bipartisan amendment across both the House and the Senate to protect our State election equipment. Our country is stronger when everyone participates, and that is why we must protect the election equipment.

We must make it easier to vote. I have one idea: Why don’t we just automatically register eligible voters when they turn 18, maybe when they get their driver’s license or Social Security number. Our States have that data. They also have a way to crosscheck with criminal records and other things to make sure these are eligible voters. Wouldn’t that be easier than going out and trying to get everyone to vote? It doesn’t mean you have to vote, but you automatically get registered to vote, just like you get your Social Security number.

There is momentum for this idea at the State level. Last month, Illinois

became the 10th State to pass automatic voter registration. Experts project that it will result in 1 million people being added to the registration list. Estimates show that as many as 50 million eligible voters would be registered if we moved to automatic registration.

Another thing we can do to increase turnout is to allow same-day voting. In February, I introduced the Same Day Voter Registration Act, a bill that will allow people to register to vote on election day. This reduces the burden of voting and ensures that anyone who forgets to register can go up there to prove who they are and they can get registered. Fifteen States have this—not just blue States, but red States and blue States. And they always tend to be up at the top in the number of people who vote.

We need to restore Americans' confidence in our election process and our democracy, and we do that by welcoming people to vote.

A few years ago, I was fortunate enough to go with Congressman LEWIS on his yearly pilgrimage—his trip where he takes people to the site of the march to Montgomery. The weekend I got to go was actually the moment 48 years to the weekend later. The White police chief of Montgomery handed his badge to Congressman LEWIS and gave him that badge and apologized. He apologized because their police department at that time, 48 years before, had not protected the African-American marchers and those other citizens who were there marching with them.

It took 48 years, but it happened. It was an emotional trip, and it made you think about those marchers and everything they had done just to get the right to vote. You see it in other countries where people will wait in line for a day just to be able to have their say in their own government. That is really what this is about. It is about a freedom—the freedoms that are guaranteed in our Constitution. One of those is that we can all participate. As long as we make the rules, as long as we are eligible, we can all participate.

Today on National Voter Registration Day, I hope that people will join me in celebrating the work of those who are out there encouraging people to vote and, of course, get out there and register yourself so your own voice can be heard.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 1101. Mr. CORNYN (for Ms. COLLINS) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1028, to provide for the establishment and maintenance of a Family Caregiving Strategy, and for other purposes.

SA 1102. Mr. CORNYN (for Ms. COLLINS) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1028, *supra*.

SA 1103. Mr. CORNYN (for Mr. LEE) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 114, expressing the sense of the Senate on humanitarian crises in Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen.

SA 1104. Mr. CORNYN (for Ms. HIRONO) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 504, to permanently authorize the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Business Travel Card Program.

SA 1105. Mr. CORNYN (for Mr. LEE) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1057, to amend the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Act of 1998 to address harmful algal blooms, and for other purposes.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 1101. Mr. CORNYN (for Ms. COLLINS) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1028, to provide for the establishment and maintenance of a Family Caregiving Strategy, and for other purposes; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Recognize, Assist, Include, Support, and Engage Family Caregivers Act of 2017” or the “RAISE Family Caregivers Act”.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) **ADVISORY COUNCIL.**—The term “Advisory Council” means the Family Caregiving Advisory Council convened under section 4.

(2) **FAMILY CAREGIVER.**—The term “family caregiver” means an adult family member or other individual who has a significant relationship with, and who provides a broad range of assistance to, an individual with a chronic or other health condition, disability, or functional limitation.

(3) **SECRETARY.**—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

(4) **STRATEGY.**—The term “Strategy” means the Family Caregiving Strategy set forth under section 3.

SEC. 3. FAMILY CAREGIVING STRATEGY.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary, in consultation with the heads of other appropriate Federal agencies, shall develop jointly with the Advisory Council and submit to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions and the Special Committee on Aging of the Senate, the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives, and the State agencies responsible for carrying out family caregiver programs, and make publically available on the internet website of the Department of Health and Human Services, a Family Caregiving Strategy.

(b) **CONTENTS.**—The Strategy shall identify recommended actions that Federal (under existing Federal programs), State, and local governments, communities, health care providers, long-term services and supports providers, and others are taking, or may take, to recognize and support family caregivers in a manner that reflects their diverse needs, including with respect to the following:

(1) Promoting greater adoption of person- and family-centered care in all health and long-term services and supports settings, with the person receiving services and supports and the family caregiver (as appropriate) at the center of care teams.

(2) Assessment and service planning (including care transitions and coordination) involving family caregivers and care recipients.

(3) Information, education and training supports, referral, and care coordination, including with respect to hospice care, palliative care, and advance planning services.

(4) Respite options.

(5) Financial security and workplace issues.

(6) Delivering services based on the performance, mission, and purpose of a program while eliminating redundancies.

(c) **DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY.**—The Secretary (or the Secretary’s designee), in carrying out subsection (a), shall oversee the following:

(1) Collecting and making publicly available information, submitted by the Advisory Council under section 4(d) to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions and the Special Committee on Aging of the Senate, the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives, and the State agencies responsible for carrying out family caregiver programs, and made publically available by the Secretary, including evidence-based or promising practices and innovative models (both domestic and foreign) regarding the provision of care by family caregivers or support for family caregivers.

(2) Coordinating and assessing existing Federal Government programs and activities to recognize and support family caregivers while ensuring maximum effectiveness and avoiding unnecessary duplication.

(3) Providing technical assistance, as appropriate, such as disseminating identified best practices and information sharing based on reports provided under section 4(d), to State or local efforts to support family caregivers.

(d) **INITIAL STRATEGY; UPDATES.**—The Secretary shall—

(1) not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, develop, publish, and submit to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions and the Special Committee on Aging of the Senate, the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives, and the State agencies responsible for carrying out family caregiver programs, an initial Strategy incorporating the items addressed in the Advisory Council’s initial report under section 4(d) and other relevant information, including best practices, for recognizing and supporting family caregivers; and

(2) biennially update, republish, and submit to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions and the Special Committee on Aging of the Senate, the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives, and the State agencies responsible for carrying out family caregiver programs the Strategy, taking into account the most recent annual report submitted under section 4(d)(1)—

(A) to reflect new developments, challenges, opportunities, and solutions; and

(B) to review progress based on recommendations for recognizing and supporting family caregivers in the Strategy and, based on the results of such review, recommend priority actions for improving the implementation of such recommendations, as appropriate.

(e) **PROCESS FOR PUBLIC INPUT.**—The Secretary shall establish a process for public input to inform the development of, and updates to, the Strategy, including a process for the public to submit recommendations to the Advisory Council and an opportunity for public comment on the proposed Strategy.

(f) **NO PREEMPTION.**—Nothing in this Act preempts any authority of a State or local government to recognize or support family caregivers.

(g) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this Act shall be construed to permit the Secretary (through regulation, guidance, grant criteria, or otherwise) to—

(1) mandate, direct, or control the allocation of State or local resources;

(2) mandate the use of any of the best practices identified in the reports required under this Act; or

(3) otherwise expand the authority of the Secretary beyond that expressly provided to the Secretary in this Act.

SEC. 4. FAMILY CAREGIVING ADVISORY COUNCIL.

(a) CONVENING.—The Secretary shall convene a Family Caregiving Advisory Council to advise and provide recommendations, including identified best practices, to the Secretary on recognizing and supporting family caregivers.

(b) MEMBERSHIP.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The members of the Advisory Council shall consist of—

(A) the appointed members under paragraph (2); and

(B) the Federal members under paragraph (3).

(2) APPOINTED MEMBERS.—In addition to the Federal members under paragraph (3), the Secretary shall appoint not more than 15 voting members of the Advisory Council who are not representatives of Federal departments or agencies and who shall include at least one representative of each of the following:

(A) Family caregivers.

(B) Older adults with long-term services and supports needs.

(C) Individuals with disabilities.

(D) Health care and social service providers.

(E) Long-term services and supports providers.

(F) Employers.

(G) Paraprofessional workers.

(H) State and local officials.

(I) Accreditation bodies.

(J) Veterans.

(K) As appropriate, other experts and advocacy organizations engaged in family caregiving.

(3) FEDERAL MEMBERS.—The Federal members of the Advisory Council, who shall be nonvoting members, shall consist of the following:

(A) The Administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (or the Administrator's designee).

(B) The Administrator of the Administration for Community Living (or the Administrator's designee who has experience in both aging and disability).

(C) The Secretary of Veterans Affairs (or the Secretary's designee).

(D) The heads of other Federal departments or agencies (or their designees), including relevant departments or agencies that oversee labor and workforce, economic, government financial policies, community service, and other impacted populations, as appointed by the Secretary or the Chair of the Advisory Council.

(4) DIVERSE REPRESENTATION.—The Secretary shall ensure that the membership of the Advisory Council reflects the diversity of family caregivers and individuals receiving services and supports.

(c) MEETINGS.—The Advisory Council shall meet quarterly during the 1-year period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act and at least three times during each year thereafter. Meetings of the Advisory Council shall be open to the public.

(d) ADVISORY COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 12 months after the date of enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Advisory Council shall submit to the Secretary, the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions and the Special Committee on Aging of the Senate, the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives, and the State agencies responsible for carrying out family caregiver programs, and make publicly available on the internet website of the Department of Health and Human Services, a report con-

cerning the development, maintenance, and updating of the Strategy, including a description of the outcomes of the recommendations and any priorities included in the initial report pursuant to paragraph (2), as appropriate.

(2) INITIAL REPORT.—The Advisory Council's initial report under paragraph (1) shall include—

(A) an inventory and assessment of all federally funded efforts to recognize and support family caregivers and the outcomes of such efforts, including analyses of the extent to which federally funded efforts are reaching family caregivers and gaps in such efforts;

(B) recommendations—

(i) to improve and better coordinate Federal programs and activities to recognize and support family caregivers, as well as opportunities to improve the coordination of such Federal programs and activities with State programs; and

(ii) to effectively deliver services based on the performance, mission, and purpose of a program while eliminating redundancies, avoiding unnecessary duplication and overlap, and ensuring the needs of family caregivers are met;

(C) the identification of challenges faced by family caregivers, including financial, health, and other challenges, and existing approaches to address such challenges; and

(D) an evaluation of how family caregiving impacts the Medicare program, the Medicaid program, and other Federal programs.

(e) NONAPPLICABILITY OF FACA.—The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to the Advisory Council.

SEC. 5. FUNDING.

No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this Act. This Act shall be carried out using funds otherwise authorized.

SEC. 6. SUNSET PROVISION.

The authority and obligations established by this Act shall terminate on the date that is 5 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

SA 1102. Mr. CORNYN (for Ms. COLLINS) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1028, to provide for the establishment and maintenance of a Family Caregiving Strategy, and for other purposes; as follows:

Amend the title so as to read: "A bill to provide for the establishment and maintenance of a Family Caregiving Strategy, and for other purposes."

SA 1103. Mr. CORNYN (for Mr. LEE) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 114, expressing the sense of the Senate on humanitarian crises in Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen; as follows:

Strike all after the resolving clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SENSE OF THE SENATE.

It is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) an urgent and comprehensive international diplomatic effort is necessary to address obstacles in Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen that are preventing humanitarian aid from being delivered to millions of people who desperately need it;

(2) the United States should encourage other governments to join in providing the resources necessary to address the humanitarian crises in Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen;

(3) parties to the conflicts in Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen should allow and facilitate rapid and unimpeded passage

of humanitarian relief for civilians in need and respect and protect humanitarian and medical relief personnel and objects;

(4) the United States, working with international partners, should support efforts to hold accountable those responsible for deliberate restrictions on humanitarian access in Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen; and

(5) the contributions of charities, non-profit organizations, religious organizations, and businesses of the United States have an important role in addressing humanitarian crises.

SEC. 2. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.

Nothing in this resolution shall be construed as a declaration of war or authorization to use force.

SA 1104. Mr. CORNYN (for Ms. HIRONO) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 504, to permanently authorize the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Business Travel Card Program; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Business Travel Cards Act of 2017".

SEC. 2. ASIA-PACIFIC ECONOMIC COOPERATION BUSINESS TRAVEL CARDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle B of title IV of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 211 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 417 the following:

"SEC. 418. ASIA-PACIFIC ECONOMIC COOPERATION BUSINESS TRAVEL CARDS.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—The Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection is authorized to issue an Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Business Travel Card (referred to in this section as an 'ABT Card') to any individual described in subsection (b).

"(b) CARD ISSUANCE.—An individual described in this subsection is an individual who—

"(1) is a citizen of the United States;

"(2) has been approved and is in good standing in an existing international trusted traveler program of the Department; and

"(3) is—

"(A) engaged in business in the Asia-Pacific region, as determined by the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection; or

"(B) a United States Government official actively engaged in Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation business, as determined by the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

"(c) INTEGRATION WITH EXISTING TRAVEL PROGRAMS.—The Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall integrate application procedures for, and issuance, renewal, and revocation of, ABT Cards with existing international trusted traveler programs of the Department.

"(d) COOPERATION WITH PRIVATE ENTITIES AND NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS.—In carrying out this section, the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection may consult with appropriate private sector entities and nongovernmental organizations, including academic institutions.

"(e) FEE.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall—

"(A) prescribe and collect a fee for the issuance and renewal of ABT Cards; and

"(B) adjust such fee to the extent the Commissioner determines necessary to comply with paragraph (2).

"(2) LIMITATION.—The Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall

ensure that the total amount of the fees collected under paragraph (1) during any fiscal year is sufficient to offset the direct and indirect costs associated with carrying out this section during such fiscal year, including the costs associated with operating and maintaining the ABT Card issuance and renewal processes.

“(3) ACCOUNT FOR COLLECTIONS.—There is established in the Treasury of the United States an ‘Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Business Travel Card Account’ into which the fees collected under paragraph (1) shall be deposited as offsetting receipts.

“(4) USE OF FUNDS.—Amounts deposited into the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Business Travel Card Account established under paragraph (3) shall—

“(A) be credited to the appropriate account of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection for expenses incurred in carrying out this section; and

“(B) remain available until expended.

“(f) NOTIFICATION.—The Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall notify the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate not later than 60 days after the expenditures of funds to operate and provide ABT Card services beyond the amounts collected under subsection (e)(1).

“(g) TRUSTED TRAVELER PROGRAM DEFINED.—In this section, the term ‘trusted traveler program’ means a voluntary program of the Department that allows U.S. Customs and Border Protection to expedite clearance of pre-approved, low-risk travelers arriving in the United States.”

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 417 the following new item:

“Sec. 418. Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Business Travel Cards.”.

SEC. 3. ACCOUNT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the repeal of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Business Travel Cards Act of 2011 (Public Law 112-54; 8 U.S.C. 1185 note) pursuant to section 4(b)(1), amounts deposited into the APEC Business Travel Card Account established pursuant to such Act as of the date of the enactment of this Act are hereby transferred to the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Business Travel Card Account established pursuant to section 418(e) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (as added by section 2(a) of this Act), and shall be available without regard to whether such amounts are expended in connection with expenses incurred with respect to an ABT Card issued at any time before or after such date of enactment.

(b) AVAILABILITY.—Amounts deposited in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Business Travel Card Account established pursuant to section 418(e) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, in addition to the purposes for which such amounts are available pursuant to such subsection, shall also be available for expenditure in connection with expenses incurred with respect to ABT Cards issued at any time before the date of the enactment of such section.

(c) TERMINATION.—After the completion of the transfer described in subsection (a), the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Business Travel Card Account established pursuant to the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Business Travel Cards Act of 2011 shall be closed.

SEC. 4. CONFORMING AMENDMENTS AND REPEAL.

(a) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 411(c) of section 411 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 211(c)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (17), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) by redesignating paragraph (18) as paragraph (19); and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (17) the following:

“(18) carry out section 418, relating to the issuance of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Business Travel Cards; and”.

(b) REPEAL.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Business Travel Cards Act of 2011 (Public Law 112-54; 8 U.S.C. 1185 note) is repealed.

(2) SAVING CLAUSE.—Notwithstanding the repeal under paragraph (1), an ABT Card issued pursuant to the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Business Travel Cards Act of 2011 before the date of the enactment of this Act that, as of such date, is still valid, shall remain valid on and after such date until such time as such Card would otherwise expire.

SA 1105. Mr. CORNYN (for Mr. LEE) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1057, to amend the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Act of 1998 to address harmful algal blooms, and for other purposes; as follows:

Beginning on page 10, strike line 4 and all that follows through page 12, line 15 and insert the following:

SEC. 7. HYPOXIA OR HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM OF NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE.

(a) RELIEF.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Upon a determination under subsection (b) that there is an event of national significance, the appropriate Federal official is authorized to make sums available to the affected State or local government for the purposes of assessing and mitigating the detrimental environmental, economic, subsistence use, and public health effects of the event of national significance.

(2) FEDERAL SHARE.—The Federal share of the cost of any activity carried out under this subsection for the purposes described in paragraph (1) may not exceed 50 percent of the cost of that activity.

(3) DONATIONS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, an appropriate Federal official may accept donations of funds, services, facilities, materials, or equipment that the appropriate Federal official considers necessary for the purposes described in paragraph (1). Any funds donated to an appropriate Federal official under this paragraph may be expended without further appropriation and without fiscal year limitation.

(b) DETERMINATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—At the discretion of an appropriate Federal official, or at the request of the Governor of an affected State, an appropriate Federal official shall determine whether a hypoxia or harmful algal bloom event is an event of national significance.

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In making a determination under paragraph (1), the appropriate Federal official shall consider the toxicity of the harmful algal bloom, the severity of the hypoxia, its potential to spread, the economic impact, the relative size in relation to the past 5 occurrences of harmful algal blooms or hypoxia events that occur on a recurrent or annual basis, and the geographic scope, including the potential to affect several municipalities, to affect more than 1 State, or to cross an international boundary.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPROPRIATE FEDERAL OFFICIAL.—The term “appropriate Federal official” means—

(A) in the case of a marine or coastal hypoxia or harmful algal bloom event, the

Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere; and

(B) in the case of a freshwater hypoxia or harmful algal bloom event, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

(2) EVENT OF NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE.—The term “event of national significance” means a hypoxia or harmful algal bloom event that has had or will likely have a significant detrimental environmental, economic, subsistence use, or public health impact on an affected State.

(3) HYPOXIA OR HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM EVENT.—The term “hypoxia or harmful algal bloom event” means the occurrence of hypoxia or a harmful algal bloom as a result of a natural, anthropogenic, or undetermined cause.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I have 8 requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, September 26, 2017, at 10 a.m., in open session to consider the nomination of:

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, September 26, 2017, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled, “Oversight of the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission.”

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate in order to hold a hearing on Tuesday, September 26, 2017, at 10 a.m. in Room 366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building in Washington, DC.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, September 26, 2017 at 10:30 a.m., to hold a business meeting.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, September 26, 2017 at 10:45 a.m., to hold a hearing entitled, “Managing Security Assistance to Support Foreign Policy.”

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, on September 26, 2017 at 10 a.m., in room SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled, “Special Counsels and the Separation of Powers.”

COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Senate Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during

the session of the 115th Congress of the U.S. Senate on Tuesday, September 26, 2017 from 2 p.m., in room SH-219 of the Senate Hart Office Building to hold a Closed Member Roundtable.

COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION, PRODUCT SAFETY, INSURANCE, AND DATA SECURITY

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to hold a meeting during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, September 26, 2017, at 2:30 p.m. in room 253 of the Russell Senate Office Building.

The Committee will hold Subcommittee Hearing on "FTC Stakeholder Perspectives: Reform Proposals to Improve Fairness, Innovation and Consumer Welfare."

HURRICANES HARVEY, IRMA, AND MARIA EDUCATION RELIEF ACT OF 2017

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I would like to address a bill that was actually recommended to me by the chairman of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, Senator ALEXANDER. I appreciate his bringing this matter to my attention. I will explain what it does in a moment.

Basically, it deals with the educational impact of hurricanes on our population, whether they be in Texas, whether they be in Florida, or whether they be in Puerto Rico. I think it is important, as the Presiding Officer knows in his having been to Puerto Rico recently, that we deal with all of these hurricanes and their aftermaths in a similar and combined and joint fashion.

This legislation is called the Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria Education Relief Act of 2017, and it has three vital hurricane relief-related purposes.

First, it provides the Secretary of Education with the authority to waive Federal matching requirements for two campus-based aid programs under the Higher Education Act. First is the Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant Program. Second is the Federal Work-Study Program. Notably, in my State, 18 campuses of higher education will be eligible for the waiver of Federal matching requirements. If not passed before September 30, which is on Saturday, if I am not mistaken, these matching funds will no longer be available. So this is a rare window of opportunity for us. As I said, this waiver of authority and relief was also done following Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Sandy, I believe.

No. 2, the bill requires the Secretary to reallocate any remaining supplemental educational opportunity grant or Federal work study funds from the 2016 and 2017 award years to colleges and universities located in hurricane-impacted areas. Currently, this second amount totals \$17.5 million, and if it is not used by the end of September, like these matching funds, it will no longer be available. These funds provide financial aid to students who have been

harmed by the hurricanes at those schools.

Finally, the third thing this bill will do is restore the equitable distribution to all schools in the Project School Emergency Response to Violence Program.

These grants go to schools to assist recovery following a crisis. They can be used for a wide variety of activities, including mental health assessments, emergency transportation needs, and increased costs for teacher overtime. My State alone can be expected to submit applications for this funding next week, and over 14,000 campuses would be eligible. Obviously, given the limited funds, not all of them will receive the maximum they could, but the point is, this is a widely needed and important source of funds for those 14,000 campuses in Texas alone. Previously, Louisiana, New Jersey, New York, and Connecticut all received these funds after Katrina and Sandy.

Colleagues, Congress needs to act or we will forgo our opportunity to use all three categories of these funds since, as I said, the time expires next Saturday.

When so many people in my home State of Texas and States such as Louisiana and Florida and places such as Puerto Rico are dealing with the aftermath of devastating hurricanes, we cannot allow this opportunity to go to waste.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 1866, introduced earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1866) to provide the Secretary of Education with waiver authority for the reallocation rules and authority to extend the deadline by which funds have to be reallocated in the campus-based aid programs under the Higher Education Act of 1965 due to Hurricane Harvey, Hurricane Irma, and Hurricane Maria, to provide equitable services to children and teachers in private schools, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. CORNYN. 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. 1866) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 1866

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 "Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria Education Relief Act of 2017".

SEC. 2. ALLOCATION AND USE OF CAMPUS-BASED HIGHER EDUCATION ASSISTANCE.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) AFFECTED AREA.—The term "affected area" means an area for which the President

declared a major disaster or an emergency under section 401 or 501, respectively, of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170 and 5191) as a result of Hurricane Harvey, Hurricane Irma, Hurricane Maria, Tropical Storm Harvey, Tropical Storm Irma, or Tropical Storm Maria.

(2) AFFECTED STUDENT.—The term "affected student" means an individual who has applied for or received student financial assistance under title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070 et seq.), and who—

(A) was enrolled or accepted for enrollment on August 25, 2017, at an institution of higher education that is located in an affected area;

(B) is a dependent student who was enrolled or accepted for enrollment on August 25, 2017, at an institution of higher education that is not located in an affected area, but whose parent or parents resided or was employed on August 25, 2017, in an affected area; or

(C) suffered direct economic hardship as a direct result of Hurricane Harvey, Hurricane Irma, Hurricane Maria, Tropical Storm Harvey, Tropical Storm Irma, or Tropical Storm Maria, as determined by the Secretary.

(3) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The term "institution of higher education" has the meaning given the term in section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002).

(4) SECRETARY.—The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of Education.

(b) WAIVERS.—

(1) WAIVER OF NON-FEDERAL SHARE REQUIREMENT.—Notwithstanding sections 413C(a)(2) and 443(b)(5) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070b-2(a)(2) and 1087-53(b)(5)), with respect to funds made available for award years 2016-2017 and 2017-2018—

(A) in the case of an institution of higher education that is located in an affected area, the Secretary shall waive the requirement that a participating institution of higher education provide a non-Federal share to match Federal funds provided to the institution for the programs authorized pursuant to subpart 3 of part A and part C of title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070b et seq. and 1087-51 et seq.); and

(B) in the case of an institution of higher education that is not located in an affected area but has enrolled or accepted for enrollment any affected students, the Secretary may waive the non-Federal share requirement described in subparagraph (A) after considering the institution's student population and existing resources.

