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Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.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.

Lord, God, thank You for the majesty of Your Name that fills our hearts with joy. We are grateful for the declarations in nature that constantly remind us of Your might and power. Lord, the heavens declare Your glory.

Continue to protect and sustain our Senators. Provide them with power to meet each challenge, to solve each problem, and to catapult each obstacle.

Eternal God, You reign forever, judging the world with Your justice and ruling nations with Your providence. Remind us that the hearts of world leaders are in Your hands and Your purposes will prevail.

We pray in Your mighty 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.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. YOUNG). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

ENERGY AND WATER, LEGISLATIVE BRANCH, AND MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2019

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 5895, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 5895) making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

REMEMBERING FIRST LIEUTENANT GARLIN MURL CONNER

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, this week our Nation will honor the memory of a brave Kentuckian. President Trump will posthumously award 1LT Garlin Murl Conner with our Nation's highest military distinction, the Medal of Honor.

In 1941 Garlin left his farm town in Clinton County, KY. This quiet 21-year-old enlisted in the Army. When he returned, after World War II service that spanned eight major campaigns and earned a battlefield commission, four Silver Stars, three Purple Hearts, and the Distinguished Service Cross, he was a hero.

Lieutenant Conner wasn't supposed to be in a snow-covered forest that January morning in 1945. He was meant to be recovering in a hospital. But with his unit in need, he snuck away and returned to the front in France. When he rejoined his comrades, they were in urgent danger, pinned down by six German tanks. Lieutenant Conner stepped forward. He took a telephone, a radio, and a wire reel and ran toward the enemy alone—totally alone.

Past the American line, in a ditch barely large enough to cover him, Lieutenant Conner began directing artillery against the approaching enemy. He held his ground through wave after

wave of German advances. When the enemy surged, even coming within feet of him, he called in artillery strikes on his own position.

Amazingly, when the dust settled, Lieutenant Conner was still alive, and Allied artillery had destroyed the German tanks and stopped the advance. On that frigid morning, in complete disregard for his own safety, Lieutenant Conner saved the lives of his comrades.

This afternoon I will have the privilege to welcome Ms. Pauline Conner, Garlin's wife of more than 50 years, and other family members to the Capitol. Without Pauline's patience and steadfast resolve, there would be no recognition tomorrow.

After the war, Lieutenant Conner demurred any sort of personal glory. With the humility that is typical among the Greatest Generation, he returned to his farm and planned to leave the war behind him. Later in life, he took it upon himself to meet privately with his fellow veterans and their families, offering comfort and advice.

One day late in Lieutenant Conner's life, a former Army Green Beret named Richard Chilton came to their home to ask about his late uncle, who had served with him in Europe. He saw all of Garlin's decorations and medals and urged Pauline to apply for the Medal of Honor. That was the first step. The path wasn't easy—filing paperwork, finding eyewitness accounts, gathering support from the Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs, generals, and even Members of Congress. It was my privilege to join Pauline's team when they contacted my office over a decade ago. There were setbacks, even a Federal court ruling, but Pauline and her team pushed forward. Her long journey will finally end in victory when the Commander in Chief entrusts her with Garlin's Medal of Honor tomorrow. I am grateful to President Trump, Secretary Mattis, and Secretary Esper for recognizing this deserving Kentuckian.

I am proud to congratulate Pauline and her family today, and I would like

- This “bullet” symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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to thank her for giving our Nation the opportunity to salute 1LT Garlin Murl Conner. He embodied the highest values of our Commonwealth and of our Nation, but this humble man never called himself a hero. So it is incumbent upon us to do just that.

Now, Mr. President, on a completely different matter, this afternoon our colleagues will vote to pass the first 3 of 12 appropriations bills for fiscal year 2019. When they do, the Senate will be putting more common sense back into the appropriations process. This hasn't come easily. But thanks to the leadership of Chairman SHELBY and Ranking Member LEAHY, the process thus far has been governed by level-headed bipartisanship.

I am optimistic the same will be true for the nine remaining appropriations measures. Great progress has already been made at the committee level, and I look forward to considering more legislation on the floor soon.