(2) WAIVER OF REALLOCATION RULES.—

(A) AUTHORITY TO REALLOCATE.—Notwithstanding sections 413D(d) and 442(d) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070b-3(d) and 1087-52(d)), the Secretary shall—

(i) reallocate any funds returned under such section 413D or 442 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 that were allocated to institutions of higher education for award year 2016-2017 to an institution of higher education that is eligible under subparagraph (B); and

(ii) waive the allocation reduction for award year 2018-2019 for an institution of higher education that is eligible under subparagraph (B) returning more than 10 percent of its allocation under such section 413D or 442 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 for award year 2017-2018.

(B) INSTITUTIONS ELIGIBLE FOR REALLOCATION.—An institution of higher education is eligible under this subparagraph if the institution—

(i) participates in the program for which excess allocations are being reallocated; and

(ii) (I) is located in an affected area; or

(II) has enrolled or accepted for enrollment any affected students in award year 2017–2018.

(C) BASIS OF REALLOCATION.—The Secretary shall—

(i) determine the manner in which excess allocations will be reallocated pursuant to this paragraph; and

(ii) give preference in making reallocations to the needs of institutions of higher education located in an affected area.

(D) ADDITIONAL WAIVER AUTHORITY.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, in order to carry out this paragraph, the Secretary may waive or modify any statutory or regulatory provision relating to the reallocation of excess allocations under subpart 3 of part A or part C of title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070b et seq. and 1087–51 et seq.) in order to ensure that assistance is received by institutions of higher education that are eligible under subparagraph (B).

(3) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS DATE EXTENSION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law—

(A) any funds available to the Secretary under sections 413A and 441 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070b and 1087–51) for which the period of availability would otherwise expire on September 30, 2017, shall be available for obligation by the Secretary until September 30, 2018, for the purposes of the programs authorized pursuant to subpart 3 of part A and part C of title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070b et seq. and 1087–51 et seq.); and

(B) the Secretary may recall any funds allocated to an institution of higher education for award year 2016–2017 under section 413D or 442 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070b–3 and 1087–52), that, if not returned to the Secretary as excess allocations pursuant to either of those sections, would otherwise lapse on September 30, 2017, and reallocate those funds in accordance with paragraph (2)(A).

(C) EMERGENCY REQUIREMENT.—This section is designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 4(g) of the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 (title I of Public Law 111–139; 2 U.S.C. 933(g)).

(d) REPORT.—Not later than October 1, 2018, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives information on—

(1) the total volume of assistance received by each eligible institution of higher education under subsection (b)(2); and

(2) the total volume of the non-Federal share waived for each institution of higher education under subsection (b)(1).

(e) SUNSET.—The provisions of subsection (b) shall cease to be effective on September 30, 2018.

SEC. 3. PROJECT SERV AND EQUITABLE SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND TEACHERS IN PRIVATE SCHOOLS.

Section 8501(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7881(b)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (D), by striking “and”;

(2) in subparagraph (E), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(F) section 4631, with regard to Project SERV.”.

RAISE FAMILY CAREGIVERS ACT

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 78, S. 1028.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1028) to provide for the establishment and maintenance of a National Family Caregiving Strategy, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. CORNYN. I ask unanimous consent that the Collins substitute amendment, which is at the desk, be agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed; that the Collins title amendment, which is at the desk, be agreed to; and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The amendment (No. 1101) in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under “Text of Amendments.”)

The bill (S. 1028), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

The amendment (No. 1102) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To amend the title)

Amend the title so as to read: “A bill to provide for the establishment and maintenance of a Family Caregiving Strategy, and for other purposes.”.

EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE ON HUMANITARIAN CRISES IN NIGERIA, SOMALIA, SOUTH SUDAN, AND YEMEN

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 115, S. Res. 114.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 114) expressing the sense of the Senate on humanitarian crises in Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment to strike all after the resolving clause and insert the part printed in italic, and with an amendment to strike the preamble and insert the part printed in italic, as follows:

Whereas Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen are all in famine, pre-famine, or at risk of famine in 2017;

Whereas, according to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), 20,000,000 people are at risk of starvation this year in Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen;

Whereas, on March 22, 2017, Mr. Yves Daccord, the Director-General of the International Committee of the Red Cross, testified before Congress that the crisis represents “one of the most critical humanitarian issues to face mankind since the end of the Second World War” and warned that “we are at the brink of a humanitarian mega-crisis unprecedented in recent history”;

Whereas, according to the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), “[m]ore than 5.1 million people face severe food insecurity in northeastern Nigeria”;

Whereas, according to USAID, “An estimated 6.2 million people—more than half of Somalia’s

total population—currently require urgent humanitarian assistance.”;

Whereas, according to USAID, “An estimated 5.5 million people—nearly half of South Sudan’s population—will face life threatening hunger by July.”;

Whereas, according to USAID, in Yemen, “More than seventeen million people—an astounding 60% of the country’s population—are food insecure, including seven million people who are unable to survive without food assistance.”;

Whereas, according to the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), “[s]ome 22 million children have been left hungry, sick, displaced and out of school in the four countries” and “Nearly 1.4 million are at imminent risk of death this year from severe malnutrition.”;

Whereas the humanitarian crises in each of these regions are, to varying degrees, man-made and preventable—exacerbated by armed conflict and deliberate restrictions on humanitarian access;

Whereas parties to the conflicts, including even some government forces, have harassed, attacked, and killed humanitarian workers, blocked and hindered humanitarian access, and continue to deprive the world’s most hungry people of the food they need;

Whereas humanitarian actors, coordinated by OCHA, have appealed for \$5,600,000,000 in 2017 to address famines in Yemen, South Sudan, Nigeria, and Somalia; and

Whereas Mr. Daccord testified before Congress on March 22, 2017, “Our main message is clear: immediate, decisive action is needed to prevent vast numbers of people starving to death.”;

Now, therefore, be it

Resolved,

That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the United States should lead an urgent and comprehensive international diplomatic effort to address obstacles in Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen that are preventing humanitarian aid from being delivered to millions of people who desperately need it;

(2) the United States should encourage other governments to join the United States in providing the resources necessary to address the humanitarian crises in Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen;

(3) parties to the conflicts in Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen should allow and facilitate rapid and unimpeded passage of humanitarian relief for civilians in need and respect and protect humanitarian and medical relief personnel and objects; and

(4) the United States, working with international partners, should support efforts to hold accountable those responsible for deliberate restrictions on humanitarian access in Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen.

Mr. CORNYN. I ask unanimous consent that the committee amendment to the resolution be withdrawn; the Lee amendment at the desk be agreed to; the resolution, as amended, be agreed to; the amendment to the preamble be agreed to; the preamble, as amended, be agreed to; and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute to the resolution was withdrawn.

The amendment (No. 1103) in the nature of a substitute was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To recognize that charities, non-profit organizations, religious organizations, and businesses of the United States have an important role in addressing humanitarian crises)

Strike all after the resolving clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SENSE OF THE SENATE.

It is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) an urgent and comprehensive international diplomatic effort is necessary to address obstacles in Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen that are preventing humanitarian aid from being delivered to millions of people who desperately need it;

(2) the United States should encourage other governments to join in providing the resources necessary to address the humanitarian crises in Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen;

(3) parties to the conflicts in Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen should allow and facilitate rapid and unimpeded passage of humanitarian relief for civilians in need and respect and protect humanitarian and medical relief personnel and objects;

(4) the United States, working with international partners, should support efforts to hold accountable those responsible for deliberate restrictions on humanitarian access in Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen; and

(5) the contributions of charities, non-profit organizations, religious organizations, and businesses of the United States have an important role in addressing humanitarian crises.

SEC. 2. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.

Nothing in this resolution shall be construed as a declaration of war or authorization to use force.

The resolution (S. Res. 114), as amended, was agreed to.

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute to the preamble was agreed to.

The preamble, as amended, was agreed to.

The resolution, as amended, with its preamble, as amended, reads as follows:

S. RES. 114

Whereas Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen are all in famine, pre-famine, or at risk of famine in 2017;

Whereas, according to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), 20,000,000 people are at risk of starvation this year in Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen;

Whereas, on March 22, 2017, Mr. Yves Daccord, the Director-General of the International Committee of the Red Cross, testified before Congress that the crisis represents “one of the most critical humanitarian issues to face mankind since the end of the Second World War” and warned that “we are at the brink of a humanitarian mega-crisis unprecedented in recent history”;

Whereas, according to the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), “[m]ore than 5.1 million people face severe food insecurity in northeastern Nigeria”;

Whereas, according to USAID, “An estimated 6.2 million people—more than half of Somalia’s total population—currently require urgent humanitarian assistance.”;

Whereas, according to USAID, “An estimated 5.5 million people—nearly half of South Sudan’s population—will face life threatening hunger by July.”;

Whereas, according to USAID, in Yemen, “More than seventeen million people—an astounding 60% of the country’s population—are food insecure, including seven million people who are unable to survive without food assistance.”;

Whereas, according to the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), “[s]ome 22 million children have been left hungry, sick, displaced

and out of school in the four countries” and “Nearly 1.4 million are at imminent risk of death this year from severe malnutrition.”;

Whereas the humanitarian crises in each of these regions are, to varying degrees, man-made and preventable—exacerbated by armed conflict and deliberate restrictions on humanitarian access;

Whereas parties to the conflicts, including even some government forces, have harassed, attacked, and killed humanitarian workers, blocked and hindered humanitarian access, and continue to deprive the world’s most hungry people of the food they need;

Whereas humanitarian actors, coordinated by OCHA, have appealed for \$5,600,000,000 in 2017 to address famines in Yemen, South Sudan, Nigeria, and Somalia; and

Whereas Mr. Daccord testified before Congress on March 22, 2017, “Our main message is clear: immediate, decisive action is needed to prevent vast numbers of people starving to death.”; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved,

SECTION 1. SENSE OF THE SENATE.

It is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) an urgent and comprehensive international diplomatic effort is necessary to address obstacles in Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen that are preventing humanitarian aid from being delivered to millions of people who desperately need it;

(2) the United States should encourage other governments to join in providing the resources necessary to address the humanitarian crises in Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen;

(3) parties to the conflicts in Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen should allow and facilitate rapid and unimpeded passage of humanitarian relief for civilians in need and respect and protect humanitarian and medical relief personnel and objects;

(4) the United States, working with international partners, should support efforts to hold accountable those responsible for deliberate restrictions on humanitarian access in Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen; and

(5) the contributions of charities, non-profit organizations, religious organizations, and businesses of the United States have an important role in addressing humanitarian crises.

SEC. 2. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.

Nothing in this resolution shall be construed as a declaration of war or authorization to use force.

APEC BUSINESS TRAVEL CARDS REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2017

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar 190, S. 504.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DAINES). The clerk will report the bill by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 504) to permanently authorize the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Business Travel Card Program.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Hirono substitute amendment, which is at the desk, be agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The amendment (No. 1104) in the nature of a substitute was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute)

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Business Travel Cards Act of 2017”.

SEC. 2. ASIA-PACIFIC ECONOMIC COOPERATION BUSINESS TRAVEL CARDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle B of title IV of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 211 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 417 the following:

“SEC. 418. ASIA-PACIFIC ECONOMIC COOPERATION BUSINESS TRAVEL CARDS.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection is authorized to issue an Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Business Travel Card (referred to in this section as an ‘ABT Card’) to any individual described in subsection (b).

“(b) CARD ISSUANCE.—An individual described in this subsection is an individual who—

“(1) is a citizen of the United States;

“(2) has been approved and is in good standing in an existing international trusted traveler program of the Department; and

“(3) is—

“(A) engaged in business in the Asia-Pacific region, as determined by the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection; or

“(B) a United States Government official actively engaged in Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation business, as determined by the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

“(c) INTEGRATION WITH EXISTING TRAVEL PROGRAMS.—The Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall integrate application procedures for, and issuance, renewal, and revocation of, ABT Cards with existing international trusted traveler programs of the Department.

“(d) COOPERATION WITH PRIVATE ENTITIES AND NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS.—In carrying out this section, the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection may consult with appropriate private sector entities and nongovernmental organizations, including academic institutions.

“(e) FEE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall—

“(A) prescribe and collect a fee for the issuance and renewal of ABT Cards; and

“(B) adjust such fee to the extent the Commissioner determines necessary to comply with paragraph (2).

“(2) LIMITATION.—The Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall ensure that the total amount of the fees collected under paragraph (1) during any fiscal year is sufficient to offset the direct and indirect costs associated with carrying out this section during such fiscal year, including the costs associated with operating and maintaining the ABT Card issuance and renewal processes.

“(3) ACCOUNT FOR COLLECTIONS.—There is established in the Treasury of the United States an ‘Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Business Travel Card Account’ into which the fees collected under paragraph (1) shall be deposited as offsetting receipts.

“(4) USE OF FUNDS.—Amounts deposited into the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Business Travel Card Account established under paragraph (3) shall—

“(A) be credited to the appropriate account of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection for expenses incurred in carrying out this section; and

“(B) remain available until expended.

“(f) NOTIFICATION.—The Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall notify the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate not later

than 60 days after the expenditures of funds to operate and provide ABT Card services beyond the amounts collected under subsection (e)(1).

“(g) TRUSTED TRAVELER PROGRAM DEFINED.—In this section, the term ‘trusted traveler program’ means a voluntary program of the Department that allows U.S. Customs and Border Protection to expedite clearance of pre-approved, low-risk travelers arriving in the United States.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 417 the following new item:

“Sec. 418. Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Business Travel Cards.”.

SEC. 3. ACCOUNT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the repeal of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Business Travel Cards Act of 2011 (Public Law 112-54; 8 U.S.C. 1185 note) pursuant to section 4(b)(1), amounts deposited into the APEC Business Travel Card Account established pursuant to such Act as of the date of the enactment of this Act are hereby transferred to the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Business Travel Card Account established pursuant to section 418(e) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (as added by section 2(a) of this Act), and shall be available without regard to whether such amounts are expended in connection with expenses incurred with respect to an ABT Card issued at any time before or after such date of enactment.

(b) AVAILABILITY.—Amounts deposited in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Business Travel Card Account established pursuant to section 418(e) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, in addition to the purposes for which such amounts are available pursuant to such subsection, shall also be available for expenditure in connection with expenses incurred with respect to ABT Cards issued at any time before the date of the enactment of such section.

(c) TERMINATION.—After the completion of the transfer described in subsection (a), the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Business Travel Card Account established pursuant to the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Business Travel Cards Act of 2011 shall be closed.

SEC. 4. CONFORMING AMENDMENTS AND REPEAL.

(a) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 411(c) of section 411 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 211(c)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (17), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) by redesignating paragraph (18) as paragraph (19); and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (17) the following:

“(18) carry out section 418, relating to the issuance of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Business Travel Cards; and”.

(b) REPEAL.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Business Travel Cards Act of 2011 (Public Law 112-54; 8 U.S.C. 1185 note) is repealed.

(2) SAVING CLAUSE.—Notwithstanding the repeal under paragraph (1), an ABT Card issued pursuant to the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Business Travel Cards Act of 2011 before the date of the enactment of this Act that, as of such date, is still valid, shall remain valid on and after such date until such time as such Card would otherwise expire.

The bill (S. 504), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM AND HYPOXIA RESEARCH AND CONTROL AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2017

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 205, S. 1057.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1057) to amend the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Act of 1998 to address harmful algal blooms, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Amendments Act of 2017”.

SEC. 2. REFERENCES TO THE HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM AND HYPOXIA RESEARCH AND CONTROL ACT OF 1998.

Except as otherwise expressly provided, wherever in this Act an amendment or repeal is expressed in terms of an amendment to, or repeal of, a section or other provision, the reference shall be considered to be made to a section or other provision of the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Act of 1998 (33 U.S.C. 4001 et seq.).

SEC. 3. INTER-AGENCY TASK FORCE.

Section 603(a) (33 U.S.C. 4001(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (12), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) by redesignating paragraph (13) as paragraph (14); and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (12) the following:

“(13) the Army Corps of Engineers; and”.

SEC. 4. SCIENTIFIC ASSESSMENTS OF FRESHWATER HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOMS.

Section 603 (33 U.S.C. 4001) is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (f);

(2) by redesignating subsections (g), (h), (i), and (j) as subsections (f), (g), (h), and (i), respectively; and

(3) by amending subsection (g) to read as follows:

“(g) SCIENTIFIC ASSESSMENTS OF MARINE AND FRESHWATER HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOMS.—Not less than once every 5 years the Task Force shall complete and submit to Congress a scientific assessment of harmful algal blooms in United States coastal waters and freshwater systems. Each assessment shall examine both marine and freshwater harmful algal blooms, including those in the Great Lakes and upper reaches of estuaries, those in freshwater lakes and rivers, and those that originate in freshwater lakes or rivers and migrate to coastal waters.”.

SEC. 5. NATIONAL HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM AND HYPOXIA PROGRAM.

(a) PROGRAM DUTIES.—Section 603A(e) (33 U.S.C. 4002(e)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by inserting “, including to local and regional stakeholders through the establishment and maintenance of a publicly accessible Internet website that provides information as to Program activities completed under this section” after “Program”; and

(2) in paragraph (3)—

(A) in subparagraph (B), by striking “; and” and inserting a semicolon;

(B) in subparagraph (C), by inserting “and” after the semicolon at the end; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(D) to accelerate the utilization of effective methods of intervention and mitigation to re-

duce the frequency, severity, and impacts of harmful algal bloom and hypoxia events;”.

(3) in paragraph (4), by striking “and work cooperatively with” and inserting “, and work cooperatively to provide technical assistance to.”; and

(4) in paragraph (7)—

(A) by inserting “and extension” after “existing education”; and

(B) by inserting “intervention,” after “awareness of the causes, impacts,”.

(b) NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION ACTIVITIES.—Section 603A(f) (33 U.S.C. 4002(f)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3), by inserting “, which shall include unmanned systems,” after “infrastructure”;

(2) in paragraph (5), by striking “and” at the end;

(3) in paragraph (6)(C), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

“(7) use cost effective methods in carrying out this Act; and

“(8) develop contingency plans for the long-term monitoring of hypoxia.”.

SEC. 6. CONSULTATION REQUIRED.

Section 102 of the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Amendments Act of 2004 (33 U.S.C. 4001a) is amended by striking “the amendments made by this title” and inserting “the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Act of 1998”.

SEC. 7. HYPOXIA OR HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM OF NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE.

(a) RELIEF.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Upon a determination under subsection (b) that there is an event of national significance, the appropriate Federal official is authorized to make sums available to the affected State or local government for the purposes of assessing and mitigating the environmental, economic, social, and public health effects of the event of national significance.

(2) FEDERAL SHARE.—The Federal share of the cost of any activity carried out under this subsection for the purposes described in paragraph (1) may not exceed 75 percent of the cost of that activity.

(3) DONATIONS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, an appropriate Federal official may accept donations of funds, services, facilities, materials, or equipment that the appropriate Federal official considers necessary for the purposes described in paragraph (1). Any funds donated to an appropriate Federal official under this paragraph may be expended without further appropriation and without fiscal year limitation.

(b) DETERMINATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—At the discretion of an appropriate Federal official, or at the request of the Governor of an affected State, an appropriate Federal official shall determine whether a hypoxia or harmful algal bloom event is an event of national significance.

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In making a determination under paragraph (1), the appropriate Federal official shall consider such factors as the toxicity of the harmful algal bloom, the severity of the hypoxia, its potential to spread, the economic impact, the relative size in relation to the past 5 occurrences of harmful algal blooms or hypoxia events that occur on a recurrent or annual basis, and the geographic scope, including the potential to affect several municipalities, to affect more than 1 State, or to cross an international boundary.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPROPRIATE FEDERAL OFFICIAL.—The term “appropriate Federal official” means—

(A) in the case of a marine or coastal hypoxia or harmful algal bloom event, the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere; and

(B) in the case of a freshwater hypoxia or harmful algal bloom event, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

(2) *EVENT OF NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE.*—The term “event of national significance” means a hypoxia or harmful algal bloom event that has had or will likely have a significant environmental, economic, or public health impact on an affected State.

(3) *HYPOXIA OR HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM EVENT.*—The term “hypoxia or harmful algal bloom event” means the occurrence of hypoxia or a harmful algal bloom as a result of a natural, anthropogenic, or undetermined cause.

SEC. 8. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

Section 609(a) (33 U.S.C. 4009(a)) is amended by inserting “, and \$22,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2019 through 2023” before the period at the end.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported substitute amendment be considered, the Lee amendment be considered and agreed to, the committee-reported substitute amendment, as amended, be agreed to, and the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time.

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

The amendment (No. 1105) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To improve the bill)

Beginning on page 10, strike line 4 and all that follows through page 12, line 15 and insert the following:

SEC. 7. HYPOXIA OR HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM OF NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE.

(a) RELIEF.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Upon a determination under subsection (b) that there is an event of national significance, the appropriate Federal official is authorized to make sums available to the affected State or local government for the purposes of assessing and mitigating the detrimental environmental, economic, subsistence use, and public health effects of the event of national significance.

(2) FEDERAL SHARE.—The Federal share of the cost of any activity carried out under this subsection for the purposes described in paragraph (1) may not exceed 50 percent of the cost of that activity.

(3) DONATIONS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, an appropriate Federal official may accept donations of funds, services, facilities, materials, or equipment that the appropriate Federal official considers necessary for the purposes described in paragraph (1). Any funds donated to an appropriate Federal official under this paragraph may be expended without further appropriation and without fiscal year limitation.

(b) DETERMINATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—At the discretion of an appropriate Federal official, or at the request of the Governor of an affected State, an appropriate Federal official shall determine whether a hypoxia or harmful algal bloom event is an event of national significance.

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In making a determination under paragraph (1), the appropriate Federal official shall consider the toxicity of the harmful algal bloom, the severity of the hypoxia, its potential to spread, the economic impact, the relative size in relation to the past 5 occurrences of harmful algal blooms or hypoxia events that occur on a recurrent or annual basis, and the geographic scope, including the potential to affect several municipalities, to affect more than 1 State, or to cross an international boundary.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPROPRIATE FEDERAL OFFICIAL.—The term “appropriate Federal official” means—

(A) in the case of a marine or coastal hypoxia or harmful algal bloom event, the

Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere; and

(B) in the case of a freshwater hypoxia or harmful algal bloom event, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

(2) *EVENT OF NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE.*—The term “event of national significance” means a hypoxia or harmful algal bloom event that has had or will likely have a significant detrimental environmental, economic, subsistence use, or public health impact on an affected State.

(3) *HYPOXIA OR HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM EVENT.*—The term “hypoxia or harmful algal bloom event” means the occurrence of hypoxia or a harmful algal bloom as a result of a natural, anthropogenic, or undetermined cause.

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended, was agreed to.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I know of no further debate on the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate on the bill?

Hearing none, the bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall it pass?

The bill (S. 1057), as amended, was passed, as follows:

S. 1057

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 “Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Amendments Act of 2017”.

SEC. 2. REFERENCES TO THE HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM AND HYPOXIA RESEARCH AND CONTROL ACT OF 1998.

Except as otherwise expressly provided, wherever in this Act an amendment or repeal is expressed in terms of an amendment to, or repeal of, a section or other provision, the reference shall be considered to be made to a section or other provision of the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Act of 1998 (33 U.S.C. 4001 et seq.).

SEC. 3. INTER-AGENCY TASK FORCE.

Section 603(a) (33 U.S.C. 4001(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (12), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) by redesignating paragraph (13) as paragraph (14); and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (12) the following:

“(13) the Army Corps of Engineers; and”.

SEC. 4. SCIENTIFIC ASSESSMENTS OF FRESHWATER HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOMS.

Section 603 (33 U.S.C. 4001) is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (f);

(2) by redesignating subsections (g), (h), (i), and (j) as subsections (f), (g), (h), and (i), respectively; and

(3) by amending subsection (g) to read as follows:

“(g) SCIENTIFIC ASSESSMENTS OF MARINE AND FRESHWATER HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOMS.—Not less than once every 5 years the Task Force shall complete and submit to Congress a scientific assessment of harmful algal blooms in United States coastal waters and freshwater systems. Each assessment shall examine both marine and freshwater harmful algal blooms, including those in the Great Lakes and upper reaches of estuaries, those in freshwater lakes and rivers, and those that originate in freshwater lakes or rivers and migrate to coastal waters.”.

SEC. 5. NATIONAL HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM AND HYPOXIA PROGRAM.

(a) PROGRAM DUTIES.—Section 603A(e) (33 U.S.C. 4002(e)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by inserting “, including to local and regional stakeholders through the establishment and maintenance of a publicly accessible Internet website that provides information as to Program activities completed under this section” after “Program”;

(2) in paragraph (3)—

(A) in subparagraph (B), by striking “; and” and inserting a semicolon;

(B) in subparagraph (C), by inserting “and” after the semicolon at the end; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(D) to accelerate the utilization of effective methods of intervention and mitigation to reduce the frequency, severity, and impacts of harmful algal bloom and hypoxia events;”;

(3) in paragraph (4), by striking “and work cooperatively with” and inserting “, and work cooperatively to provide technical assistance to;”;

(4) in paragraph (7)—

(A) by inserting “and extension” after “existing education”; and

(B) by inserting “intervention,” after “awareness of the causes, impacts,”.

(b) NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION ACTIVITIES.—Section 603A(f) (33 U.S.C. 4002(f)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3), by inserting “, which shall include unmanned systems,” after “infrastructure”;

(2) in paragraph (5), by striking “and” at the end;

(3) in paragraph (6)(C), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

“(7) use cost effective methods in carrying out this Act; and

“(8) develop contingency plans for the long-term monitoring of hypoxia.”.

SEC. 6. CONSULTATION REQUIRED.

Section 102 of the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Amendments Act of 2004 (33 U.S.C. 4001a) is amended by striking “the amendments made by this title” and inserting “the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Act of 1998”.

SEC. 7. HYPOXIA OR HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM OF NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE.

(a) RELIEF.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Upon a determination under subsection (b) that there is an event of national significance, the appropriate Federal official is authorized to make sums available to the affected State or local government for the purposes of assessing and mitigating the detrimental environmental, economic, subsistence use, and public health effects of the event of national significance.

(2) FEDERAL SHARE.—The Federal share of the cost of any activity carried out under this subsection for the purposes described in paragraph (1) may not exceed 50 percent of the cost of that activity.

(3) DONATIONS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, an appropriate Federal official may accept donations of funds, services, facilities, materials, or equipment that the appropriate Federal official considers necessary for the purposes described in paragraph (1). Any funds donated to an appropriate Federal official under this paragraph may be expended without further appropriation and without fiscal year limitation.

(b) DETERMINATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—At the discretion of an appropriate Federal official, or at the request of the Governor of an affected State, an appropriate Federal official shall determine whether a hypoxia or harmful algal bloom event is an event of national significance.

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In making a determination under paragraph (1), the appropriate Federal official shall consider the toxicity of the harmful algal bloom, the severity of the hypoxia, its potential to spread, the economic impact, the relative size in relation to the past 5 occurrences of harmful algal blooms or hypoxia events that occur on a recurrent or annual basis, and the geographic scope, including the potential to affect several municipalities, to affect more than 1 State, or to cross an international boundary.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPROPRIATE FEDERAL OFFICIAL.—The term “appropriate Federal official” means—

(A) in the case of a marine or coastal hypoxia or harmful algal bloom event, the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere; and

(B) in the case of a freshwater hypoxia or harmful algal bloom event, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

(2) EVENT OF NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE.—The term “event of national significance” means a hypoxia or harmful algal bloom event that has had or will likely have a significant detrimental environmental, economic, subsistence use, or public health impact on an affected State.

(3) HYPOXIA OR HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM EVENT.—The term “hypoxia or harmful algal bloom event” means the occurrence of hypoxia or a harmful algal bloom as a result of a natural, anthropogenic, or undetermined cause.

SEC. 8. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

Section 609(a) (33 U.S.C. 4009(a)) is amended by inserting “, and \$22,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2019 through 2023” before the period at the end.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

CREATING HIGH-QUALITY RESULTS AND OUTCOMES NECESSARY TO IMPROVE CHRONIC (CHRONIC) CARE ACT OF 2017

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 206, S. 870.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 870) 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.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Finance, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the “Creating High-Quality Results and Outcomes Necessary to Improve Chronic (CHRONIC) Care Act of 2017”.

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

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—RECEIVING HIGH QUALITY CARE IN THE HOME

Sec. 101. Extending the Independence at Home Demonstration Program.

Sec. 102. Expanding access to home dialysis therapy.

TITLE II—ADVANCING TEAM-BASED CARE

Sec. 201. Providing continued access to Medicare Advantage special needs plans for vulnerable populations.

TITLE III—EXPANDING INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY

Sec. 301. Adapting benefits to meet the needs of chronically ill Medicare Advantage enrollees.

Sec. 302. Expanding supplemental benefits to meet the needs of chronically ill Medicare Advantage enrollees.

Sec. 303. Increasing convenience for Medicare Advantage enrollees through telehealth.

Sec. 304. Providing accountable care organizations the ability to expand the use of telehealth.

Sec. 305. Expanding the use of telehealth for individuals with stroke.

TITLE IV—IDENTIFYING THE CHRONICALLY ILL POPULATION

Sec. 401. Providing flexibility for beneficiaries to be part of an accountable care organization.

TITLE V—EMPOWERING INDIVIDUALS AND CAREGIVERS IN CARE DELIVERY

Sec. 501. Eliminating barriers to care coordination under accountable care organizations.

Sec. 502. GAO study and report on longitudinal comprehensive care planning services under Medicare part B.

TITLE VI—OTHER POLICIES TO IMPROVE CARE FOR THE CHRONICALLY ILL

Sec. 601. Providing prescription drug plans with parts A and B claims data to promote the appropriate use of medications and improve health outcomes.

Sec. 602. GAO study and report on improving medication synchronization.

Sec. 603. GAO study and report on impact of obesity drugs on patient health and spending.

Sec. 604. HHS study and report on long-term risk factors for chronic conditions among Medicare beneficiaries.

TITLE VII—OFFSETS

Sec. 701. Medicare Improvement Fund.

Sec. 702. Medicaid Improvement Fund

TITLE I—RECEIVING HIGH QUALITY CARE IN THE HOME

SEC. 101. EXTENDING THE INDEPENDENCE AT HOME DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM.

Section 1866E of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395cc-5) is amended—

(1) in subsection (e)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking “5-year period” and inserting “7-year period”; and

(B) in paragraph (5), by striking “10,000” and inserting “15,000”;

(2) in subsection (g), in the first sentence, by inserting “, including, to the extent practicable, the use of electronic health information systems as described in subsection (b)(1)(A)(vi),” after “program”; and

(3) in subsection (i)(A), by striking “will not receive an incentive payment for the second of 2” and inserting “did not achieve savings for the third of 3”.

SEC. 102. EXPANDING ACCESS TO HOME DIALYSIS THERAPY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1881(b)(3) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395rr(b)(3)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraphs (A) and (B) as clauses (i) and (ii), respectively;

(2) in clause (ii), as redesignated by subparagraph (A), strike “on a comprehensive” and insert “subject to subparagraph (B), on a comprehensive”;

(3) by striking “With respect to” and inserting “(A) With respect to”; and

(4) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(B) For purposes of subparagraph (A)(ii), an individual determined to have end stage renal disease receiving home dialysis may choose to receive monthly end stage renal disease-related clinical assessments furnished on or after January 1, 2019, via telehealth if the individual receives a face-to-face clinical assessment, without the use of telehealth, at least once every three consecutive months.”.

(b) ORIGINATING SITE REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 1834(m) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395m(m)) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (4)(C)(ii), by adding at the end the following new subclauses:

“(IX) A renal dialysis facility, but only for purposes of section 1881(b)(3)(B).

“(X) The home of an individual, but only for purposes of section 1881(b)(3)(B).”; and

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

“(5) TREATMENT OF HOME DIALYSIS MONTHLY ESRD-RELATED VISIT.—The geographic requirements described in paragraph (4)(C)(i) shall not apply with respect to telehealth services furnished on or after January 1, 2019, for purposes of section 1881(b)(3)(B), at an originating site described in subclause (VI), (IX), or (X) of paragraph (4)(C)(ii).”.

(2) NO FACILITY FEE IF ORIGINATING SITE FOR HOME DIALYSIS THERAPY IS THE HOME.—Section 1834(m)(2)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395m(m)(2)(B)) is amended—

(A) by redesignating clauses (i) and (ii) as subclauses (I) and (II), and indenting appropriately;

(B) in subclause (II), as redesignated by subparagraph (A), by striking “clause (i) or this clause” and inserting “subclause (I) or this subclause”;

(C) by striking “SITE.—With respect to” and inserting “SITE.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Subject to clause (ii), with respect to”; and

(D) by adding at the end the following new clause:

“(ii) NO FACILITY FEE IF ORIGINATING SITE FOR HOME DIALYSIS THERAPY IS THE HOME.—No facility fee shall be paid under this subparagraph to an originating site described in paragraph (4)(C)(ii)(X).”.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 1881(b)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395rr(b)(1)) is amended by striking “paragraph (3)(A)” and inserting “paragraph (3)(A)(i)”.

TITLE II—ADVANCING TEAM-BASED CARE

SEC. 201. PROVIDING CONTINUED ACCESS TO MEDICARE ADVANTAGE SPECIAL NEEDS PLANS FOR VULNERABLE POPULATIONS.

(a) EXTENSION.—Section 1859(f)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-28(f)(1)) is amended by striking “and for periods before January 1, 2019”.

(b) INCREASED INTEGRATION OF DUAL SNPs.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 1859(f) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-28(f)) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (3), by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(F) The plan meets the requirements applicable under paragraph (8).”; and

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

“(8) INCREASED INTEGRATION OF DUAL SNPs.—

“(A) DESIGNATED CONTACT.—The Secretary, acting through the Federal Coordinated Health Care Office established under section 2602 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, shall serve as a dedicated point of contact for States to address misalignments that arise with the integration of specialized MA plans for special needs individuals described in subsection (b)(6)(B)(ii) under this paragraph and, consistent with such role, shall—

“(i) establish a uniform process for disseminating to State Medicaid agencies information under this title impacting contracts between such agencies and such plans under this subsection; and

“(ii) establish basic resources for States interested in exploring such plans as a platform for integration, such as a model contract or other tools to achieve those goals.

“(B) UNIFIED GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS PROCESSES.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Not later than April 1, 2020, the Secretary shall establish procedures, to the extent feasible, unifying grievances and appeals procedures under sections 1852(f), 1852(g), 1902(a)(3), 1902(a)(5), and 1932(b)(4) for items and services provided by specialized MA plans for special needs individuals described in subsection (b)(6)(B)(ii) under this title and title XIX. The Secretary shall solicit comment in developing such procedures from States, plans, beneficiaries and their representatives, and other relevant stakeholders.

“(ii) PROCEDURES.—The procedures established under clause (i) shall be included in the plan contract under paragraph (3)(D) and shall—

“(I) adopt the provisions for the enrollee that are most protective for the enrollee and, to the extent feasible as determined by the Secretary, are compatible with unified timeframes and consolidated access to external review under an integrated process;

“(II) take into account differences in State plans under title XIX to the extent necessary;

“(III) be easily navigable by an enrollee; and

“(IV) include the elements described in clause (iii), as applicable.

“(iii) ELEMENTS DESCRIBED.—Both unified appeals and unified grievance procedures shall include, as applicable, the following elements described in this clause:

“(I) Single written notification of all applicable grievances and appeal rights under this title and title XIX. For purposes of this subparagraph, the Secretary may waive the requirements under section 1852(g)(1)(B) when the specialized MA plan covers items or services under this part or under title XIX.

“(II) Single pathways for resolution of any grievance or appeal related to a particular item or service provided by specialized MA plans for special needs individuals described in subsection (b)(6)(B)(ii) under this title and title XIX.

“(III) Notices written in plain language and available in a language and format that is accessible to the enrollee, including in non-English languages that are prevalent in the service area of the specialized MA plan.

“(IV) Unified timeframes for grievances and appeals processes, such as an individual’s filing of a grievance or appeal, a plan’s acknowledgment and resolution of a grievance or appeal, and notification of decisions with respect to a grievance or appeal.

“(V) Requirements for how the plan must process, track, and resolve grievances and appeals, to ensure beneficiaries are notified on a timely basis of decisions that are made throughout the grievance or appeals process and are able to easily determine the status of a grievance or appeal.

“(iv) CONTINUATION OF BENEFITS PENDING APPEAL.—The unified procedures under clause (i) shall, with respect to all benefits under parts A and B and title XIX subject to appeal under such procedures, incorporate provisions under current law and implementing regulations that provide continuation of benefits pending appeal under this title and title XIX.

“(C) REQUIREMENT FOR UNIFIED GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS.—For 2021 and subsequent years, the contract of a specialized MA plan for special needs individuals described in subsection (b)(6)(B)(ii) with a State Medicaid agency under paragraph (3)(D) shall require the use of unified grievances and appeals procedures as described in subparagraph (B).

“(D) REQUIREMENTS FOR INTEGRATION.—For 2021 and subsequent years, a specialized MA plan for special needs individuals described in subsection (b)(6)(B)(ii) shall meet one or more of the following requirements, to the extent permitted under State law, for integration of benefits under this title and title XIX:

“(i) The specialized MA plan must meet the requirements of contracting with the State Medicaid agency described in paragraph (3)(D) in addition to coordinating long-term services and supports or behavioral health services, or both, by meeting an additional minimum set of requirements determined by the Secretary through the Federal Coordinated Health Care Office established under section 2602 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act based on input from stakeholders, such as notifying the State in a timely manner of hospitalizations, emergency room visits, and hospital or nursing home discharges of enrollees, assigning one primary care provider for each enrollee, or sharing data that would benefit the coordination of items and services under this title and the State plan under title XIX. Such minimum set of requirements must be included in the contract of the specialized MA plan with the State Medicaid agency under such paragraph.

“(ii) The specialized MA plan must meet the requirements of a fully integrated plan described in section 1853(a)(1)(B)(iv)(II) (other than the requirement that the plan have similar average levels of frailty, as determined by the Secretary, as the PACE program), or enter into a capitated contract with the State Medicaid agency to provide long-term services and supports or behavioral health services, or both.

“(iii) In the case where an individual is enrolled in both the specialized MA plan and a Medicaid managed care organization (as defined in section 1903(m)(1)(A)) providing long term services and supports or behavioral health services that have the same parent organization, the parent organization offering both the specialized MA plan and the Medicaid managed care plan must assume clinical and financial responsibility for benefits provided under this title and title XIX.”.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT TO RESPONSIBILITIES OF FEDERAL COORDINATED HEALTH CARE OFFICE.—Section 2602(d) of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (42 U.S.C. 1315b(d)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

“(6) To act as a designated contact for States under subsection (f)(8)(A) of section 1859 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–28) with respect to the integration of specialized MA plans for special needs individuals described in subsection (b)(6)(B)(ii) of such section.

“(7) To be responsible for developing regulations and guidance related to the implementation of a unified grievance and appeals process as described in subparagraphs (B) and (C) of section 1859(f)(8) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–28(f)(8)).”.

(c) IMPROVEMENTS TO SEVERE OR DISABLING CHRONIC CONDITION SNPS.—

(1) CARE MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS.—Section 1859(f)(5) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–28(f)(5)) is amended—

(A) by striking “ALL SNPs.—The requirements” and inserting “ALL SNPs.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (B), the requirements”;

(B) by redesignating subparagraphs (A) and (B) as clauses (i) and (ii), respectively, and indenting appropriately;

(C) in clause (ii), as redesignated by subparagraph (B), by redesignating clauses (i) through (iii) as subclauses (I) through (III), respectively, and indenting appropriately; and

(D) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(B) IMPROVEMENTS TO CARE MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR SEVERE OR DISABLING CHRONIC CONDITION SNPs.—For 2020 and subsequent years, in the case of a specialized MA plan for

special needs individuals described in subsection (b)(6)(B)(iii), the requirements described in this paragraph include the following:

“(i) The interdisciplinary team under subparagraph (A)(ii)(III) includes a team of providers with demonstrated expertise, including training in an applicable specialty, in treating individuals similar to the targeted population of the plan.

“(ii) Requirements developed by the Secretary to provide face-to-face encounters with individuals enrolled in the plan not less frequently than on an annual basis.

“(iii) As part of the model of care under clause (i) of subparagraph (A), the results of the initial assessment and annual reassessment under clause (ii)(I) of such subparagraph of each individual enrolled in the plan are addressed in the individual’s individualized care plan under clause (ii)(II) of such subparagraph.

“(iv) As part of the annual evaluation and approval of such model of care, the Secretary shall take into account whether the plan fulfilled the previous year’s goals (as required under the model of care).

“(v) The Secretary shall establish a minimum benchmark for each element of the model of care of a plan. The Secretary shall only approve a plan’s model of care under this paragraph if each element of the model of care meets the minimum benchmark applicable under the preceding sentence.”.

(2) REVISIONS TO THE DEFINITION OF A SEVERE OR DISABLING CHRONIC CONDITIONS SPECIALIZED NEEDS INDIVIDUAL.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Section 1859(b)(6)(B)(iii) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–28(b)(6)(B)(iii)) is amended—

(i) by striking “who have” and inserting “who—

“(I) before January 1, 2022, have”;

(ii) in subclause (I), as added by clause (i), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”;

(iii) by adding at the end the following new subclause:

“(II) on or after January 1, 2022, have one or more comorbid and medically complex chronic conditions that is life threatening or significantly limits overall health or function, have a high risk of hospitalization or other adverse health outcomes, and require intensive care coordination and that is listed under subsection (f)(9)(A).”.

(B) PANEL OF CLINICAL ADVISORS.—Section 1859(f) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–28(f)), as amended by subsection (b), is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(9) LIST OF CONDITIONS FOR CLARIFICATION OF THE DEFINITION OF A SEVERE OR DISABLING CHRONIC CONDITIONS SPECIALIZED NEEDS INDIVIDUAL.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than December 31, 2020, and every 5 years thereafter, the Secretary shall convene a panel of clinical advisors to establish and update a list of conditions that meet each of the following criteria:

“(i) Conditions that meet the definition of a severe or disabling chronic condition under subsection (b)(6)(B)(iii) on or after January 1, 2022.

“(ii) Conditions that require prescription drugs, providers, and models of care that are unique to the specific population of enrollees in a specialized MA plan for special needs individuals described in such subsection on or after such date and—

“(I) as a result of access to, and enrollment in, such a specialized MA plan for special needs individuals, individuals with such condition would have a reasonable expectation of slowing or halting the progression of the disease, improving health outcomes and decreasing overall costs for individuals diagnosed with such condition compared to available options of care other than through such a specialized MA plan for special needs individuals; or

“(II) have a low prevalence in the general population of beneficiaries under this title or a

disproportionally high per-beneficiary cost under this title.

“(B) REQUIREMENT.—In establishing and updating the list under subparagraph (A), the panel shall take into account the availability of varied benefits, cost-sharing, and supplemental benefits under the model described in paragraph (2) of section 1859(h), including the expansion under paragraph (1) of such section.”.

(d) QUALITY MEASUREMENT AT THE PLAN LEVEL FOR SNPs AND DETERMINATION OF FEASIBILITY OF QUALITY MEASUREMENT AT THE PLAN LEVEL FOR ALL MA PLANS.—Section 1853(o) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–23(o)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

“(6) QUALITY MEASUREMENT AT THE PLAN LEVEL FOR SNPs.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (B), the Secretary may require reporting of data under section 1852(e) for, and apply under this subsection, quality measures at the plan level for specialized MA plans for special needs individuals instead of at the contract level.

“(B) CONSIDERATIONS.—Prior to applying quality measurement at the plan level under this paragraph, the Secretary shall—

“(i) take into consideration the minimum number of enrollees in a specialized MA plan for special needs individuals in order to determine if a statistically significant or valid measurement of quality at the plan level is possible under this paragraph;

“(ii) take into consideration the impact of such application on plans that serve a disproportionate number of individuals dually eligible for benefits under this title and under title XIX;

“(iii) if quality measures are reported at the plan level, ensure that MA plans are not required to provide duplicative information;

“(iv) ensure that such reporting does not interfere with the collection of encounter data submitted by MA organizations or the administration of any changes to the program under this part as a result of the collection of such data.

“(C) APPLICATION.—If the Secretary applies quality measurement at the plan level under this paragraph, such quality measurement may include Medicare Health Outcomes Survey (HOS), Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS), Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) measures and quality measures under part D.

“(7) DETERMINATION OF FEASIBILITY OF QUALITY MEASUREMENT AT THE PLAN LEVEL FOR ALL MA PLANS.—

“(A) DETERMINATION OF FEASIBILITY.—The Secretary shall determine the feasibility of requiring reporting of data under section 1852(e) for, and applying under this subsection, quality measures at the plan level for all MA plans under this part.

“(B) CONSIDERATION OF CHANGE.—After making a determination under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall consider requiring such reporting and applying such quality measures at the plan level as described in such subparagraph.”.

(e) GAO STUDY AND REPORT ON STATE-LEVEL INTEGRATION BETWEEN DUAL SNPs AND MEDICAID.—

(1) STUDY.—The Comptroller General of the United States (in this paragraph referred to as the “Comptroller General”) shall conduct a study on State-level integration between specialized MA plans for special needs individuals described in subsection (b)(6)(B)(ii) of section 1859 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–28) and the Medicaid program under title XIX of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.). Such study shall include an analysis of the following:

(A) The characteristics of States in which the State agency responsible for administering the State plan under such title XIX has a contract with such a specialized MA plan and that delivers long term services and supports under the

State plan under such title XIX through a managed care program, including the requirements under such State plan with respect to long term services and supports.

(B) The types of such specialized MA plans, which may include the following:

(i) A plan described in section 1853(a)(1)(B)(iv)(II) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–23(a)(1)(B)(iv)(II)).

(ii) A plan that meets the requirements described in subsection (f)(3)(D) of such section 1859.

(iii) A plan described in clause (ii) that also meets additional requirements established by the State.

(C) The characteristics of individuals enrolled in such specialized MA plans.

(D) As practicable, the following with respect to State programs for the delivery of long term services and supports under such title XIX through a managed care program:

(i) Which populations of individuals are eligible to receive such services and supports.

(ii) Whether all such services and supports are provided on a capitated basis or if any of such services and supports are carved out and provided through fee-for-service.

(E) How the availability and variation of integration arrangements of such specialized MA plans offered in States affects spending, service delivery options, access to community-based care, and utilization of care.

(F) The efforts of State Medicaid programs to transition dually-eligible beneficiaries receiving long term services and supports (LTSS) from institutional settings to home and community-based settings and related financial impacts of such transitions

(2) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to Congress a report containing the results of the study conducted under paragraph (1), together with recommendations for such legislation and administrative action as the Comptroller General determines appropriate.

TITLE III—EXPANDING INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY

SEC. 301. ADAPTING BENEFITS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF CHRONICALLY ILL MEDICARE ADVANTAGE ENROLLEES.

Section 1859 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–28) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(h) NATIONAL TESTING OF MODEL FOR MEDICARE ADVANTAGE VALUE-BASED INSURANCE DESIGN.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—In implementing the model described in paragraph (2) proposed to be tested under section 1115A(b), the Secretary shall revise the testing of the model under such section to cover, effective not later than January 1, 2020, all States.

“(2) MODEL DESCRIBED.—The model described in this paragraph is the testing of a model of Medicare Advantage value-based insurance design that would allow Medicare Advantage plans the option to propose and design benefit structures that vary benefits, cost-sharing, and supplemental benefits offered to enrollees with specific chronic diseases proposed to be carried out in Oregon, Arizona, Texas, Iowa, Michigan, Indiana, Tennessee, Alabama, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts.

“(3) TERMINATION AND MODIFICATION PROVISION NOT APPLICABLE UNTIL JANUARY 1, 2022.—The provisions of section 1115A(b)(3)(B) shall apply to the model described in paragraph (2), including such model as expanded under paragraph (1), beginning January 1, 2022, but shall not apply to such model, as so expanded, prior to such date.

“(4) FUNDING.—The Secretary shall allocate funds made available under section 1115A(f)(1) to design, implement, and evaluate the model described in paragraph (2), as expanded under paragraph (1).”.

SEC. 302. EXPANDING SUPPLEMENTAL BENEFITS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF CHRONICALLY ILL MEDICARE ADVANTAGE ENROLLEES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1852(a)(3) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–22(a)(3)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking “Each” and inserting “Subject to subparagraph (D), each”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(D) EXPANDING SUPPLEMENTAL BENEFITS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF CHRONICALLY ILL ENROLLEES.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—For plan year 2020 and subsequent plan years, in addition to any supplemental health care benefits otherwise provided under this paragraph, an MA plan may provide supplemental benefits described in clause (ii) to a chronically ill enrollee (as defined in clause (iii)).

“(ii) SUPPLEMENTAL BENEFITS DESCRIBED.—

“(I) IN GENERAL.—Supplemental benefits described in this clause are supplemental benefits that, with respect to a chronically ill enrollee, have a reasonable expectation of improving or maintaining the health or overall function of the chronically ill enrollee and may not be limited to being primarily health related benefits.

“(II) AUTHORITY TO WAIVE UNIFORMITY REQUIREMENTS.—The Secretary may, only with respect to supplemental benefits provided to a chronically ill enrollee under this subparagraph, waive the uniformity requirement under subsection (d)(1)(A), as determined appropriate by the Secretary.

“(iii) CHRONICALLY ILL ENROLLEE DEFINED.—In this subparagraph, the term ‘chronically ill enrollee’ means an enrollee in an MA plan that the Secretary determines—

“(I) has one or more comorbid and medically complex chronic conditions that is life threatening or significantly limits the overall health or function of the enrollee;

“(II) has a high risk of hospitalization or other adverse health outcomes; and

“(III) requires intensive care coordination.”.

(b) GAO STUDY AND REPORT.—

(1) STUDY.—The Comptroller General of the United States (in this subsection referred to as the “Comptroller General”) shall conduct a study on supplemental benefits provided to enrollees in Medicare Advantage plans under part C of title XVIII of the Social Security Act. To the extent data are available, such study shall include an analysis of the following:

(A) The type of supplemental benefits provided to such enrollees, the total number of enrollees receiving each supplemental benefit, and whether the supplemental benefit is covered by the standard benchmark cost of the benefit or with an additional premium.

(B) The frequency in which supplemental benefits are utilized by such enrollees.

(C) The impact supplemental benefits have on—

(i) indicators of the quality of care received by such enrollees, including overall health and function of the enrollees;

(ii) the utilization of items and services for which benefits are available under the original Medicare fee-for-service program option under parts A and B of such title XVIII by such enrollees; and

(iii) the amount of the bids submitted by Medicare Advantage Organizations for Medicare Advantage plans under such part C.

(2) REPORT.—Not later than 5 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to Congress a report containing the results of the study conducted under paragraph (1), together with recommendations for such legislation and administrative action as the Comptroller General determines appropriate.

SEC. 303. INCREASING CONVENIENCE FOR MEDICARE ADVANTAGE ENROLLEES THROUGH TELEHEALTH.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1852 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–22) is amended—
 (1) in subsection (a)(1)(B)(i), by inserting “, subject to subsection (m),” after “means”; and
 (2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(m) PROVISION OF ADDITIONAL TELEHEALTH BENEFITS.—

“(1) MA PLAN OPTION.—For plan year 2020 and subsequent plan years, subject to the requirements of paragraph (3), an MA plan may provide additional telehealth benefits (as defined in paragraph (2)) to individuals enrolled under this part.

“(2) ADDITIONAL TELEHEALTH BENEFITS DEFINED.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this subsection and section 1854:

“(i) DEFINITION.—The term ‘additional telehealth benefits’ means services—

“(I) for which benefits are available under part B, including services for which payment is not made under section 1834(m) due to the conditions for payment under such section; and

“(II) that are identified as clinically appropriate to furnish using electronic information and telecommunications technology when a physician (as defined in section 1861(r)) or practitioner (described in section 1842(b)(18)(C)) providing the service is not at the same location as the plan enrollee.

“(ii) EXCLUSION OF CAPITAL AND INFRASTRUCTURE COSTS AND INVESTMENTS.—The term ‘additional telehealth benefits’ does not include capital and infrastructure costs and investments relating to such benefits.

“(B) PUBLIC COMMENT.—Not later than November 30, 2018, the Secretary shall solicit comments on—

“(i) what types of items and services (including those provided through supplemental health care benefits) should be considered to be additional telehealth benefits; and

“(ii) the requirements for the provision or furnishing of such benefits (such as licensure, training, and coordination requirements).

“(3) REQUIREMENTS FOR ADDITIONAL TELEHEALTH BENEFITS.—The Secretary shall specify requirements for the provision or furnishing of additional telehealth benefits, including with respect to the following:

“(A) Physician or practitioner licensure and other requirements such as specific training.

“(B) Factors necessary to ensure the coordination of such benefits with items and services furnished in-person.

“(C) Such other areas as determined by the Secretary.

“(4) ENROLLEE CHOICE.—If an MA plan provides a service as an additional telehealth benefit (as defined in paragraph (2))—

“(A) the MA plan shall also provide access to such benefit through an in-person visit (and not only as an additional telehealth benefit); and

“(B) an individual enrollee shall have discretion as to whether to receive such service through the in-person visit or as an additional telehealth benefit.

“(5) TREATMENT UNDER MA.—For purposes of this subsection and section 1854, additional telehealth benefits shall be treated as if they were benefits under the original Medicare fee-for-service program option.

“(6) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed as affecting the requirement under subsection (a)(1) that MA plans provide enrollees with items and services (other than hospice care) for which benefits are available under parts A and B, including benefits available under section 1834(m).”

(b) CLARIFICATION REGARDING INCLUSION IN BID AMOUNT.—Section 1854(a)(6)(A)(ii)(I) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–24(a)(6)(A)(ii)(I)) is amended by inserting “, including, for plan year 2020 and subsequent plan

years, the provision of additional telehealth benefits as described in section 1852(m)” before the semicolon at the end.

SEC. 304. PROVIDING ACCOUNTABLE CARE ORGANIZATIONS THE ABILITY TO EXPAND THE USE OF TELEHEALTH.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1899 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395jjj) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(1) PROVIDING ACOS THE ABILITY TO EXPAND THE USE OF TELEHEALTH SERVICES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—In the case of telehealth services for which payment would otherwise be made under this title furnished on or after January 1, 2020, for purposes of this subsection only, the following shall apply with respect to such services furnished by a physician or practitioner participating in an applicable ACO (as defined in paragraph (2)) to a Medicare fee-for-service beneficiary assigned to the applicable ACO:

“(A) INCLUSION OF HOME AS ORIGINATING SITE.—Subject to paragraph (3), the home of a beneficiary shall be treated as an originating site described in section 1834(m)(4)(C)(ii).

“(B) NO APPLICATION OF GEOGRAPHIC LIMITATION.—The geographic limitation under section 1834(m)(4)(C)(i) shall not apply with respect to an originating site described in section 1834(m)(4)(C)(ii) (including the home of a beneficiary under subparagraph (A)), subject to State licensing requirements.

“(2) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

“(A) APPLICABLE ACO.—The term ‘applicable ACO’ means an ACO participating in a model tested or expanded under section 1115A or under this section—

“(i) that operates under a two-sided model—

“(I) described in section 425.600(a) of title 42, Code of Federal Regulations; or

“(II) tested or expanded under section 1115A; and

“(ii) for which Medicare fee-for-service beneficiaries are assigned to the ACO using a prospective assignment method, as determined appropriate by the Secretary.

“(B) HOME.—The term ‘home’ means, with respect to a Medicare fee-for-service beneficiary, the place of residence used as the home of the beneficiary.

“(3) TELEHEALTH SERVICES RECEIVED IN THE HOME.—In the case of telehealth services described in paragraph (1) where the home of a Medicare fee-for-service beneficiary is the originating site, the following shall apply:

“(A) NO FACILITY FEE.—There shall be no facility fee paid to the originating site under section 1834(m)(2)(B).

“(B) EXCLUSION OF CERTAIN SERVICES.—No payment may be made for such services that are inappropriate to furnish in the home setting such as services that are typically furnished in inpatient settings such as a hospital.”

(b) STUDY AND REPORT.—

(1) STUDY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services (in this subsection referred to as the “Secretary”) shall conduct a study on the implementation of section 1899(1) of the Social Security Act, as added by subsection (a). Such study shall include an analysis of the utilization of, and expenditures for, telehealth services under such section.

(B) COLLECTION OF DATA.—The Secretary may collect such data as the Secretary determines necessary to carry out the study under this paragraph.

(2) REPORT.—Not later than January 1, 2026, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report containing the results of the study conducted under paragraph (1), together with recommendations for such legislation and administrative action as the Secretary determines appropriate.

SEC. 305. EXPANDING THE USE OF TELEHEALTH FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH STROKE.

Section 1834(m) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395m(m)), as amended by section

102(b)(2), is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(6) TREATMENT OF STROKE TELEHEALTH SERVICES.—

“(A) NON-APPLICATION OF ORIGINATING SITE REQUIREMENTS.—The requirements described in paragraph (4)(C) shall not apply with respect to telehealth services furnished on or after January 1, 2021, for purposes of evaluation of an acute stroke, as determined by the Secretary.

“(B) NO ORIGINATING SITE FACILITY FEE.—In the case of an originating site that does not meet the requirements described in paragraph (4)(C), he Secretary shall not pay an originating site facility fee (as described in paragraph (2)(B)) to the originating site with respect to such telehealth services.”

TITLE IV—IDENTIFYING THE CHRONICALLY ILL POPULATION

SEC. 401. PROVIDING FLEXIBILITY FOR BENEFICIARIES TO BE PART OF AN ACCOUNTABLE CARE ORGANIZATION.

Section 1899(c) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395jjj(c)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (1) and (2) as subparagraphs (A) and (B), respectively, and indenting appropriately;

(2) by striking “ACOs.—The Secretary” and inserting “ACOS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), the Secretary”; and

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

“(2) PROVIDING FLEXIBILITY.—

“(A) CHOICE OF PROSPECTIVE ASSIGNMENT.—For each agreement period (effective for agreements entered into or renewed on or after January 1, 2020), in the case where an ACO established under the program is in a Track that provides for the retrospective assignment of Medicare fee-for-service beneficiaries to the ACO, the Secretary shall permit the ACO to choose to have Medicare fee-for-service beneficiaries assigned prospectively, rather than retrospectively, to the ACO for an agreement period.

“(B) ASSIGNMENT BASED ON VOLUNTARY IDENTIFICATION BY MEDICARE FEE-FOR-SERVICE BENEFICIARIES.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—For performance year 2018 and each subsequent performance year, if a system is available for electronic designation, the Secretary shall permit a Medicare fee-for-service beneficiary to voluntarily identify an ACO professional as the primary care provider of the beneficiary for purposes of assigning such beneficiary to an ACO, as determined by the Secretary.

“(ii) NOTIFICATION PROCESS.—The Secretary shall establish a process under which a Medicare fee-for-service beneficiary is—

“(I) notified of their ability to make an identification described in clause (i); and

“(II) informed of the process by which they may make and change such identification.

“(iii) SUPERSEDING CLAIMS-BASED ASSIGNMENT.—A voluntary identification by a Medicare fee-for-service beneficiary under this subparagraph shall supersede any claims-based assignment otherwise determined by the Secretary.”

TITLE V—EMPOWERING INDIVIDUALS AND CAREGIVERS IN CARE DELIVERY

SEC. 501. ELIMINATING BARRIERS TO CARE COORDINATION UNDER ACCOUNTABLE CARE ORGANIZATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1899 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395jjj), as amended by section 304(a), is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)(2), by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(I) An ACO that seeks to operate an ACO Beneficiary Incentive Program pursuant to subsection (m) shall apply to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and with such information as the Secretary may require.”;

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(m) **AUTHORITY TO PROVIDE INCENTIVE PAYMENTS TO BENEFICIARIES WITH RESPECT TO QUALIFYING PRIMARY CARE SERVICES.**—

“(1) **PROGRAM.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—In order to encourage Medicare fee-for-service beneficiaries to obtain medically necessary primary care services, an ACO participating under this section under a payment model described in clause (i) or (ii) of paragraph (2)(B) may apply to establish an ACO Beneficiary Incentive Program to provide incentive payments to such beneficiaries who are furnished qualifying services in accordance with this subsection. The Secretary shall permit such an ACO to establish such a program at the Secretary's discretion and subject to such requirements, including program integrity requirements, as the Secretary determines necessary.

“(B) **IMPLEMENTATION.**—The Secretary shall implement this subsection on a date determined appropriate by the Secretary. Such date shall be no earlier than January 1, 2019, and no later than January 1, 2020.

“(2) **CONDUCT OF PROGRAM.**—

“(A) **DURATION.**—Subject to subparagraph (H), an ACO Beneficiary Incentive Program established under this subsection shall be conducted for such period (of not less than 1 year) as the Secretary may approve.

“(B) **SCOPE.**—An ACO Beneficiary Incentive Program established under this subsection shall provide incentive payments to all of the following Medicare fee-for-service beneficiaries who are furnished qualifying services by the ACO:

“(i) With respect to the Track 2 and Track 3 payment models described in section 425.600(a) of title 42, Code of Federal Regulations (or in any successor regulation), Medicare fee-for-service beneficiaries who are preliminarily prospectively or prospectively assigned (or otherwise assigned, as determined by the Secretary) to the ACO.

“(ii) With respect to any future payment models involving two-sided risk, Medicare fee-for-service beneficiaries who are assigned to the ACO, as determined by the Secretary.

“(C) **QUALIFYING SERVICE.**—For purposes of this subsection, a qualifying service is a primary care service, as defined in section 425.20 of title 42, Code of Federal Regulations (or in any successor regulation), with respect to which coinurance applies under part B, furnished through an ACO by—

“(i) an ACO professional described in subsection (h)(1)(A) who has a primary care specialty designation included in the definition of primary care physician under section 425.20 of title 42, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation);

“(ii) an ACO professional described in subsection (h)(1)(B); or

“(iii) a Federally qualified health center or rural health clinic (as such terms are defined in section 1861(aa)).

“(D) **INCENTIVE PAYMENTS.**—An incentive payment made by an ACO pursuant to an ACO Beneficiary Incentive Program established under this subsection shall be—

“(i) in an amount up to \$20, with such maximum amount updated annually by the percentage increase in the consumer price index for all urban consumers (United States city average) for the 12-month period ending with June of the previous year;

“(ii) in the same amount for each Medicare fee-for-service beneficiary described in clause (i) or (ii) of subparagraph (B) without regard to enrollment of such a beneficiary in a Medicare supplemental policy (described in section 1882(g)(1)), in a State Medicaid plan under title XIX or a waiver of such a plan, or in any other health insurance policy or health benefit plan;

“(iii) made for each qualifying service furnished to such a beneficiary described in clause (i) or (ii) of subparagraph (B) during a period specified by the Secretary; and

“(iv) made no later than 30 days after a qualifying service is furnished to such a beneficiary

described in clause (i) or (ii) of subparagraph (B).

“(E) **NO SEPARATE PAYMENTS FROM THE SECRETARY.**—The Secretary shall not make any separate payment to an ACO for the costs, including incentive payments, of carrying out an ACO Beneficiary Incentive Program established under this subsection. Nothing in this subparagraph shall be construed as prohibiting an ACO from using shared savings received under this section to carry out an ACO Beneficiary Incentive Program.

“(F) **NO APPLICATION TO SHARED SAVINGS CALCULATION.**—Incentive payments made by an ACO under this subsection shall be disregarded for purposes of calculating benchmarks, estimated average per capita Medicare expenditures, and shared savings under this section.

“(G) **REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.**—An ACO conducting an ACO Beneficiary Incentive Program under this subsection shall, at such times and in such format as the Secretary may require, report to the Secretary such information and retain such documentation as the Secretary may require, including the amount and frequency of incentive payments made and the number of Medicare fee-for-service beneficiaries receiving such payments.

“(H) **TERMINATION.**—The Secretary may terminate an ACO Beneficiary Incentive Program established under this subsection at any time for reasons determined appropriate by the Secretary.

“(3) **EXCLUSION OF INCENTIVE PAYMENTS.**—Any payment made under an ACO Beneficiary Incentive Program established under this subsection shall not be considered income or resources or otherwise taken into account for purposes of—

“(A) determining eligibility for benefits or assistance (or the amount or extent of benefits or assistance) under any Federal program or under any State or local program financed in whole or in part with Federal funds; or

“(B) any Federal or State laws relating to taxation.”;

(3) in subsection (e), by inserting “, including an ACO Beneficiary Incentive Program under subsections (b)(2)(I) and (m)” after “the program”; and

(4) in subsection (g)(6), by inserting “or of an ACO Beneficiary Incentive Program under subsections (b)(2)(I) and (m)” after “under subsection (d)(4)”.

(b) **AMENDMENT TO SECTION 1128B.**—Section 1128B(b)(3) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1320a–7b(b)(3)) is amended—

(1) by striking “and” at the end of subparagraph (I);

(2) by striking the period at the end of subparagraph (J) and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(K) an incentive payment made to a Medicare fee-for-service beneficiary by an ACO under an ACO Beneficiary Incentive Program established under subsection (m) of section 1899, if the payment is made in accordance with the requirements of such subsection and meets such other conditions as the Secretary may establish.”.

(c) **EVALUATION AND REPORT.**—

(1) **EVALUATION.**—The Secretary of Health and Human Services (in this subsection referred to as the “Secretary”) shall conduct an evaluation of the ACO Beneficiary Incentive Program established under subsections (b)(2)(I) and (m) of section 1899 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395jjj), as added by subsection (a). The evaluation shall include an analysis of the impact of the implementation of the Program on expenditures and beneficiary health outcomes under title XVIII of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395 et seq.).

(2) **REPORT.**—Not later than October 1, 2023, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report containing the results of the evaluation under paragraph (1), together with recommendations

for such legislation and administrative action as the Secretary determines appropriate.

SEC. 502. GAO STUDY AND REPORT ON LONGITUDINAL COMPREHENSIVE CARE PLANNING SERVICES UNDER MEDICARE PART B.

(a) **STUDY.**—The Comptroller General shall conduct a study on the establishment under part B of the Medicare program under title XVIII of the Social Security Act of a payment code for a visit for longitudinal comprehensive care planning services. Such study shall include an analysis of the following to the extent such information is available:

(1) The frequency with which services similar to longitudinal comprehensive care planning services are furnished to Medicare beneficiaries, which providers of services and suppliers are furnishing those services, whether Medicare reimbursement is being received for those services, and, if so, through which codes those services are being reimbursed.

(2) Whether, and the extent to which, longitudinal comprehensive care planning services would overlap, and could therefore result in duplicative payment, with services covered under the hospice benefit as well as the chronic care management code, evaluation and management codes, or other codes that already exist under part B of the Medicare program.

(3) Any barriers to hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, hospice programs, home health agencies, and other applicable providers working with a Medicare beneficiary to engage in the care planning process and complete the necessary documentation to support the treatment and care plan of the beneficiary and provide such documentation to other providers and the beneficiary or the beneficiary's representative.

(4) Any barriers to providers, other than the provider furnishing longitudinal comprehensive care planning services, accessing the care plan and associated documentation for use related to the care of the Medicare beneficiary.

(5) Potential options for ensuring that applicable providers are notified of a patient's existing longitudinal care plan and that applicable providers consider that plan in making their treatment decisions, and what the challenges might be in implementing such options.

(6) Stakeholder's views on the need for the development of quality metrics with respect to longitudinal comprehensive care planning services, such as measures related to—

(A) the process of eliciting input from the Medicare beneficiary or from a legally authorized representative and documenting in the medical record the patient-directed care plan;

(B) the effectiveness and patient-centeredness of the care plan in organizing delivery of services consistent with the plan;

(C) the availability of the care plan and associated documentation to other providers that care for the beneficiary; and

(D) the extent to which the beneficiary received services and support that is free from discrimination based on advanced age, disability status, or advanced illness.

(7) Stakeholder's views on how such quality metrics would provide information on—

(A) the goals, values, and preferences of the beneficiary;

(B) the documentation of the care plan;

(C) services furnished to the beneficiary; and

(D) outcomes of treatment.

(8) Stakeholder's views on—

(A) the type of training and education needed for applicable providers, individuals, and caregivers in order to facilitate longitudinal comprehensive care planning services;

(B) the types of providers of services and suppliers that should be included in the interdisciplinary team of an applicable provider; and

(C) the characteristics of Medicare beneficiaries that would be most appropriate to receive longitudinal comprehensive care planning services, such as individuals with advanced disease and individuals who need assistance with multiple activities of daily living.

(9) Stakeholder's views on the frequency with which longitudinal comprehensive care planning services should be furnished.

(b) **REPORT.**—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to Congress a report containing the results of the study conducted under subsection (a), together with recommendations for such legislation and administrative action as the Comptroller General determines appropriate.

(c) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) **APPLICABLE PROVIDER.**—The term “applicable provider” means a hospice program (as defined in subsection (dd)(2) of section 1861 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395wv)) or other provider of services (as defined in subsection (u) of such section) or supplier (as defined in subsection (d) of such section) that—

(A) furnishes longitudinal comprehensive care planning services through an interdisciplinary team; and

(B) meets such other requirements as the Secretary may determine to be appropriate.

(2) **COMPTROLLER GENERAL.**—The term “Comptroller General” means the Comptroller General of the United States.

(3) **INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM.**—The term “interdisciplinary team” means a group that—

(A) includes the personnel described in subsection (dd)(2)(B)(i) of such section 1861;

(B) may include a chaplain, minister, or other clergy; and

(C) may include other direct care personnel.

(4) **LONGITUDINAL COMPREHENSIVE CARE PLANNING SERVICES.**—The term “longitudinal comprehensive care planning services” means a voluntary shared decisionmaking process that is furnished by an applicable provider through an interdisciplinary team and includes a conversation with Medicare beneficiaries who have received a diagnosis of a serious or life-threatening illness. The purpose of such services is to discuss a longitudinal care plan that addresses the progression of the disease, treatment options, the goals, values, and preferences of the beneficiary, and the availability of other resources and social supports that may reduce the beneficiary's health risks and promote self-management and shared decisionmaking.

(5) **SECRETARY.**—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

TITLE VI—OTHER POLICIES TO IMPROVE CARE FOR THE CHRONICALLY ILL

SEC. 601. PROVIDING PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLANS WITH PARTS A AND B CLAIMS DATA TO PROMOTE THE APPROPRIATE USE OF MEDICATIONS AND IMPROVE HEALTH OUTCOMES.

Section 1860D–4(c) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–104(c)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(6) **PROVIDING PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLANS WITH PARTS A AND B CLAIMS DATA TO PROMOTE THE APPROPRIATE USE OF MEDICATIONS AND IMPROVE HEALTH OUTCOMES.**—

“(A) **PROCESS.**—Subject to subparagraph (B), the Secretary shall establish a process under which a PDP sponsor of a prescription drug plan may submit a request for the Secretary to provide the sponsor, on a periodic basis and in an electronic format, beginning in plan year 2020, data described in subparagraph (D) with respect to enrollees in such plan. Such data shall be provided without regard to whether such enrollees are described in clause (ii) of paragraph (2)(A).

“(B) **PURPOSES.**—A PDP sponsor may use the data provided to the sponsor pursuant to subparagraph (A) for any of the following purposes:

“(i) To optimize therapeutic outcomes through improved medication use, as such phrase is used in clause (i) of paragraph (2)(A).

“(ii) To improving care coordination so as to prevent adverse health outcomes, such as preventable emergency department visits and hospital readmissions.

“(iii) For any other purpose determined appropriate by the Secretary.

“(C) **LIMITATIONS ON DATA USE.**—A PDP sponsor shall not use data provided to the sponsor pursuant to subparagraph (A) for any of the following purposes:

“(i) To inform coverage determinations under this part.

“(ii) To conduct retroactive reviews of medically accepted indications determinations.

“(iii) To facilitate enrollment changes to a different prescription drug plan or an MA–PD plan offered by the same parent organization.

“(iv) To inform marketing of benefits.

“(v) For any other purpose that the Secretary determines is necessary to include in order to protect the identity of individuals entitled to, or enrolled for, benefits under this title and to protect the security of personal health information.

“(D) **DATA DESCRIBED.**—The data described in this clause are standardized extracts (as determined by the Secretary) of claims data under parts A and B for items and services furnished under such parts for time periods specified by the Secretary. Such data shall include data as current as practicable.”

SEC. 602. GAO STUDY AND REPORT ON IMPROVING MEDICATION SYNCHRONIZATION.

(a) **STUDY.**—The Comptroller General of the United States (in this section referred to as the “Comptroller General”) shall conduct a study on the extent to which Medicare prescription drug plans (MA–PD plans and standalone prescription drug plans) under part D of title XVIII of the Social Security Act and private payors use programs that synchronize pharmacy dispensing so that individuals may receive multiple prescriptions on the same day to facilitate comprehensive counseling and promote medication adherence. The study shall include an analysis of the following:

(1) The extent to which pharmacies have adopted such programs.

(2) The common characteristics of such programs, including how pharmacies structure counseling sessions under such programs and the types of payment and other arrangements that Medicare prescription drug plans and private payors employ under such programs to support the efforts of pharmacies.

(3) How such programs compare for Medicare prescription drug plans and private payors.

(4) What is known about how such programs affect patient medication adherence and overall patient health outcomes, including if adherence and outcomes vary by patient subpopulations, such as disease state and socioeconomic status.

(5) What is known about overall patient satisfaction with such programs and satisfaction with such programs, including within patient subpopulations, such as disease state and socioeconomic status.

(6) The extent to which laws and regulations of the Medicare program support such programs.

(7) Barriers to the use of medication synchronization programs by Medicare prescription drug plans.

(b) **REPORT.**—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to Congress a report containing the results of the study under subsection (a), together with recommendations for such legislation and administrative action as the Comptroller General determines appropriate.

SEC. 603. GAO STUDY AND REPORT ON IMPACT OF OBESITY DRUGS ON PATIENT HEALTH AND SPENDING.

(a) **STUDY.**—The Comptroller General of the United States (in this section referred to as the “Comptroller General”) shall, to the extent data are available, conduct a study on the use of prescription drugs to manage the weight of obese patients and the impact of coverage of such drugs on patient health and on health care spending. Such study shall examine the use and impact of these obesity drugs in the non-Medicare population and for Medicare beneficiaries

who have such drugs covered through an MA–PD plan (as defined in section 1860D–1(a)(3)(C) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–101(a)(3)(C))) as a supplemental health care benefit. The study shall include an analysis of the following:

(1) The prevalence of obesity in the Medicare and non-Medicare population.

(2) The utilization of obesity drugs.

(3) The distribution of Body Mass Index by individuals taking obesity drugs, to the extent practicable.

(4) What is known about the use of obesity drugs in conjunction with the receipt of other items or services, such as behavioral counseling, and how these compare to items and services received by obese individuals who do not take obesity drugs.

(5) Physician considerations and attitudes related to prescribing obesity drugs.

(6) The extent to which coverage policies cease or limit coverage for individuals who fail to receive clinical benefit.

(7) What is known about the extent to which individuals who take obesity drugs adhere to the prescribed regimen.

(8) What is known about the extent to which individuals who take obesity drugs maintain weight loss over time.

(9) What is known about the subsequent impact such drugs have on medical services that are directly related to obesity, including with respect to subpopulations determined based on the extent of obesity.

(10) What is known about the spending associated with the care of individuals who take obesity drugs, compared to the spending associated with the care of individuals who do not take such drugs.

(b) **REPORT.**—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to Congress a report containing the results of the study under subsection (a), together with recommendations for such legislation and administrative action as the Comptroller General determines appropriate.

SEC. 604. HHS STUDY AND REPORT ON LONG-TERM RISK FACTORS FOR CHRONIC CONDITIONS AMONG MEDICARE BENEFICIARIES.

(a) **STUDY.**—The Secretary of Health and Human Services (in this section referred to as the “Secretary”) shall conduct a study on long-term cost drivers to the Medicare program, including obesity, tobacco use, mental health conditions, and other factors that may contribute to the deterioration of health conditions among individuals with chronic conditions in the Medicare population. The study shall include an analysis of any barriers to collecting and analyzing such information and how to remove any such barriers (including through legislation and administrative actions).

(b) **REPORT.**—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report containing the results of the study under subsection (a), together with recommendations for such legislation and administrative action as the Secretary determines appropriate. The Secretary shall also post such report on the Internet website of the Department of Health and Human Services.

TITLE VII—OFFSETS

SEC. 701. MEDICARE IMPROVEMENT FUND.

Section 1898(b)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395iii(b)(1)) is amended by striking “\$270,000,000” and inserting “\$0”.

SEC. 702. MEDICAID IMPROVEMENT FUND.

Section 1941(b)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396w–1(b)(1)) is amended by striking “\$5,000,000” and inserting “\$0”.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, today is a big day in the ongoing effort to update and strengthen Medicare's guarantee to seniors. Senate passage of the

Finance Committee's chronic care bill means seniors with multiple chronic illnesses will have their individual needs better met and get the type of care they need earlier.

It is my judgment that the Finance Committee has no job more significant than updating the Medicare guarantee, and that is exactly what today is all about. The CHRONIC Care Act begins a transformational change in the way Medicare works for seniors who suffer from chronic illnesses like cancer, diabetes, and Alzheimer's disease.

If you could bring the lawmakers responsible for the creation of Medicare into 2017, they would barely recognize the program they created more than half a century ago. Back then, if a senior needed surgery for a broken hip, he or she visited a hospital and used Medicare Part A. If a senior needed treatment for a nasty bout of the flu, he or she visited their doctor and used Part B.

Today, more than 90 percent of the Medicare dollar goes toward seniors who have two or more chronic conditions. Today's seniors get their care in a variety of ways. It is not just fee-for-service; there are Medicare Advantage, Accountable Care Organizations, and other new systems under development.

Keeping up with those changes—updating the Medicare guarantee—is a big policymaking challenge, and that is why the Finance Committee worked so hard, for so long, to get this bill across the finish line. There are still more steps before these policies reach the President's desk, but with strong bipartisan backing of the entire U.S. Senate, I am confident the job will get done.

The CHRONIC Care Act will mean more care at home and less in institutions. It will expand the use of life-saving technology. It places a stronger focus on primary care. It gives seniors, however they get Medicare, more tools and options to receive care specifically targeted to address their chronic illnesses and keep them healthy. Those are all important steps forward in updating the Medicare guarantee. Still to come is ensuring that every senior with multiple chronic conditions has an advocate to help them navigate through the Byzantine healthcare system.

Finally just a few points about the bipartisan process leading to this bill's passage today. The Finance Committee, in my view, has handed the Congress a model for how to legislate on a bipartisan basis. I want to thank Chairman HATCH, with whom I formed a bipartisan chronic care working group almost exactly 2 years ago, and I want to thank Senators WARNER and ISAKSON who generously took on the challenge of leading it.

Of course this bill wouldn't have materialized at all if not for the sweat equity put in by staff. Somewhere amid all the endless hours of work that went into writing this bill, they found time for multiple weddings, the birth of

three children, and a handful of job changes. Thank you to Karen Fisher, Hannah Hawkins, Kelsey Avery, Leigh Stuckhardt, Liz Jurinka, Beth Vrabel, and Matt Kazan—our chronic care lead—all on my team. Chairman HATCH, I thank you for your commitment to keep working on this and to your staff, including Jay Khosla, Brett Baker, Jen Kuskowski, Katie Meyer-Simeon, and the chronic care lead, Erin Dempsey. Thank you also to Senators WARNER and ISAKSON for lending us Marvin Figueroa and Jordan Bartolomeo.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported amendment be agreed to, and the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time.

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

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I know of no further debate on the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate on the bill?

Hearing none, the bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall it pass?

The bill (S. 870), as amended, was passed.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—H.R. 3354

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A 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. CORNYN. Mr. President, I now ask for a second reading and, in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The bill will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2017

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Wednesday, September 27; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be

deemed expired, the Journal of the 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; finally, that following leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 1519.

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

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. CORNYN. 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 from the Senator from Maryland, Mr. VAN HOLLEN.

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

The Senator from Maryland.

PUERTO RICO AND U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS RECOVERY EFFORT

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I want to start by saying a few words about what is happening in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands where, in front of our eyes on the television sets, we see a growing humanitarian crisis that needs our urgent attention.

Hurricane Maria has left unimaginable devastation. Less than half of the population of Puerto Rico has potable water. Cell service is out on 95 percent of the island, making it difficult to contact loved ones and call emergency services, and only 5 percent of the power grid in Puerto Rico is working.

My office has been fielding hundreds of calls from across the State of Maryland, some from constituents who are eager and desperate to reach their loved ones, others from fellow Americans who are watching the devastation and who are asking us to act quickly.

We all know that in the runups to Hurricanes Harvey and Irma, Texas and Florida braced for impact. We here in the Senate quickly organized to promise we would deliver the resources they would need to rebuild. We provided an emergency downpayment, and we gave them assurances that we would also stand ready to provide assistance when it comes to rebuilding.

We need to make that same urgent commitment to the people of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, our fellow Americans. The administration needs to bring to bear its full resources from the military, to the Army Corps, to FEMA to deliver critical supplies and access to people in all parts of those areas.

We have heard that we might get an emergency request for appropriations in a week or two. We need to move much more quickly, given the urgency of the situation; 3.5 million of our fellow Americans should not be left to languish without water or power. That is not who we are. We need all hands on deck, and we need them now, so I hope we will move on to that.

HEALTHCARE, THE DREAM ACT, AND TAX REFORM

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, we had some good news—or I should say the American public had some good news today in the announcement from the Republican leader that the Senate will not be proceeding to debate what is known as the Graham-Cassidy legislation, the latest version of TrumpCare, which would have had a devastating impact on our healthcare system and created harm throughout the country and in my State of Maryland. In fact, I know millions of Marylanders will be breathing a sigh of relief as a result of this decision.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the personal testimonials of Marylanders who, in the last few days, have sent to me their very powerful stories about how the Graham-Cassidy legislation would have harmed their loved ones.

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

VAN HOLLEN CONSTITUENT HEALTHCARE/ACA
STORIES
9/19/2017

"I am a Registered Nurse who specializes in perianesthesia care. Please do not wind back the clock and make it harder for people to seek care during an illness. I am heartbroken that I have cared for patients who delayed care for weeks and months because they were more afraid of medical bills than dying. When people are ill and do not seek care, they jeopardize their lives—and in the case of communicable diseases they jeopardize the lives of others by delaying care and treatment."—Beth

"My 14 year old daughter is a leukemia survivor. She has multiple serious long term side effects from her chemotherapy regiment. By repealing Obamacare, she becomes uninsurable due to her preexisting conditions and the fact that she has met her life time maximum many times over."—Caroline

"I have a neuromuscular autoimmune disease called Myasthenia Gravis. It affects my voluntary muscles, muscles I use to walk, carry my groceries, see, swallow and breathe. I already have to fight with my insurance to get them to pay for my immunoglobulin infusions, which most of the time they deny, which sends me to the emergency room because I can't breathe. If for any reason I have to find a new insurance, such as my husband getting a different job, it could be a death sentence for me. Just one month of outpatient immunoglobulin therapy is \$27,000. My immunosuppressants I have to take daily can run up to \$2000 for a 3 month supply. Then couple my health issues and the cost of medications and I would probably die within a month or less. I didn't ask to get sick. I never imagined at 41 I would be facing my mortality."—Chrissy

"My older sister has been profoundly disabled by mental illness for the last 50 years. She is 62 now. She has severe behavioral issues She cannot work. . . . She has been one step from living on the street if it weren't for Medicaid and SSDI. She is not getting rich from these safety nets by any means. If these go away the republican congress and this presidential administration will be responsible for making challenging lives that much more miserable We don't treat our most vulnerable as if they are disposable."—Cat

"My son, 6, has a complex congenital heart defect called Hypoplastic Left Heart Syn-

drome (HLHS). He has had four open heart surgeries and several cardiac catheterizations. A transplant could be needed one day. I worry every day about how he will have heart care should something happen and when he is too old to be on our plan."—Dara

"I am a nurse practitioner and worked for the VA Healthcare System for 15yrs. While this system is not without its challenges, without it, many of our veterans would not be receiving the healthcare and support they need to remain healthy and productive members of society They would not be able to work and support their families and as a result, would likely not seek healthcare until they needed emergency services. By then their previously untreated condition may already have worsened to the point of permanent disability or death, leaving their families to fall into poverty, despair and having to rely on Gov't. Assistance. If they do not die, their disability care costs far more than the early and maintenance treatment they should have been receiving even if they needed this maintenance treatment for a lifetime!"—Becky

"My 25 yr old son has Crohn's disease. His entire large intestine was surgically removed when he was 17. He must get a remicade infusion every 6 weeks to keep his immune system from attacking his intestines. No hospital ER will administer his remicade infusion as this is considered maintenance of his disease. When his situation becomes life threatening and he needs the Intervention of the ER . . . the damage is already done. Why don't our republican senators get this? Shouldn't they be aware of this. . . . If they think they are the experts, representing us? Trey will lose his insurance next June when he turns 26."—Darlene

"Deep Medicaid Cuts would be devastating to the millions of people with disabilities. The Home and Community Waivers would be in jeopardy. Because of the Community Pathways Medicaid Waiver, Our 32 year old son is able to live in his own apartment, volunteer in the community, hold a 30 hr week job in Gaithersburg, and have a social life. Without the supports he would lose his independence. . . . Please don't make deep cuts to Medicaid."—Reda

"We have 14 year-old twins, both of whom have Cerebral Palsy. . . . It isn't their fault that they have a disability and they should not be punished for it."—Danica

"I work with medically fragile children with disabilities. Without Medical Assistance, these children and their families cannot afford the equipment, supplies & therapies that help them grow and thrive."—Carmel

"I'm 48. I was diagnosed with scoliosis at age 13, and I had spinal fusion surgery to save my life from it at age 21. The surgery saved my live, but also had lifelong consequences. I have had this pre-existing condition for most of my life. My parents, and then me when I came of age, have always had to be careful to make sure that pre-existing conditions were covered. I once turned down a job in part because their insurance didn't cover pre-existing conditions. The ACA meant I no longer had to worry. Today, I work as a contractor for the US military, helping defend US cyberspace. I wouldn't be here, doing important work and being a productive member of society, if I couldn't get coverage for my pre-existing conditions."—Bruce

"Obamacare saved my roommate's life. He was a server at a very popular restaurant, hardworking, got good tips but could not afford health insurance. He got prostate cancer. Obamacare got him the care he needed."—Deborah

"I had a mitral valve prolapse. It was discovered when I was a little girl, and basi-

cally that means that one of the valves in my heart never fully closed. I was followed annually by a cardiologist, and she told me to expect to have it fixed in my 30s. She also told me to have children in my 20s because if I needed to have it replaced (not just repaired), I would need to take blood thinners that would not allow me to be pregnant. I had my heart repaired four days after my 30th birthday, when my kids were 5 and 9 months. It was not fun, especially being a mom with little ones, but I am as good as new five years later. Only my health insurance doesn't think so. Prior to the ACA, I was rejected by the BCBS policy my husband's company was providing for us and his employees. They told us they were happy to offer coverage for my family but would not include me on our plan. Everyone gets sick. Everyone gets old. You can do everything right and take care of yourself—and still have a preexisting condition that makes you more expensive to cover. And without the ACA, I may find myself having to fight for health insurance again."—Justine

"My daughter was diagnosed with a rare Autoimmune disorder at age 18 Thanks to Obamacare, she was able to stay on our insurance until age 26 then purchase her own through her employer. Preventative care keeps her in remission. Losing the ability to afford insurance means she cannot afford care. One medication alone costs over \$2,000/month!"—Cheryl

"I am the first to acknowledge that there are major problems under the ACA. Premiums and deductibles are far too high and increasing far too much annually. I am self-employed and the individual market is getting exceedingly worse each year. CareFirst proposed a 50% rate hike for 2018 for plans that already have a \$6500 deductible. This is not sustainable. However, prior to the ACA, I was denied coverage by every insurer in the State of Maryland. The reason for the denial was that I was prescribed Lovenox, an injectable blood thinner, when I was pregnant with my three children. The letters denying coverage said I was at increased risk for thrombosis, despite the fact that I had medical documentation stating otherwise because my particular blood clotting concerns exist only in pregnancy. Before the three children in my profile picture were born, our first daughter was stillborn and I had two miscarriages. Initial pathology following her stillbirth showed that the placenta was badly clotted and blood testing showed that my Protein S levels were low. Following the two miscarriages and substantial blood work, my doctors concluded that my protein S levels dip to deficient levels in pregnancy and that I needed blood thinner in order to maintain a pregnancy. I find it ironic that the "pro-life" Republican party wishes to punish me and my family because of medication I took to ensure that my children were born alive and well. We need to fix the ACA, but this is not it."—Kim

"I have been a type I diabetic for 25 years. When my husband and I had health insurance coverage through his employer, my prescription for life-sustaining insulin cost us \$300 each month. After he began working for a new employer who did not offer health insurance, we were encouraged to shop for our healthcare on the Maryland Exchange. With our ACA plan, my insulin is now much more affordable at \$50 a month. If I have to go back to paying exorbitant amounts of money for a medication I need in order to survive, I will be forced to cut corners. If I do not take the necessary amount of insulin, I face a host of complications including kidney failure, neuropathy, blindness, and so much more. My husband and children should not have to watch me suffer the preventable side-effects of this disease. Like all other

Americans, I deserve affordable health insurance coverage and the Affordable Care Act provides that for me!"—Katie

"I am a 55-year-old humorous, fun-loving, and fiercely idealistic daughter, sister, friend, 5th grade teacher, volunteer, advocate, and 9 year breast cancer SURVIVOR. Please!! Do not allow them to change the words "breast cancer survivor" into something I loathe and fail to celebrate!! If the GOP is successful, which I CANNOT bear to consider, I become no more than a "pre-existing condition and cancer VICTIM" in the eyes of our government, insurance companies, and the healthcare system. If the GOP is successful, I become a 55-year-old angst-ridden daughter, sister, friend, 5th grade teacher, volunteer, advocate, and SCARED AS HELL breast cancer VICTIM who fears bankruptcy and spends countless hours contemplating my mortality. Please!! Keep fighting for all of us. I sincerely believe that EVERYONE IS A SURVIVOR—NOT A VICTIM—OF SOMETHING IN THIS LIFE!! Please!! Do not let the GOP take control of our narrative. We all have people who count on us. If we cannot take care of ourselves because of sky-rocketing medical costs . . . If we cannot function in our jobs properly because of constant fear and worry . . . How can we possibly take care of our beloved family, friends, and those in our care both professionally and in our volunteer endeavors???"—Carla

"Thank you for fighting this. I am a 7 1/2 year cancer survivor, but could be prohibited from coverage if my previous diagnosis is included in pre-existing condition exemptions."—Pat

"My daughter is medically fragile, and dependent on a ventilator, due to a genetic condition (Neurofibromatosis type 1, also known as NF). She also has a rare cerebrovascular disorder, called Moyamoya Disease that caused her to suffer two strokes at age 15 months old. Daphne has been through heart surgery, neurosurgeries, chemotherapy, and countless hospitalizations. She also suffers from epilepsy. Because of her vast health issues, she requires 24 hour care and receives in-home nursing through Medicaid for 16 hours a day. Cuts to Medicaid coupled with allowing insurers to deny for pre-existing conditions, and bringing back high-risk pools would put the most vulnerable people at risk . . . Every ACA repeal bill that has come forward has been a threat to my daughter's wellbeing, and this one is no exception. This is not the right path forward. The Senate should be working hard to make sure every American has access to healthcare, every Senator should be looking out for the most vulnerable Americans. There are measures needed to improve our healthcare system; but cutting access to healthcare to the people who need it most is not an improvement. For families like mine, it would be devastating."—Jenny

"In 1994, I was 24 years old and working at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire, when I suddenly got very sick and was hospitalized. I was diagnosed with acute pancreatitis of unknown cause, and spent 11 weeks in the hospital and had 2 surgeries. I did have health insurance, but the final costs from that initial illness that were billed to insurance totaled over \$250,000. Two years later I experienced a recurrence of the pancreatitis, and I was told that I now was almost assuredly going to have what is known as Idiopathic Recurrent Acute Pancreatitis. This time I was only hospitalized for 30 days, but the costs were mounting, and I began to be afraid that I was going to easily hit the one million dollar lifetime limit that was currently part of my policy. I also was unable to consider moving away from New Hampshire (to be closer to family resources and support,

for example), because of the strict Pre-existing Conditions clauses at that time. In 1998, when President Clinton signed the bill that forbade insurance providers from denying coverage for preexisting conditions, I was able to change jobs and move back to my hometown of Baltimore, Maryland. Now, after working for The Johns Hopkins University for 15 years, I have been forced by necessity to leave my job and obtain Social Security Disability benefits, and now I am also being covered primarily by Medicare. I am already living on a fixed income, at age 47, and I am not making enough money to even live without a roommate, let alone enough money to face increasing premiums as well as decreasing coverage for my medical care. Please, please, please do not let Congress pass this bill!! I would be honored for you to tell my story, and I hope that maybe it could be eye-opening for some of the representatives who seem to believe that if you are a well-educated, younger, tax paying citizen these changes won't have a big impact. This kind of unexpected medical disaster could happen to anyone."—Nicole

"11 months ago, I had to consent to a C-section at 28 weeks pregnant due to pre-eclampsia. The only thing worse than having to put my tiny son's health in jeopardy to save my life was the fear of my dying and leaving my husband to raise a 4 year old and a potentially medically-fragile infant. Now I worry, will his prematurity and my high blood pressure come back to haunt us? I got through his 142 day stay in the NICU by dreaming of what his life could be. I dream of him running when he is two, arms outstretched, of when he is 22 and graduates from college, maybe to be a NICU nurse, of when he gets married and I dance with him . . . My nightmare is that this will affect our ability to have that future I dreamed of, mostly that I won't be there for him. We have fought so hard to get our own "normal", please keep fighting for us."—Rachel

"I am a Montgomery County Maryland resident and have an aged severely disabled aged brother in a nursing home who depends on Medicaid and an adult daughter with Crohn's disease and a preexisting condition she acquired as a teenager and both of their lives will be put in jeopardy if they lose their current . . . medical coverage and I am worried and angry at the cruel and heartless Republican attempt to reduce or eliminate their life saving health coverage."—Richard

"My husband and I have both have had life threatening medical conditions. To lose our health insurance due to pre-existing conditions will be a death sentence when we run out of options. I worry most though for our medically fragile children and seniors."—Val

"Twelve years ago, before the Affordable Care Act, I was a single parent of two school age children and was denied health insurance coverage because of pre-existing conditions. I frantically searched for employment where I could have coverage in an employer plan. I was fortunate to find this . . . In 2014 I had to leave employment to become a care giver for my husband who was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. I considered myself fortunate to be able to do this because the Affordable Care Act would allow me to purchase health insurance without worrying about my pre-existing conditions. My premiums and deductibles have been very expensive, but at least I could obtain coverage. I remember the stress and fear from being previously denied coverage."—Roberta

"My 25 year old daughter is about to hit her 90-day sobriety date, thanks to her hard work, and the treatment she is receiving at a great rehab in PA. She is still going to outpatient, and she is living in a sober house with roommates. My health insurance has covered her treatment. Thank God she is

still able to be covered under our family plan. Please do not take the chance for a life in recovery, and addiction treatment services away from our children It is saving lives."—Deb

"It would be a death sentence for me. As it is now I am fighting to get on disability now. I have 4 serious pre-existing conditions. The ACA saved my husband's life no joke as he had cancer life threatening cancer and without it he would NEVER have survived period. He also has 3 other preexisting conditions. Our medical bills as it stands now are more than all our other bills combined per month. In the middle of an opiate epidemic as well as OMG addiction and or mental health issues are considered pre-existing conditions what are they thinking and ripping millions of people safety net away from them in the middle of this crisis is not human."—Jean

"I have asthma, which was and is a pre-existing condition. Early in my twenties when I was in college but not able to be on my parent's insurance, I would put off going to the doctor because I couldn't afford it when I got sick. Consequently, this meant I ended up in the ER for asthma related problems. Every 6 months I would come down with pneumonia because there was no vaccine for it then, and each time it meant a visit to the ER for intensive breathing treatments because I could not breathe. This happened so many times I eventually had to declare bankruptcy to get out from under the bills. Today my asthma medicine is covered with a nominal co-pay, I can see my doctor before a case of bronchitis becomes something worse, and I do not need to go to the ER for treatment. Now I have a twenty year old in college who has pre-existing conditions, unlike me she is still covered under our health insurance and her prescriptions are affordable. What happens to me, my daughter, and my husband who all have pre-existing conditions if our insurance is allowed to go back to the old days of charging more for our coverage? What happens to my daughter if she can no longer be on our policy? Surely the Republicans can't think that repealing these protections and replacing them with nothing is something good for our country? Are they that out of touch with the middle class? Please do not pass this, you will be hurting many, many people."—Pamela

"As a type 1 diabetic, I used to skimp on my insulin to make the bottles last longer. Keeping my blood sugar levels higher than they had to be is catastrophically unhealthy. Please don't make people with chronic illnesses have to choose between food and medicine!"—Sandra

"My sister who has Cerebral Palsy and is able to live at home at the age of 41 with my parents would lose the medical coverage and supports that ensures her wellbeing. My father who is 87 years old would now be subject to pre-existing condition exclusions. This is a man who served in the army and retired from the Postal Service in his 70's. He grew up in the Great Depression and worked tirelessly his entire life. Name me one person who does not have a pre-existing condition by the age of 87."—Bonnie

"My daughter has had pre-existing conditions since she was 22 months. She is now 23, still with developmental delays and chronic medical conditions. She will need good care and Medicaid and a Medicaid waiver program the rest of her life. She will never be able to work. If there are cuts to Medicaid and she gets denied private insurance for pre-existing conditions, our government is basically telling me and telling her, "We really don't want her to live. We really only want healthy and non-disabled people living in America. We would like her to die." That is exactly what their plan sounds like to me."—Kimbell

"I am guilty of being born with an autoimmune condition. For much of my young adult life I was not insurable because of the pre-existing condition clause, and arthritis caused by my autoimmune condition left me stuck in bed more days than not. Since the ACA, I am insured and as a result have been able to start a treatment for my condition which is literally life-changing. I can leave the house, I can have a normal life, and I'm even fostering a dog for a rescue that took dogs from the Harvey shelters before the storm, to make room for displaced pets. He needs a walk every day, at least once a day, and I can do that. The repeal makes no sense—if I can buy insurance I can work and contribute to the community. If I can't get insurance I can't get healthcare, and without healthcare I can't work, I can't contribute to society through volunteering—how do people benefit from making sure people like me can't get the healthcare we need to be able to have lives? Even if you don't care about us as people, society benefits when more people can work and pay taxes and volunteer."—Kris

"In 2006 at age 41, I was diagnosed with a rare, incurable and life-threatening disease. I had insurance through a Health Savings Account, which had a \$3,000 annual deductible and monthly premiums that increased 400% in 5 years. I've been disabled by this illness and many complications and rely on Medicare and Medicaid to survive. If either is cut I won't be able to afford the highly specialized medical care this rare disease requires. I will die as a result. Please do everything in your power to protect all of us whose lives are at risk."—Sangye

"My Wife's Father, Dennis, passed away a little over two years ago of congestive heart failure. He wasn't even 60. He was a CT Native that lived alone in SC with just his beloved German Shepherd Bobbi at his side. While his medical issues were great, he managed to hide most of them from the family . . . Had he gotten treatment early his conditions could have been easily managed but because he went untreated for years, his issues became fatal. There was eventually nothing that could be done. The saddest part of this is that we fought with him for years to sign up under the Affordable Care Act. He refused because he felt this was a hand out and he was too proud for that. When he eventually became too weak to carry out even the most basic tasks, which included hiding his condition from the family, he finally agreed to sign up. While he did sign up, he would never see his first appointment. He passed in his sleep before it could even be scheduled . . . Dennis should have lived. He could have lived. If he simply had access to the care he needed all along then he would still be with us. But we don't get to have that. Instead my Wife has a hole in her heart that may never be repaired. Tormented with the "what ifs" that can never be answered. The only thing we can be thankful for in this is that we were able to claim Bobbi, the dog he lived for. She has become a truly beloved member of our family."—Jason

"Thank you for fighting for us. If pre-existing conditions aren't covered I will quickly go bankrupt. I will lose my house that I just purchased. I have a good, steady job and a Master's degree but this would quickly bankrupt me."—Rebecca

"People need to understand how easy it is to feel like a relatively healthy person, then be saddled with a "pre-existing condition". I work in a field where it is difficult to get employer sponsored health insurance. Before the ACA, when I was applying for my own policy . . . I had to go through underwriting. They called every doctor I ever had. They requested that my entire file be sent to the insurance company. It was very invasive

. . . Finally, I received a letter. I do not qualify for insurance due to pre-existing conditions. I have never been seriously ill, never been hospitalized. I use an asthma inhaler as needed and I take one generic pill every day for another condition. This was enough to deny me. I had to go on a high risk plan which cost me almost as much as our ACA plan for a family of three. There was no drug coverage whatsoever. I had to pay list price for drugs . . . I had a well-paying job with no dependents and I still needed help from my parents to pay for all of this . . . With this new bill, these are the days we are going back to. We can't. We just can't."—Hilary

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Now that we have decided not to vote on that legislation, it is essential that this Senate move forward expeditiously to take up bipartisan legislation that has been in the works through Senator ALEXANDER and Senator MURRAY. Those conversations were bearing fruit. They were productive until the Senate decided to veer off, once again, to try to pass legislation that would have destroyed the Affordable Care Act. But now that we have decided not to go down that path, we have to quickly come back to those bipartisan talks and adopt some commonsense measures to strengthen the insurance system in a smart and targeted way.

There were many commonsense ideas that are part of those discussions, including making more permanent the so-called cost-sharing provisions, which help to lower the costs of healthcare and help to reduce the premiums, the copays, and the deductibles, and the reinsurance provisions that also have that effect, as well as discussions about how we might be able to streamline waivers within the Medicaid system without sacrificing or jeopardizing the important principles and protections that Medicaid provides on a national level.

We know we have to move quickly on this front because insurance companies all over the country have already started or are on the brink of starting the process of announcing their premiums. Unless this Senate takes action, we are going to see many high premiums. So we have to move quickly. As we do, the White House needs to stop their efforts to undermine and sabotage the Affordable Care Act.

On day one of his Presidency, President Trump adopted an Executive order that began to sabotage that program. We are already seeing the impact when it comes to some of the early premium announcements we have seen from insurance companies that offer insurance in the exchanges. That decision—that early Executive order—has created a big spike. So the President needs to act right away to assure the folks who provide healthcare throughout the country that he is going to stop the sabotage and begin to make sure that we stabilize those markets. It is under his control to say today, if he wanted, that he will continue those cost-sharing payments until the Senate and the House adopt permanent legislation to address those issues.

So it is really important that the Trump administration take those actions now to avert increasing premiums in the exchanges in the days to come. It is also essential that the Senate move forward on that legislation.

I hope we will also move forward with the continuation and some strengthening and modifications of the Children's Health Insurance Program. Again, there is bipartisan agreement on that proposal. We need to move forward right away with the support for community health centers because that authority will also expire.

I hope we will then get on with the business of putting into law the agreement in principle that was reached by President Trump and the Democratic leaders in the House and the Senate to provide protections for the Dreamers. As we all know, the President lit the 6-month fuse on these young people who were brought here through no fault of their own, and it is incumbent on all of us to make sure that these young people, who have grown up knowing only America as their country and who have grown up pledging allegiance to the flag, not face the threat of deportation 6 months from now. That is what they are facing as of this moment. The Senate should act quickly to pass the bipartisan Dream Act.

I hope we will also move forward in a bipartisan way on the important issue of tax reform because I think all of us agree that our Tax Code could be simplified. There is a lot of junk in our Tax Code that has been put there by powerful special interests who were able to hire high-priced lobbyists to exempt themselves from certain tax provisions that all other Americans have to pay. We need to clear out that underbrush and make other important reforms, and we can simplify the Tax Code.

As we do that, I was very much hoping that we would take the advice of our colleague, Senator MCCAIN, who said we need to get back to the regular order. We need to get back to the Senate conducting its business in a transparent manner. We need to have hearings. We need to bring witnesses from all different perspectives and points of view to testify as to the impact of tax reform proposals.

We short-circuited that process when it came to healthcare, and the result was a healthcare bill that the overwhelming majority of the American people rejected, including every single patient advocacy organization that weighed in on that bill—from the American Cancer Society to the American Heart Association and the American Diabetes Association. We have seen that very long list, with all of the healthcare providers, from the nurses to the doctors to the hospitals. Hospitals in rural areas, suburban areas, and urban areas all said that the healthcare bill that did not go through the regular process and did not go through the regular order was deeply flawed and would hurt America.

We should learn a lesson from that. The lesson we should learn is that tax reform, which also has an incredibly wide-reaching impact on our economy and on our country, should go through the regular order of debate. It is very alarming to see that, as of now, it appears that the process on tax reform is going to go through the same short-circuited effort as we saw with respect to healthcare, because what we have seen is that the Senate Budget Committee, on which I am proud to serve, will soon—maybe as early as next week—be taking up a budget bill that will include what are known as budget reconciliation instructions, which would provide for a tax cut that would be deficit-financed. What does that mean? It means that we would be cutting taxes and not paying for them. We would be cutting taxes and putting it on the American credit card and, as a result, dramatically increasing our debt. In fact, the reports indicate that the proposal will actually green-light a \$1.5 trillion increase in the Federal deficit.

Now, I have heard our Republican colleagues in the House and in the Senate for years talk about the fact that the debt is a huge burden overhanging on our economy. The debt is a big problem, and we need to deal with it. In fact, a few months ago, Leader MCCONNELL said that any tax overhaul plan would “have to be revenue-neutral” because of the “alarming \$20 trillion Federal debt.” Yet, just months after that statement, we are told that we are probably going to get a proposal that would actually green-light—open the door—to increasing the Federal debt by \$1.5 trillion in order to provide a tax cut.

Now, the Democrats have put forward some principles for tax reform that I believe reflect the views of the American public. What we have said is this. No. 1, tax reform should be there to help the middle class and working families with some relief, and we should not be providing millionaires in the top 1 percent with yet another tax cut windfall. That should not be the priority of the country. In fact, Secretary Mnuchin, when he was testifying during his confirmation hearings, put forward something that we called the Mnuchin rule, which said that there should be no net tax cut for the very wealthy. So we have adopted that as one of our principles for tax reform.

We have also said what Leader MCCONNELL said a few months ago, that tax reform should not add to the deficit and debt. We shouldn't pass that burden on to taxpayers and future generations to pay the interest on that debt.

Finally, we have said that it should go through the regular order, as Senator MCCAIN indicated, where we have that debate in an open forum so that everybody can understand the impact and have their say before people try to rush it through the Senate in a short period of time. So I hope that is what

we will do. These reports that we are talking about short-circuiting the process are alarming.

Then, we just heard within the last few days that, in addition to creating a process that would fast-track tax cuts that could go overwhelmingly to the wealthy and add to our deficit, this reconciliation bill will be written in a way that might allow us to try to fast-track the destruction of the Affordable Care Act again. We have finished this debate for this fiscal year, but suggestions are that it will open the door to destroying the Affordable Care Act through that fast-track, so-called reconciliation process in the months ahead.

So we would have in one piece of legislation a proposal that says: Let's cut taxes for very wealthy people, and it will add to the deficit, but we are also going to try to reduce the deficit a little bit by cutting healthcare for millions of Americans.

We thought we just had that debate, and we thought the American public just weighed in on that debate. The result of the American public's weighing in was very clear, and that is why we are not voting on that this week in the Senate. We should not open the door again to that kind of fast-track process that could do such grave harm to the healthcare of the American people.

So I hope that when it comes to tax reform, we will take a different path. As I indicated, there are things we can and should do to simplify our Tax Code. What we should not do is what we have seen in the past. What we saw in the past in the early 2000s was this fast-track procedure used to pass tax cuts that went overwhelmingly to the wealthiest Americans. In fact, after that tax cut was put in place, what went up was the income of the top 1 percent. What went up was the deficit and the debt, and everybody else was left flat or sinking. So that would be a terrible mistake.

For example, we are told that part of this will be eliminating entirely the so-called estate tax. Right now, the estate tax only applies to estates over \$11 million, for couples—over \$11 million. So 0.2 percent of Americans are impacted by the estate tax, and they are the wealthiest of the very wealthy. Yet this proposal says we are going to actually increase the debt by \$1.5 trillion in order to make room for tax cuts that benefit the top two-tenths of 1 percent of the American public.

That is heading in the wrong direction. I am pretty confident that, at least, in my State of Maryland, the overwhelming majority of our citizens would be very much opposed to that effort. What always happens is that, when it comes to cutting taxes for the very wealthy or for powerful special interests, many of our Republican colleagues here forget about all the talk about the importance of the deficit and debt. It is OK to run up a \$1.5 trillion debt on top of our already high debt in order to provide tax cuts. But then,

when those debts go up, always the conversation comes around to cutting—cutting our investments in education; cutting Medicare, turning it into a voucher program, as various Republican budgets in the House and Senate have proposed over the years; cutting Medicaid, which is what the Graham-Cassidy bill would have done and, according to the Congressional Budget Office, it is over a \$1 trillion cut, and that is before it went over a total cliff in the outyears.

So let's, please, colleagues, learn the lesson from how this healthcare fiasco unfolded. When it comes to things like tax reform, let's proceed in a bipartisan way. Let's begin in the coming week to get back to the bipartisan discussions on healthcare, so that as we head into the fall, people are not going to experience wounds that are inflicted by the lack of action by this Congress—by this Senate and this House.

I thank you, Mr. President. I hope we can get back to regular order at some point in time and really do the people's work the way it is intended to be done—in an open, transparent, and bipartisan way.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for approximately 6 or 7 minutes.

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

EPA PROPOSAL ON BIODIESEL

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I come to the floor because I am very disturbed about some actions coming out of EPA affecting biofuels and contrary to what the President promised. In other words, I think people working for the President aren't following the President's direction.

As my colleagues know well, I have championed renewable fuels and other energies for a long period of time. I have worked hard to enact policies to encourage the growth of renewable electricity from sources such as wind and solar. The same is true for biofuels. I have pursued policies to grow our country's production of renewable fuels, such as conventional corn ethanol, biodiesel, and cellulosic ethanol. I support renewable energy because it is good for the economy. It is good for our national security. It is good for our balance of trade. It is good for the rural economies, and it is good for energy independence.

I was pleased that in the most recent Presidential election, then Candidate Trump—now our President—made clear his support for ethanol and the renewable fuels standard. He said clearly: “We are going to protect the Renewable Fuels Standard.”

On another occasion, Candidate Trump recognized the benefits of the industry when he said this at an ethanol biorefinery:

Amazing what you've been able to do—amazing. And it's great for the country and

the investment is great. Beyond even the product, the investment and the jobs and everything else are great for the country.

Finally, at a summit focusing on renewable fuels in Iowa, as a candidate in January of 2016, Mr. Trump said this:

The RFS, which is Renewable Fuel Standard, is an important tool in the mission to achieve energy independence to the United States. I will do all that is in my power as President to achieve that goal. . . . As President, I will encourage Congress to be cautious in attempting to charge and change any part of the RFS. . . . Energy independence is a requirement of America to become great again.

Candidate Trump continued:

My theme is 'Make America Great Again.' It's an important part of it. The EPA should ensure that biofuel RVOs, or blend levels, match the statutory level set by Congress under the RFS.

These are, in fact, very strong words and went over well with farmers and alternative energy people in my State and throughout the country, and I am glad he said them. After years of delay and uncertainty from the previous administration, Iowans are very grateful to hear such determination and conviction from Candidate Trump, now President Trump.

I was somewhat cautious early on when the President named a few members of his Cabinet who were from oil-producing States. Fearful of Big Oil's opposition to biofuels and then concerned about whether the President would keep his promise, I, along with a number of my Senate colleagues, held a meeting in my office with the nominees for Director of EPA and Secretary of Energy, among others. We expressed to those nominees our support for biofuels and renewable energy and the benefits of strong biofuels policies. One by one, these nominees assured us of their support because they were made well aware of President Trump's sup-

port by the President himself. They told us that they knew who was boss, and they knew the President supported the Renewable Fuel Standard.

About a month ago, the President called me. I was traveling to Northwest Iowa for my town meetings. He called me. We talked on the cellphone for maybe a couple of minutes. He was somewhat worried—although he didn't say why he was worried—that people might be questioning whether he still supported ethanol and other biofuels. He made very clear to me that he supports renewable fuels and that he will keep his word on the Renewable Fuel Standard. He said he wanted me to tell that to the people of Iowa.

There are a lot of ways you can tell the people of Iowa, but one of the ways I did what he asked is I tweeted it to the 140,000 people who are on my Twitter feed. I have done what he asked me to do.

Here we are today. You can imagine my surprise this very day when I saw that President Trump's EPA has released a proposal out of the blue to reduce the volume requirements for biodiesel for 2018 and 2019 under the Renewable Fuel Standard. That is the RFS.

This action today has come out of nowhere. The EPA just released a proposal in July to set blending levels for biodiesel. It did not touch the 2018 level, which was already finalized at 2.1 billion gallons. The July proposal would keep the 2019 levels steady at 2.1 billion gallons.

This is what happened today, which I have already referred to. Today's announcement proposes to reduce both levels, contrary to what the President had said that he was supporting. It is outrageous that the EPA would change course and propose a reduction in renewable fuel volumes in this particular

way. This seems like a bait and switch from the EPA's prior proposal and from assurances from President Trump himself and from those Cabinet Secretaries who came to my office to assure us of their support for the RFS.

Reducing volumes as the EPA proposes would undermine renewable fuel production. That is contrary to the worthwhile goal of America first. It will undermine U.S. workers and harm the U.S. economy, particularly in rural America. It is contrary to the goal of meeting the country's fuel needs through domestic production, which is critical to job creation and economic growth.

This all gives me a strong suspicion that big oil companies and big oil refineries are prevailing once again in this Trump EPA, as they did in the Obama administration, despite assurances to the contrary that I have received from this administration.

You can bet that I plan to press the administration to drop this terrible plan. I hope the officials working for the President will keep the President's word, so I will make sure that EPA hears loud and clear the impact the EPA's proposal will have on Iowa's corn and soybean farmers and the biofuel producers in my State and all the jobs connected with it. That is not a way to make America strong once again.

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 7:08 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, September 27, 2017, at 10 a.m.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PATRICK J. TIBERI

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 26, 2017

Mr. TIBERI. Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call Nos. 530 (motion to suspend the rules and pass, as amended H.R. 3823), and 531 (motion to suspend the rules and pass, as amended H.R. 2061), I did not cast my vote. Had I been present, I would have voted Yea on both these votes.

RECOGNIZING THE PASSING OF COLONEL JAMES BROWN OF FREDERICKSBURG, VIRGINIA

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 26, 2017

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with the sad news that Colonel Jim Brown, a resident of Fredericksburg, Virginia passed away on August 30, 2017. Col. Brown graduated from Annandale High School in 1956 and went on to graduate from Virginia Tech with a degree in Electrical Engineering in 1960. Col. Brown served 30 years in the Army Reserves, retiring in 1991.

Col. Brown dedicated his career to public service, spending much of his career working with electric power systems ensuring power supply adequacy and reliability, in addition to restoring systems after storms and earthquakes. Jim served as the Department of Virginia President of the Reserve Officers Association, Region IV Commander as well as Department of Virginia Commander of the Military Order of the World Wars. I have had the pleasure of working with Jim on the Fredericksburg Veterans Council for the past 8 years. Jim is survived by his wife, June; children, James and Julie; and three grandchildren, Joshua, Victoria, and Michael.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join me and countless others as we recognize the many contributions of Colonel Jim Brown.

PJM 90TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. RYAN A. COSTELLO

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 26, 2017

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the hard work and dedication of all employees, past and present, at PJM Interconnection, which is celebrating its 90th anniversary.

The work of PJM employees is critical to ensuring homes and businesses—more than 65 million people in total in all or portions of 13 states and the District of Columbia—have a

reliable and efficient source of power. In fact, PJM oversees the largest power grid in North America, employing more than 600 people at their headquarters in my district near Valley Forge, Pennsylvania.

PJM was founded in 1927 when three utilities determined they could provide power more efficiently by interconnecting to share their generating resources and created the world's first continuous power pool. Over the past 90 years, PJM has grown to include more than one thousand members representing transmission owners, generation owners, consumers, and residential and commercial customers. PJM earned the distinction of being the country's first fully-functioning independent system operator in 1997 and the country's first fully-functioning regional transmission organization in 2002.

Mr. Speaker, PJM Interconnection has demonstrated extraordinary leadership and embraced innovation in the constantly-evolving utility industry and, therefore, I would ask my colleagues to join me in extending best wishes for continued success to all employees as they commemorate this memorable milestone.

HANK ALDERFER

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 26, 2017

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Hank Alderfer for receiving the 2017 Hall of Fame Award from the West Chamber.

The Hall of Fame Award recognizes outstanding individuals who have significant, long-lasting impacts through their leadership and contributions to Jefferson County's economy, community and legacy.

Hank Alderfer has shown a lifelong dedication to the Jefferson County community and is known for his love of history in the mountain communities. He was raised in Evergreen, Colorado on the Alderfer Ranch. Eventually the Alderfer family sold or donated much of their property to Jefferson County Open Space which would become the 242-acre Alderfer/Three Sisters Open Space Park. When the Alderfer ranch house and barn were designated historical landmarks, Hank contributed critical information to Jefferson County Planning and Zoning in the creation of the Evergreen Area Community Plan. During his tenure on the Board of the Evergreen Park and Recreation District, Hank was instrumental in developing the Evergreen hiking and biking trails known as the Evergreen Trails Plan. Hank also shares his vast knowledge of the history of the area in his Canyon Courier newspaper column "Yesteryear."

I extend my deepest congratulations to Hank Alderfer for this well-deserved recognition by the West Chamber of Jefferson County.

HONORING THE LIFE OF REV. IMRE A. BERTALAN

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 26, 2017

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life of Rev. Imre A. Bertalan, devoted husband, father and grandfather, who served as a compassionate pastor of Calvin United Church of Christ and was known for his dedication to his church, his dedication to his Hungarian heritage, and advocating for his beloved East Toledo neighborhood, Birmingham. Imre passed away after a valiant struggle against cancer on August 29, 2017 in Latrobe Hospital in Latrobe, PA.

Imre was born in New Brunswick, New Jersey, on October 4, 1949 to Margaret and the Rev. Imre G. Bertalan. He graduated from New Brunswick High School, held a bachelor's degree from Rutgers University and a master of divinity degree from Princeton Theological Seminary.

Initially not intending to be a minister after graduating from seminary, Imre started as a community organizer and helped form the East Toledo Community Organization. He became a member of East Toledo's Calvin United Church of Christ, which was founded as the Hungarian Evangelical Reformed Church. He was elected pastor in 1979.

During his tenure as pastor, Imre reached out to the congregations of all of the religions in the neighborhood so that Calvin was not just known as a Hungarian church, but as a neighborhood church open to the entire neighborhood.

True to his Hungarian-American roots, Imre was integrally involved in efforts on behalf of America's ethnic communities. A strong representative particularly of the Hungarian-Americans with whom he shared a common heritage, Imre served on the boards of national Hungarian-American organizations for many years. He extended his national efforts to his family, instilling a love of their Hungarian tradition in all. He was encouraging, comforting, filled with abiding kindness and a gentle soul, always advising people that "everything will be all right."

After decades in ministry as pastor, Imre became the executive director of Bethlen Communities in Ligonier, PA, a retirement and nursing community founded by the Hungarian Reformed Federation of America. Even after his move to Pennsylvania, Imre and his wife maintained a home in the Birmingham neighborhood of Toledo and were active in the planning for the annual Birmingham Ethnic Festival.

Reverend Imre Bertalan will long be remembered for his dedication to his family, church, the Toledo community at large, and Bethlen Communities. A beautiful memorial service was held for Imre at Calvin United Church of Christ in East Toledo on September 23, 2017. We gathered together and gave thanks for the

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

ministry of Reverend Imre Bertalan. Just as importantly, we remembered a loving family man and friend.

We offer Imre's beautiful and artistic wife of almost 37 years, Magdalene "Baba" J. Ujvagi, Imre's children, Sara Davis, Magda Bertalan, Juli Bertalan, Margit Bertalan, and Imre Bertalan, his five grandchildren, his sisters Lilian Bertalan and M. Sarah Bertalan, his family and friends our prayers and hope. May they find comfort in the wonderful gift of Imre's life, their memories of their husband, father, brother, uncle, grandfather, friend, his imprimatur on his church and neighborhood. All that he did contributed to humanity's greater good and the glory of God.

Hungarian in his soul, a patriotic American, faithful Vicar of Christ, Imre Bertalan's life was writ large. His life will long echo in his family and friends, his congregations and those he served so well. I know he was welcomed home with "well done, my good and faithful servant."

HONORING MS. PATRICIA
McDERMOTT

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 26, 2017

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the continuous dedication and hard work of Ms. Patricia McDermott. Ms. McDermott is an invaluable member of our community and longtime dedicated employee of the Philadelphia Municipal Court.

Ms. McDermott, a trailblazer in the Philadelphia Municipal Courts, was the first woman to be appointed to Deputy Court Administrator of the Civil Division in 1996. However, her path to arrive at this point was not easy. As a single mother, Ms. McDermott struggled early in her career to find her footing within the court. Nevertheless, she worked her way up the system diligently, starting in the Private Criminal Complaint Unit, then moving to the First Filing Unit in the clerical division, then to Assistant Supervisor, then to Supervisor until she was appointed to her current position.

Ms. McDermott has shown exemplary devotion and dedication throughout her 43-year-long career. She has done much good for the City throughout her tenure, including her several renovation projects such as the combination of units work space at 34 S. 11th Street 2002 and the successful relocation of Municipal Court's Civil Division to The Widener Building in June 2012. Ms. McDermott was also responsible for the implementation of a nationally recognized electronic case management system known as C.L.A.I.M.S.

Ms. McDermott's work is certainly admirable and notable. A devoted wife and mother of four children, she will always consider the Philadelphia Municipal Court to be her second family. Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring Ms. Patricia McDermott for the wonderful work she has done and continues to do for the Philadelphia Municipal Courts.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MR. JOE
CURRY

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 26, 2017

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the passing of Mr. Joe Curry. Mr. Curry passed peacefully at his home in Lancaster County recently at the age of 84. He is survived by his two sons and three daughters.

Mr. Curry was a well-respected figure in the community. Born in the Depression, Mr. Curry experienced many things in life. He served as a Marine during the Korean War, started and ran a thriving crab steaming business, and later Curry Pottery, to which many in the community including myself, would stop by to say hello and seek his counsel on local issues.

Mr. Curry was known as a great community leader, whether it was serving on the Northern Neck Planning District Commission, the Bay Aging Board or the Lancaster County Economic Development Authority. However, Mr. Curry's figure as a community leader went well beyond the various Boards and Commissions he served on. His true passion was helping the needy, and one of his favorite charities was the Boys and Girls Club. Mr. Curry was recognized for his charitable work in the Commonwealth, receiving numerous awards from the American Red Cross, American Heart Association, Kiwanis Club, and Rotary International. With that said, Joe Curry will be remembered most for his gracious heart and tireless work towards racial reconciliation.

I am grateful to have known Mr. Curry and thankful for his words of wisdom and support over the years. Mr. Curry will be dearly missed by his family and friends. Virginia and the Nation sends its greatest gratitude for his service in the U.S. Marine Corps and in his community.

HONORING MR. EDUARDO DIOKNO

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 26, 2017

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I, along with my colleague Representative MARK DESAULNIER, rise today to honor Eduardo Diokno upon his retirement after 12 years of service with Contra Costa County. Mr. Diokno currently serves as Deputy Chief of Staff to Supervisor Federal Glover and has been a thoughtful policymaker and committed voice for Filipino Americans in the County.

Mr. Diokno is a lifelong East County resident with a passion for serving our community. He served our country in the U.S. Army as a 2nd Lieutenant and later joined the Army Reserves. Mr. Diokno then worked as a journalist for 28 years with the Philippine News, Oakland Tribune, and Contra Costa Times where he reported on politics and policy-making.

Upon joining the County, Mr. Diokno served as a Senior Field Representative and then a Policy Analyst before stepping into his current position with Supervisor Glover. In his various roles, Mr. Diokno facilitated the County's first recognition of the contributions of Filipino Americans, developed small business initia-

tives, and worked with committees and advisory bodies developing health policy at the county level. He also served as the principal liaison to Bay Point, the County's largest unincorporated community.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Diokno has served our country and our county and his legacy sets a high standard to which other public servants should aspire. Therefore, it is fitting and proper that we honor him here today and extend our best wishes for an enjoyable retirement.

JOHN ELLIS

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 26, 2017

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud John Ellis for receiving the 2017 Jefferson County Hall of Fame Award from the West Chamber.

The Hall of Fame Award recognizes outstanding individuals who have significant, long-lasting impacts through their leadership and contributions to Jefferson County's economy, community and legacy.

John Ellis has shown a lifelong dedication to the Jefferson County community. His extensive involvement includes serving on many nonprofit boards such as the Evergreen Christian Outreach, Blue Spruce Kiwanis, Evergreen Audubon, and Jeffco Outdoor Lab Foundation just to name a few. For the past eleven years John has served as an elected official with the Evergreen Metropolitan District and for almost four years has served on the Evergreen Parks and Recreation District board. In addition to these endeavors, John is an avid fisherman and has been teaching fly fishing for the past 27 years and is involved with Evergreen Trout Unlimited preserving cold-eater fisheries.

John Ellis' history of volunteerism and support of the community and its businesses spans decades. He currently holds the position of Community Relations Manager for Evergreen National Bank.

I extend my deepest congratulations to John Ellis for this well-deserved recognition by the West Chamber of Jefferson County.

HONORING PRIVATE FIRST CLASS
FREELON F. KELLY

HON. MARSHA BLACKBURN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 26, 2017

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, today we honor Wayne County resident, Private First Class Freelon F. Kelly, decorated combat veteran, farmer, friend, and fallen hero.

Born on the 2nd of May, 1912, PFC Kelly trained as an infantryman and shipped to the European Theater of Operations in 1940 where his 26th Infantry Regiment of the 1st Infantry Division led America's first-ever combat amphibious assault in North Africa. His division, nicknamed the "Big Red One" for the red Arabic numeral 1 on their shoulder sleeve insignia, fought the enemy at Tunisia's Kasserine Pass, the Amphibious Battle of Gela, Sicily, the Normandy invasion, the battle of

Aachen, Germany, and the Battle of the Bulge in Belgium's Ardennes province.

The Big Red One held the critical shoulder of the Bulge at Büllingen—a small, rural town of 2,000 residents—facing insurmountable odds, rallying to their motto: “No Mission Too Difficult. No Sacrifice Too Great.” PFC Kelly was Killed In Action on a snowy, bitterly cold day, December 21st, 1944, and for his sacrifice was awarded a Bronze Star and two Purple Hearts. His name is inscribed on the 1st Infantry Division obelisk in Büllingen, commemorating the 458 Big Red One soldiers who died there while “fighting for the liberty of the world.”

He was brought home to his final resting place in the Gallaher Cemetery on Glenrock Rd less than a mile from his family's farmland through which the Factory Creek flows. Many family memories were made with his nine siblings, on this land, in this creek, and throughout his 32 years.

We dedicate the Factory Creek Bridge to the memory of PFC Freelon F. Kelly, WWII hero, who not only ensured the lives lost in combat were not lost in vain, but also embodied the legacy of service and sacrifice of The Greatest Generation.

LYNN JOHNSON

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 26, 2017

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Lynn Johnson for receiving the West Chamber's 2017 Jefferson County Hall of Fame Award.

The Hall of Fame Award recognizes outstanding individuals who have significant, long-lasting impacts through their leadership and contributions to Jefferson County's economy, community and legacy. Known for her dedication in helping children, families, and those who need it most, Lynn has faithfully served Jefferson County and greater Colorado for over twenty years. Lynn began her career as a probation and parole officer with the United States Courts where she was responsible for supervising offenders with mental health problems and those convicted of sex offenses. Later she acted as a policy advisor for Governor Bill Owens before assuming the position of Chief of Staff to the Lieutenant Governor Jane Norton in 2003. Following this position, Lynn managed her own consulting firm which specialized in issues regarding mental health, high risk youth, developmental disabilities, child welfare and early childhood education. In that role, Lynn helped develop programs related to juvenile justice, prioritizing children and familial wellbeing.

During her career, Lynn was appointed to various task forces by three different Colorado Governors including Welfare Reform, Youth Leadership Commission, and most recently, Colorado's Human Trafficking Council. Lynn currently serves as the Executive Director of Jefferson County Human Services which includes Divisions of Head Start, Career and Family Services, Community Assistance, Workforce and Youth and Families (Child Welfare). Earlier this year, she was nominated by President Trump to be the Assistant Secretary for the Administration for Children and Fam-

ilies acknowledging the impact of Lynn's tireless service and instrumental contributions to Colorado's community as well as her potential to influence national policy.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Lynn Johnson for this well-deserved recognition by the West Chamber of Jefferson County.

HONORING MR. FRANK MONTEIRO

HON. ELIZABETH H. ESTY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 26, 2017

Ms. ESTY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Frank Monteiro, the Chief Operating Officer of MacDermid Performance Solutions and a true leader in the Waterbury, Connecticut community. Today, the Waterbury Regional Chamber is honoring Frank with the 2017 Malcolm Baldrige Community Award for his success at MacDermid and his commitment to the City of Waterbury.

A Waterbury native, Frank has been with MacDermid for nearly two decades. During Frank's time with MacDermid, he has helped guide the company through substantial transitions for the business and the local economy. Frank has been a champion for expanding the company's presence in Waterbury, working to protect 200 jobs at the research and development center and encouraging the company to expand its workforce in our town. He has served as COO of Performance Solutions since 2015.

In addition to his leadership in local business, Frank has dedicated his time and expertise to support important causes in his community. He works with the Waterbury Regional Chamber's professional development program and is an active supporter of Multiple Sclerosis research and the Greater Waterbury Campership Fund. Frank also serves on the boards of a number of local groups including the Waterbury Sportsmen's Club, the Waterbury Symphony Orchestra, the Naugatuck Valley Community College, and the United Way of Greater Waterbury.

Mr. Speaker, Frank Monteiro has been an instrumental leader in our Waterbury community, both as a leader of MacDermid Performance Solutions and a champion for our local economy. Therefore, it is fitting and proper that we honor him here today and congratulate him on this well-deserved award.

IN RECOGNITION OF VIRGINIA'S
10TH DISTRICT 2017 ANGELS IN
ADOPTION AWARD

HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 26, 2017

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize the generosity of a family in Virginia's 10th Congressional District, Colleen and Richard Davis. The Davis' have provided a loving home to two beautiful twin boys, and, this year, I am pleased to congratulate them on being the Tenth District Angels in Adoption Awardee.

Colleen and Richard had three biological children of their own, as well as one special

needs adopted child, raising them in a warm and loving home in Winchester, Virginia. During Colleen's service to the New Eve Maternity Home, a home for expectant women in crisis pregnancy in Winchester, she met a young mother and her twin newborn boys. Upon seeing the traumatic situation, when the young mothers' drug abuse and other mental health problems caused Child Protective Services to plan on placing the newborns in a temporary foster arrangement, Colleen and Richard offered to take the twins into their home and care for them until the young woman was able to provide a stable upbringing.

What was expected to be a few weeks of care was extended to months, and now about two years. While the last two years have surely been filled with joyous moments, it has not always been easy. Colleen and Richard have seen the young mother through many hardships and crises, always encouraging her to maintain a close relationship with her sons, even though it means frequent transporting of the twin boys to the mother's new home in another city. By opening their home and their hearts, Colleen and Richard have demonstrated the most sincere form of love possible.

I am grateful to Colleen and Richard for helping the mothers and children who live at the New Eve Maternity Home and for the incredible generosity and sensitivity they have displayed in caring for the twins as though they were their own, as well as their willingness to return them to their natural mother, if she becomes able to care for them. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Colleen and Richard's tireless dedication to foster care, making these parents not only stand out in Virginia's Tenth Congressional District, but earning our recognition as deserving of the 2017 Angels in Adoption award.

MIKE MOORE

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 26, 2017

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Mike Moore for receiving the West Chamber's 2017 Jefferson County Hall of Fame Award.

The Hall of Fame Award recognizes outstanding individuals who have significant, long-lasting impacts through their leadership and contributions to Jefferson County's economy, community and legacy.

As a Colorado native, Mike has faithfully served the Jefferson County community his entire life. After serving in the Peace Corps, Mike returned to Denver in 1966 to become the Executive Director of Denver Opportunity at the War on Poverty Community Action Agency. Mike later co-founded the Jefferson County Open Living School in Evergreen open to anyone within the county who wished to attend. Turning his attention to the environment, in 1972 Mike was a founding member of Plan Jeffco, which advocated for the creation of the Jefferson County Open Space (JCOS) program. The following year Mike was appointed a founding member of the Jefferson County Open Space Advisory Committee overseeing the JCOS program, which has since helped

preserve the natural and cultural resources of over 50,000 acres of land. Mike also helped found the Evergreen Center for the Arts in 1976, establishing an outlet for local artists to pursue their creative endeavors. In 1988, Mike helped found Culture Jeffco and promoted the formation of the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District. A year later he was appointed as the founding chairman of the Jefferson County Cultural Council, the governing board of the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District that was responsible for distributing the county's annual share of Tier III funds for art, music, theater, dance, zoology, botany, natural history, or cultural history.

Mike's civic achievements include recognition from the Jefferson County League of Women Voters as well as the Rex Morgan Citizen Volunteer Award. In his five decades in the Jefferson County area, Mike has worked tirelessly to improve the City of Evergreen and Jefferson County through public service.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Mike Moore for this well-deserved recognition by the West Chamber of Jefferson County.

THANKING KEVIN CHAMBERS FOR HIS SERVICE TO THE HOUSE

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 26, 2017

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to offer my thanks to Kevin Chambers for over thirty-five years of dedicated service to the United States House of Representatives. Kevin will be retiring this Friday, September 29. He is a constituent in Maryland's Fifth Congressional District, living in Calvert County, and I am proud to represent him and his family in Congress.

Kevin has been the very definition of exceptional customer service that all Chief Administrative Office (CAO) employees strive to provide to the House community. His thorough leadership and oversight in assisting Members with setting up their offices and with relocations during numerous Congressional transitions has provided a template for success for many years to come. Kevin's extensive knowledge of House furniture and its history and his mastery of building and sustaining relationships with Members and staff has resulted in cohesiveness and joint partnerships throughout the House campus. He has also maintained strong relationships over the years with colleagues from the CAO and Architect of the Capitol offices. For all who have had the pleasure of working with him, Kevin has been an invaluable asset and will be greatly missed.

Kevin began his career with the House CAO on December 12, 1980 as a Laborer. In March 1987 he advanced to Assistant Warehouse Manager and became Warehouse Manager in 1990. In that capacity, he served as a point of contact between CAO staff and Members of Congress regarding service orders for office furnishings. In 2001, the CAO called upon Kevin to offer his expertise to the newly developed First Call customer service center as a Senior Customer Solutions Consultant. There, he provided guidance, advice, and assistance to House offices regarding the selection and purchase of office furniture, equipment, and supplies. Later, Kevin became a Senior Team

Lead with the Modular-Transition office. In 2016, Kevin moved to the Manager role and led the team on House-wide projects, including the Cannon House Office Building Renewal Relocations effort. Over many years, Kevin has provided guidance to management as a subject-matter expert on House operations, and he has been an integral part of the CAO.

Among his many accomplishments over the years, Kevin supervised the CAO's Transition Office staff over the past eight Congressional transitions. He was always the first to arrive and last to leave. He provided the transitional move coordinators with the knowledge and support necessary to assist incoming freshman Members and participating returning Members effectively and efficiently. Not only has Kevin been thoroughly involved with Congressional Transitions, his extensive CAO and House knowledge put him in a position to become the Clerk's Office's main point of contact for all Congressional special elections.

Furthermore, Kevin has dedicated his career to making the CAO and the House of Representatives a better place to work and a place that runs as smoothly and efficiently as possible. He has passed along his many years of project management and customer service experience to staff and coworkers so they can continue the extremely high standards of quality service expected by the CAO. On behalf of the entire House, I extend congratulations to Kevin for his many years of dedication and outstanding contributions. I hope my colleagues will join me in wishing him and his wife Cynthia many happy years together in retirement.

HONORING CSM (RET.) SIDNEY BROWN

HON. MARSHA BLACKBURN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 26, 2017

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, today we honor retired Army Command Sergeant Major Sidney Brown, decorated combat soldier, passionate community leader, and tireless advocate for the Clarksville-Montgomery County area and its veterans.

During 30 years of active military duty, CSM Brown deployed with the 101st Airborne Division, serving two tours in Vietnam, Germany, and Korea, earning distinction as a member of the Triple Nickle—555th Parachute Infantry Association. For his outstanding service, he was awarded the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star, and multiple medals and badges.

Upon retirement, he was elected as a Montgomery County Commissioner. Within one year of appointment as Chairman of the Clarksville-Montgomery Veterans' Home Board, he gathered support from city council members, county commissioners, and state and federal officials to build a much-needed nursing home for veterans to "give back to them what they sacrificed to give us." In spite of many obstacles in fundraising and land acquisition, the Veterans' Home opened in 2016—due in large part to CSM Brown's steadfast mission. His ever-present enthusiasm, determination and devotion make him an inspirational model for the active-duty soldiers, veteran students and ROTC cadets he

has championed for decades. He has dedicated his life to our nation's military, and we are truly humbled to honor him.

Leadership is not as it appears, but as it performs. We join his family and friends in dedicating the Sidney Brown Bistro to CSM Brown, who ensured our veterans' sacrifices are revered and repaid.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LISA BLUNT ROCHESTER

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 26, 2017

Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER. Mr. Speaker, I wish to clarify my position for the record on roll call votes cast on September 25, 2017.

On Roll Call Vote Number 530, on consideration of H.R. 3823 I did not vote. It was my intention to vote "No."

On Roll Call Vote Number 531, on consideration of H.R. 2061 I did not vote. It was my intention to vote "Yea."

GREG STEVINSON

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 26, 2017

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Greg Stevinson for receiving the West Chamber's 2017 Jefferson County Hall of Fame Award.

The Hall of Fame Award recognizes outstanding individuals who have significant, long-lasting impacts through their leadership and contributions to Jefferson County's economy, community and legacy.

As a resident of Jefferson County for over fifty years, Greg has used his leadership and business insight to help shape our community. Greg was instrumental in the creation of the Colorado Mills Mall and the Denver West Office Park in Lakewood. For these efforts he received the honor of being named businessperson of the year by the Rocky Mountain News. Greg has also been an ardent supporter of open space in Jefferson County. He served on committees including Jefferson County Open Space, Save Open Space and Jeffco Outdoors Foundation.

Greg has served on several boards including the Colorado Baseball Stadium District, Red Rocks Community College Foundation and Craig Hospital. He is known for his personal drive, public service, and cultural contributions, which have made a tremendous impact on this county.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Greg Stevinson for this well-deserved recognition by the West Chamber of Jefferson County.

TAIWAN NATIONAL DAY

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 26, 2017

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate our friend, Taiwan, as it commemorates the 106th anniversary of its National Day on October 10th.

The United States and Taiwan have always had a strong relationship, even in the absence of formal diplomatic ties. This relationship has led to cooperation in many areas such as matters of international security, trade and investment, cultural exchange and education, etc. Taiwan is also a great friend in times of need. When Hurricane Harvey recently wrought destruction and wreaked havoc in areas of Texas, Louisiana, Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands Taiwan made a generous contribution of \$800,000 to help the hurricane's victims. Taiwan's President, Tsai Ing-wen, repeatedly expressed concern for our country's hurricane victims, and the people of Taiwan have, once again, demonstrated their friendship with the United States.

We need to continue to give Taiwan all the support it needs. Taiwan is a democracy and deserves our friendship and best wishes.

It is my privilege today to rise to congratulate Taiwan as it celebrates its 106th National Day.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 26, 2017

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, due to a personal conflict, I was unable to make votes. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 530, and YEA on Roll Call No. 531.

RECOGNIZING AIR EVAC LIFETEAM

HON. MARSHA BLACKBURN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 26, 2017

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, more than 46 million Americans and tens of thousands of Tennesseans live over an hour away from Level 1 or 2 trauma centers, making them twice as likely to die from an accident or medical condition. Rapid, sophisticated, air transportation is their only option for complex, time-dependent care.

That is why today we recognize Air Evac Lifeteam for its critical service to rural, medically-underserved communities. Five bases in Lawrenceburg, Parsons, Savannah, Waverly, and Waynesboro, Tennessee, serve all 19 contiguous counties in the 7th Congressional District through advanced helicopter ambulances and personnel.

Their crews of 65 pilots, nurses, paramedics, and mechanics maintain a patient-first focus on high-tech, fixed- and rotary-wing aircraft. Many pilots, having served in Iraq and Afghanistan on military air assaults and medivac missions, use those same skills to save thousands of lives every year in Tennessee. Many crews are regularly deployed for disaster relief nationwide. Their service is invaluable.

Air medical transportation will ensure access to emergency health care for the people who need it most, and Air Evac Lifeteam puts the journey in experienced, cutting-edged, compassionate hands

HONORING THE TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT FOR THEIR ROLE IN HURRICANE HARVEY RELIEF EFFORTS

HON. MARC A. VEASEY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 26, 2017

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the Texas Military Department for their outstanding response and service to the state in the wake of Hurricane Harvey.

The Texas Military Department is a unique force comprised of the Texas Army National Guard, the Texas Air National Guard, the Texas State Guard and the Domestic Operations Task Force. With little notice, Texas National and State Guard forces mobilized to participate in search and rescue missions, provide vital first aid, and assist in transportation and distribution support to the storm-ravaged areas of the Lone Star State. The 12,000 soldiers of the Texas National Guard are fully mobilized and completely engaged in operations serving Texans in need.

Since Hurricane Harvey made landfall, the Texas National Guard has performed more than 16,000 rescues and evacuated more than 7,400 people and 1,000 animals. They also ensured that the immediate needs of Texas residents were met by setting up over 30 points of distribution for food, water, and other vital commodities between Beaumont and Corpus Christi. There are 35 active Texas State Guard Shelter teams sheltering more than 8,000 evacuees at 13 shelters across the state and the Texas National Guard assisted in setting up three evacuation hubs. Rescue efforts have involved over 400 vehicles ranging from Humvees and troop transport vehicles to re-fuelers and wreckers. The Texas National Guard also deployed its 16 aircraft fleet to support rescue operations all along the coast, including numerous Blackhawk, Lakota, and Chinook helicopters.

Not only have Texas' military forces proved crucial during the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey, the Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth located in my district continues to play a critical role in the relief effort. The base housed a massive influx of aircraft that was evacuated ahead of the storm in order to avoid damage to critical military weaponry. It also became a rallying point for military and other first responders from all over the country to organize recovery efforts. I cannot stress enough the importance of this strategic base and its role in providing a swift response during the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Harvey.

The Texas Military Department's dedication to working around the clock in incredibly challenging conditions and its demonstrated ability to integrate seamlessly with active duty military troops, first responders, and the myriad of volunteers in the midst of one of the worst natural disasters to affect Texas is truly an embodiment of their motto of "Texans Serving Texas."

The Texas Military Department's response to Hurricane Harvey complimented federal efforts and the countless Texans who rose to the challenge of helping their fellow Texans during their time of need. As a member of the House Armed Services Committee and a native Texan, I could not be more proud of my state's response during one of the worst natural disasters to ever affect Texas.

I honor the Texas Military Department and the countless first responders who answered the call for help from their fellow Texans.

HONORING ST. MICHAEL PARISH ON THEIR 150TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 26, 2017

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor all of the parishioners and clergy—past and present—of St. Michael Parish in Orland Park, Illinois, as they celebrate the 150th anniversary of their parish.

Established shortly after the end of the Civil War, St. Michael Parish began with a simple wooden church, twenty feet long and thirty feet wide. The first Mass was held on the Feast of St. Michael the Archangel on September 29, 1867. After World War II, the parish began construction of a grade school which opened in September, 1949, to better serve the growing parish. As growth continued a new church needed to be built and was dedicated in 1969, followed by a Parish Activities Center in 1981.

What has remained constant through all of the changes is the commitment of St. Michael's parishioners to be a gathering of Catholic people believing in God's love, manifested by His Son Jesus, and working to fulfill His mission on earth. I have experienced the daily manifestation of this commitment during my visits to St. Michael Parish, whether for worship or to visit the school. St. Michael School is an exemplary Catholic elementary school that has won a National Blue Ribbon Award and emphasizes academics, moral values, and discipline. The spirit of the school really shined through during my visit for Catholic Schools Week.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to recognize Father Paul Burak and all the parishioners of St. Michael, and congratulate them on the 150th anniversary of their parish. May their community continue to thrive and grow in God's love.

WORLD CONTRACEPTION DAY

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 26, 2017

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today is World Contraception Day, which provides us an opportunity to talk about the importance of access to contraceptives.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has called contraception one of the greatest public health interventions of the 20th Century.

They improve overall health and well-being, reduce maternal mortality, and allow women to have greater control over their bodies and their lives.

The Affordable Care Act mandated contraception coverage with no co-pays, and the evidence of the value of this protection is clear.

We should build on this success and ensure all women—both here at home and across the globe—have access to affordable, live-changing contraception.

COMMEMORATING ENFIELD POLICE EXPLORERS' 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 26, 2017

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Enfield Police Explorers. The Enfield Police Explorer program was founded in 1967 by the late Chief Walter J. Skower to serve as a lifeline for troubled youth and as an opportunity for those interested in law enforcement. At its inception, the program was the first in the state of Connecticut and the second in the nation.

The Enfield Police Department provides its Explorers with a firsthand view of what it's like to be a Law Enforcement Officer. They receive CPR and first aid training, physical fitness instruction, and traditional classroom education designed to prepare them for a career in Law Enforcement, military or community service, and related careers. The Explorers use their training to support the police department and community by providing traffic control and security at various events, volunteering their time and efforts to support many local and national charities, and even aiding in emergency situations including storm response and locating missing persons. Each year Explorers attend various competitions and a week-long academy, where they consistently earn accolades and awards. While many members have indeed gone on to become Law Enforcement professionals and members of the Armed Forces, most importantly, Explorers become responsible citizens and contributors to their communities.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the Enfield Police Explorers program. In its fifty years, the program has become a bridge between the law enforcement and youth, fostering public safety as a career opportunity, while working to make the community a better place.

RECOGNIZING THE CENTENNIAL BIRTHDAY OF DOROTHY SHELTON

HON. NORMA J. TORRES

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 26, 2017

Mrs. TORRES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a long-time resident of my district, Doro-

thy Shelton, as she celebrates 100 years of love, life and dedicated service to her community.

On Thursday, October 5th, 2017, Pomona resident Dorothy Shelton will celebrate her 100th birthday. Ms. Shelton has resided in my home district for the last 13 years where she lives with her daughter Sonya Muhammad. We are lucky to have someone like Ms. Shelton in California's 35th district.

Ms. Shelton was born and raised in Chicago, Illinois, where in 1942 she began what would begin a lifelong career in public service by working for the Internal Revenue Service. During her time there, she worked in the Special Procedures section of the Collection Department. Ms. Shelton oversaw liens, levies, and the acquisition of personal property.

After 24 years of dedicated service in the IRS, Ms. Shelton went on to perform the same level of service for the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms in 1966. Once there, she worked with a team of investigators who confiscated illegal firearms and enforced federal laws regarding the illegal possession and sales of alcohol and tobacco.

Mr. Speaker, Dorothy's dedication extends far beyond her government service. Ms. Shelton has always been a community advocate and has belonged to numerous community organizations and social service agencies. She once supervised a housing program funded by the City of Chicago, where she helped secure housing for low-income families in the region. Ms. Shelton was also the first African American president for the National Treasury Employees Union, Chapter 94, from 1966 to her retirement in 1981.

She retired with 38 years of service to the government. She is loved by her daughter, two grandsons and their wives, and six great-grandchildren. Dorothy Shelton is indeed Pomona's national treasure.

For her endless dedication to her family and her community, and for being an example of love and kindness, I would like to recognize Ms. Shelton for such a monumental feat, and wish her a very Happy Birthday on the House floor today.

IN HONOR OF HOUSING CHOICES COALITION FOR PERSONS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 26, 2017

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, along with my colleagues Congresswoman ANNA ESHOO and

Congressman JIMMY PANETTA, I rise today to acknowledge Housing Choices Coalition for persons with Developmental Disabilities (Housing Choices). This organization was founded in 1997 with the goal of creating quality, affordable housing opportunities for people with developmental disabilities in Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Monterey and San Benito Counties.

Because of the lack of affordable and inclusive housing choices for people with developmental disabilities, Housing Choices was launched with the mission of enhancing the quality of life for people with developmental disabilities. Their hope was to relieve the segregation sometimes experienced by adults in restrictive residential facilities.

Housing Choices partnership model of permanent supportive housing for people with developmental disabilities seeks to work with local jurisdictions and housing developers to secure long-term commitments of rental units in new affordable housing properties for people with developmental disabilities. Residents are then assisted in maintaining their housing with an onsite Resident Coordinator. This housing model promotes integration of people with developmental disabilities in typical affordable housing communities.

Since 2002, Housing Choices has provided housing advice to 3,000 people with developmental disabilities. They further support housing stability for residents by providing on-site resident support services for hundreds of people. Housing Choices' approach has helped over 1,000 people with developmental disabilities annually navigate entry points into the community's supply of affordable rental housing properties.

Housing Choices helps residents with developmental disabilities understand and comply with lease terms and property rules to prevent evictions. They accomplish this by helping to resolve problems with neighbors, roommates, and property managers. Housing Choices sponsors regular workshops and social events for residents. This helps foster leadership among tenants. By fostering understanding and respect they also help create supportive communities of friends and neighbors to further integrate residents into their community.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring HCC for twenty years of extraordinary leadership and advocacy in the community of San Jose and for persons with disabilities globally.

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S6097–S6158

Measures Introduced: Twelve bills and one resolution were introduced, as follows: S. 1857–1868, and S. Res. 268. **Page S6134**

Measures Reported:

S. 607, to establish a business incubators program within the Department of the Interior to promote economic development in Indian reservation communities. (S. Rept. No. 115–163) **Page S6133**

Measures Passed:

Secretary of Education Waiver Authority: Senate passed S. 1866, to provide the Secretary of Education with waiver authority for the reallocation rules and authority to extend the deadline by which funds have to be reallocated in the campus-based aid programs under the Higher Education Act of 1965 due to Hurricane Harvey, Hurricane Irma, and Hurricane Maria, to provide equitable services to children and teachers in private schools. **Pages S6142–43**

RAISE Family Caregivers Act: Senate passed S. 1028, to provide for the establishment and maintenance of a Family Caregiving Strategy, after agreeing to the following amendments proposed thereto: **Page S6143**

Cornyn (for Collins) Amendment No. 1101, in the nature of a substitute. **Page S6143**

Cornyn (for Collins) Amendment No. 1102, to amend the title. **Page S6143**

Humanitarian Crises in Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen: Senate agreed to S. Res. 114, expressing the sense of the Senate on humanitarian crises in Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen, after withdrawing the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, and agreeing to the following amendment proposed thereto: **Pages S6143–44**

Cornyn (for Lee) Amendment No. 1103, to recognize that charities, non-profit organizations, religious organizations, and businesses of the United States have an important role in addressing humanitarian crises. **Pages S6143–44**

APEC Business Travel Cards Reauthorization Act: Senate passed S. 504, to permanently authorize the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Business Travel Card Program, after agreeing to the following amendment proposed thereto: **Pages S6144–45**

Cornyn (for Hirono) Amendment No. 1104, in the nature of a substitute. **Pages S6144–45**

Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Amendments Act: Senate passed S. 1057, to amend the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Act of 1998 to address harmful algal blooms, after agreeing to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, and the following amendment proposed thereto: **Pages S6145–47**

Cornyn (for Lee) Amendment No. 1105, relating to hypoxia or harmful algal bloom of national significance. **Pages S6146–47**

Creating High-Quality Results and Outcomes Necessary to Improve Chronic (CHRONIC) Care Act: Senate passed S. 870, 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, after agreeing to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute. **Pages S6147–53**

Measures Considered:

National Defense Authorization Act—Agreement: Senate continued consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of S. 1519, 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. **Pages S6097–S6108, S6108–21, S6122–27**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of bill at approximately 10 a.m., on Wednesday, September 27, 2017. **Page S6153**

Erickson Nomination—Cloture: Senate began consideration of the nomination of Ralph R. Erickson,

of North Dakota, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eighth Circuit. **Page S6121**

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 on Thursday, September 28, 2017. **Page S6121**

Prior to the consideration of this nomination, Senate took the following action:

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Executive Session to consider the nomination. **Page S6121**

Pai Nomination—Cloture: Senate began consideration of the nomination of Ajit Varadaraj Pai, of Kansas, to be a Member of the Federal Communications Commission. **Page S6121**

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 Ralph R. Erickson, of North Dakota, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eighth Circuit. **Page S6121**

Prior to the consideration of this nomination, Senate took the following action:

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Legislative Session. **Page S6121**

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to Executive Session to consider the nomination. **Page S6121**

Messages from the House: **Page S6131**

Measures Referred: **Page S6131**

Measures Read the First Time: **Pages S6131, S6153**

Executive Communications: **Pages S6131–33**

Executive Reports of Committees: **Pages S6133–34**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S6134–36**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S6136–39**

Additional Statements: **Pages S6130–31**

Amendments Submitted: **Pages S6139–41**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Pages S6141–42**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 7:08 p.m., until 10 a.m. on Wednesday, September 27, 2017. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Acting Majority Leader in today's Record on page S6153.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

NOMINATION

Committee on Armed Services: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nomination of General Joseph F. Dunford, Jr., USMC, for reappointment to the grade of general and reappointment to be Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, after the nominee testified and answered questions in his own behalf.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Armed Services: Committee ordered favorably reported 3,196 nominations in the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps.

SEC OVERSIGHT

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: Committee concluded an oversight hearing to examine the Securities and Exchange Commission, after receiving testimony from Jay Clayton, Chairman, Securities and Exchange Commission.

FTC STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Subcommittee on Consumer Protection, Product Safety, Insurance, and Data Security concluded a hearing to examine Federal Trade Commission stakeholder perspectives, focusing on reform proposals to improve fairness, innovation, and consumer welfare, after receiving testimony from William MacLeod, Kelley Drye and Warren LLP, Lydia Parnes, Wilson Sonsini Goodrich and Rosati PC, Jessica Rich, Consumer Reports, and Berin Szoka, TechFreedom, all of Washington, D.C.

NOMINATIONS

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nominations of Bruce J. Walker, of New York, to be an Assistant Secretary (Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability), and Steven E. Winberg, of Pennsylvania, to be an Assistant Secretary (Fossil Energy), both of the Department of Energy, after the nominees testified and answered questions in their own behalf.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee ordered favorably reported the nominations of Jon M. Huntsman, Jr., of Utah, to be Ambassador to the Russian Federation, Justin Hicks Siberell, of Maryland, to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Bahrain, and A. Wess Mitchell, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary (European and Eurasian Affairs), all of the Department of State, and J. Steven Dowd, of Florida,

to be United States Director of the African Development Bank.

SECURITY ASSISTANCE AND FOREIGN POLICY

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee concluded a hearing to examine managing security assistance to support foreign policy, after receiving testimony from Tina S. Kaidanow, Acting Assistant Secretary of State; and Todd Harvey, Acting Assistant Secretary for Strategy, Plans and Capabilities, and Lieutenant General Charles W. Hooper, USA, Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, both of the Department of Defense.

SPECIAL COUNSELS AND THE SEPARATION OF POWERS

Committee on the Judiciary: Committee concluded a to examine special counsels and the separation of pow-

ers, including S. 1735, to limit the removal of a special counsel, and S. 1741, to ensure independent investigations by allowing judicial review of the removal of a special counsel, after receiving testimony from Akhil Reed Amar, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut; Eric A. Posner, University of Chicago Law School, Chicago, Illinois; Stephen I. Vladeck, University of Texas School of Law, Austin; and John F. Duffy, University of Virginia School of Law, Charlottesville.

INTELLIGENCE

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee met in closed session to receive a briefing on certain intelligence matters from officials of the intelligence community.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 16 public bills, H.R. 3829–3844; and 4 resolutions, H. Con. Res. 80; and H. Res. 537 and 539–540 were introduced. **Pages H7532–33**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H7533–35**

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

H.R. 3229, to protect the safety of judges by extending the authority of the Judicial Conference to redact sensitive information contained in their financial disclosure reports, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 115–332); and

H. Res. 538, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3823) to amend title 49, United States Code, to extend authorizations for the airport improvement program, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the funding and expenditure authority of the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, to provide disaster tax relief, and for other purposes, and providing for consideration of motions to suspend the rules (H. Rept. 115–333). **Page H7532**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Brat to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H7489**

Recess: The House recessed at 11:08 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon. **Page H7496**

Guest Chaplain: The prayer was offered by the Guest Chaplain, Rev. William Lynn Nash, Glad Tidings Pentecostal Church, Mangham, Louisiana.

Pages H7496–97

Journal: The House agreed to the Speaker's approval of the Journal by a ye-and-nay vote of 214 yeas to 199 nays with one answering "present", Roll No. 534. **Pages H7497, H7505–06**

Motion to Fix Next Convening Time: Agreed by voice vote to the Burgess motion that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 3 p.m. tomorrow, September 27. **Pages H7503–04**

Recess: The House recessed at 2:51 p.m. and reconvened at 3:14 p.m. **Page H7514**

Increasing Opportunity through Evidence-Based Home Visiting Act: The House passed H.R. 2824, to amend title V of the Social Security Act to extend the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, by a recorded vote of 214 ayes to 209 noes, Roll No. 537. **Pages H7506–14, H7514–17**

Rejected the DelBene motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on Ways and Means with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with an amendment, by a recorded vote of 191 ayes to 232 noes, Roll No. 536. **Pages H7515–17**

Pursuant to the Rule, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 115–33 shall be considered as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the

five-minute rule, in lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means now printed in the bill.

Page H7510

Agreed to:

Smith (NE) amendment (No. 1 printed in H. Rept. 115–331) that allows states to take into account staffing, community resource, and other requirements when determining how to operate at least one home visiting model in communities in need of services;

Pages H7511–12

DelBene amendment (No. 3 printed in H. Rept. 115–331) that eliminates the bill's matching requirement for tribal home visiting programs; and

Page H7513

Murphy (FL) amendment (No. 4 printed in H. Rept. 115–331) that requires HRSA, to the extent it continues to allocate Home Visiting funding to states and territories based in whole or in part on the relative share of families with young children living at or below the federal poverty line in each state and territory, to utilize the most accurate federal data available for each jurisdiction.

Pages H7513–14

Rejected:

Pascrell amendment (No. 2 printed in H. Rept. 115–331) that sought to maintain MIECHV's current focus of funding evidence-based home visiting programs that strengthen families to make kids healthier, safer, and more ready to learn when they start school by striking the provision in the bill that would add "increasing employment and earnings" to the program's measured outcomes (by a recorded vote of 191 ayes to 231 noes, Roll No. 535).

Pages H7512–13, H7514–15

H. Res. 533, the rule providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2824) was agreed to by a recorded vote of 230 ayes to 190 noes, Roll No. 533, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 230 yeas to 189 nays, Roll No. 532.

Pages H7499–H7503, H7504–05

Western Hemisphere Drug Policy Commission—Appointment: The Chair announced the Speaker's appointment of the following individual on the part of the House to the Western Hemisphere Drug Policy Commission: Mr. Matt Salmon of Mesa, Arizona.

Page H7517

Senate Message: Message received from the Senate by the Clerk and subsequently presented to the House today appears on page H7499.

Quorum Calls—Votes: Two yea-and-nay votes and four recorded votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H7504, H7504–05, H7505–06, H7515, H7516–17, and H7517. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 6:01 p.m.

Committee Meetings

POWERING AMERICA: TECHNOLOGY'S ROLE IN EMPOWERING CONSUMERS

Committee on Energy And Commerce: Subcommittee on Energy held a hearing entitled "Powering America: Technology's Role in Empowering Consumers". Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE REDESIGN

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Full Committee held a hearing entitled "The Department of State Redesign". Testimony was heard from John J. Sullivan, Deputy Secretary, Department of State.

RAISING THE STANDARD: DHS'S EFFORTS TO IMPROVE AVIATION SECURITY AROUND THE GLOBE

Committee on Homeland Security: Subcommittee on Transportation and Protective Security held a hearing entitled "Raising the Standard: DHS's Efforts to Improve Aviation Security Around the Globe". Testimony was heard from Craig Lynes, Director of Global Compliance, Office of Global Strategies, Transportation Security Administration, Department of Homeland Security; Todd C. Owen, Executive Assistant Commissioner, Office of Field Operations, Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security; and Jennifer Grover, Director, Homeland Security and Justice, Government Accountability Office.

DHS FINANCIAL SYSTEMS: WILL MODERNIZATION EVER BE ACHIEVED

Committee on Homeland Security: Subcommittee on Oversight and Management Efficiency held a hearing entitled "DHS Financial Systems: Will Modernization Ever Be Achieved". Testimony was heard from Chip Fulghum, Deputy Under Secretary for Management, Department of Homeland Security; Michele Singer, Director, Interior Business Center, Department of the Interior; Elizabeth Angerman, Executive Director, Unified Shared Services Management, Office of Government-wide Policy, General Services Administration; and Asif Khan, Director, Financial Management and Assurance, Government Accountability Office.

TRANSFORMING GPO FOR THE 21ST CENTURY AND BEYOND: PART 3—FEDERAL DEPOSITORY LIBRARY PROGRAM

Committee on House Administration: Full Committee held a hearing entitled "Transforming GPO for the

21st Century and Beyond: Part 3—Federal Depository Library Program”. Testimony was heard from Laurie Hall, Acting Superintendent of Documents, Government Publishing Office; Stephen Parks, State Librarian, Mississippi; and public witnesses.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURES

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Water, Power and Oceans held a hearing on H.R. 200, the “Strengthening Fishing Communities and Increasing Flexibility in Fisheries Management Act”; H.R. 2023, the “Modernizing Recreational Fisheries Management Act of 2017”; H.R. 3588, the “RED SNAPPER Act”; and legislation to amend and reauthorize the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, and for other purposes. Testimony was heard from Jonathan Mitchell, Mayor, New Bedford, Massachusetts; Chris Blankenship, Commissioner, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Alabama; Chris Oliver, Director, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries, Department of Commerce; and public witnesses.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURES

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Indian, Insular and Alaska Native Affairs held a hearing on H.R. 3535, the “Ruffey Rancheria Restoration Act of 2017”; H.R. 3650, the “Lumbee Recognition Act”; and H.R. 3744, the “Tribal Recognition Act of 2017”. Testimony was heard from Representative Pittenger; John Tahsuda, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior; and public witnesses.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMISSION ON EVIDENCE-BASED POLICYMAKING

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Full Committee held a hearing entitled “Recommendations of the Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking”. Testimony was heard from the following Commission on Evidence Based Policy Making officials: Katharine G. Abraham, Chair; Ron Haskins, Co-Chair; Robert Shea, Commissioner; and Latanya Sweeney, Commissioner.

EXAMINING AMERICA’S NUCLEAR WASTE MANAGEMENT AND STORAGE

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on the Interior, Energy, and Environment held a hearing entitled “Examining America’s Nuclear Waste Management and Storage”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

DISASTER TAX RELIEF AND AIRPORT AND AIRWAY EXTENSION ACT

Committee on Rules: Full Committee held a hearing on H.R. 3823, the “Disaster Tax Relief and Airport and Airway Extension Act”. The Committee granted, by record vote of 7–3, a closed rule for H.R. 3823. The rule provides one hour of debate with 40 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means, and 20 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Financial Services. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill and provides that the bill shall not be subject to a question of consideration. The rule provides that the amendment printed in the Rules Committee report shall be considered as adopted and the bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended. The rule provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions. In section 2, the rule provides that it shall be in order at any time on the legislative day of September 28, 2017, for the Speaker to entertain motions that the House suspend the rules and that the Speaker or his designee shall consult with the Minority Leader or her designee on the designation of any matter for consideration pursuant to this section.

BUILDING A 21ST CENTURY INFRASTRUCTURE FOR AMERICA: WATER STAKEHOLDERS’ PERSPECTIVES

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment held a hearing entitled “Building a 21st Century Infrastructure for America: Water Stakeholders’ Perspectives”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURES

Committee on Veterans’ Affairs: Subcommittee on Health held a hearing on H.R. 93, to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for increased access to Department of Veterans Affairs medical care for women veterans; H.R. 501, the “VA Transparency Enhancement Act of 2017”; H.R. 1063, the “Veteran Prescription Continuity Act”; H.R. 1066, the “VA Management Alignment Act of 2017”; H.R. 1943, the “Restoring Maximum Mobility to Our Nation’s Veterans Act of 2017”; H.R. 1972, the “VA Billing Accountability Act”; H.R. 2147, the “Veterans Treatment Court Improvement Act of 2017”; H.R. 2225, the “Veterans Dog Training Therapy Act”; H.R. 2327, the “PAWS Act of 2017”; and legislation on the VA’s Health Professionals Educational Assistance Program. Testimony

was heard from Representatives Dingell, O'Rourke, Kilmer, King of Iowa, Smucker, Coffman, Stivers, DeSantis, and Rutherford; Harold Kudler, M.D., Acting Assistant Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Patient Care Services, Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs; and public witnesses.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2017

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Ann Marie Buerkle, of New York, to be Chairman of the Consumer Product Safety Commission, Howard R. Elliott, of Indiana, to be Administrator of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, and Walter G. Copan, of Colorado, to be Under Secretary of Commerce for Standards and Technology, 10:30 a.m., SR-253.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: Subcommittee on National Parks, to hold hearings to examine encouraging the next generation to visit National Parks, 2 p.m., SD-366.

Committee on Environment and Public Works: to hold hearings to examine forest management to mitigate wildfires, focusing on legislative solutions, 10 a.m., SD-406.

Committee on Foreign Relations: to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Kathleen M. Fitzpatrick, of the District of Columbia, to be Ambassador to the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, and Daniel J. Kritenbrink, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, both of the Department of State, 10:45 a.m., SD-419.

Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Richard Duke Buchan III, of Florida, to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Spain, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador to Andorra, Richard Grenell, of California, to be Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany, Edward T. McMullen, Jr., of South Carolina, to be Amba-

sador to the Swiss Confederation, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador to the Principality of Liechtenstein, Jamie McCourt, of California, to be Ambassador to the French Republic, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador to the Principality of Monaco, and Peter Hoekstra, of Michigan, to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of the Netherlands, all of the Department of State, 2:15 p.m., SD-419.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: to hold hearings to examine threats to the homeland, 10 a.m., SD-342.

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, 2:30 p.m., SD-628.

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship: to hold hearings to examine the Small Business Administration's response to the 2017 hurricanes, 3 p.m., SR-428A.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: to hold hearings to examine preventing veteran suicide, 10 a.m., SR-418.

Select Committee on Intelligence: to hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters, 2:30 p.m., SH-219.

House

Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Tactical Air and Land Forces, hearing entitled "The Army's Tactical Network Modernization Strategy", 2 p.m., 2212 Rayburn.

Committee on Financial Services, Subcommittee on Housing and Insurance, hearing entitled "Overview of the Family Self-Sufficiency Program", 3 p.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations, hearing entitled "Rwanda: Democracy Thwarted", 3 p.m., 2200 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, hearing entitled "Burma's Brutal Campaign Against the Rohingya", 2:30 p.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Committee on Natural Resources, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, hearing entitled "Exploring Solutions to Reduce Risks of Catastrophic Wildfire and Improve Resiliency of National Forests", 3 p.m., 1334 Longworth.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity, hearing entitled "How to Improve Access to GI Bill Approved Apprenticeship Programs and How these Programs Benefit Veterans", 3 p.m., 334 Cannon.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

10 a.m., Wednesday, September 27

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

3 p.m., Wednesday, September 27

Senate Chamber

Program for Wednesday: Senate will continue consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of S. 1519, National Defense Authorization Act.

House Chamber

Program for Wednesday: Consideration of measures under suspension of the Rules.

Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

HOUSE

Blackburn, Marsha, Tenn., E1268, E1270, E1271
 Blunt Rochester, Lisa, Del., E1270
 Brady, Robert A., Pa., E1268
 Comstock, Barbara, Va., E1269
 Costello, Ryan A., Pa., E1267
 Courtney, Joe, Conn., E1272

Esty, Elizabeth H., Conn., E1269
 Granger, Kay, Tex., E1271
 Green, Gene, Tex., E1271
 Hoyer, Steny H., Md., E1270
 Kaptur, Marcy, Ohio, E1267
 Lipinski, Daniel, Ill., E1271
 Lofgren, Zoe, Calif., E1272

Perlmutter, Ed, Colo., E1267, E1268, E1269, E1269,
 E1270
 Shimkus, John, Ill., E1270
 Thompson, Mike, Calif., E1268
 Tiberi, Patrick J., Ohio, E1267
 Torres, Norma J., Calif., E1272
 Veasey, Marc A., Tex., E1271
 Wittman, Robert J., Va., E1267, E1268



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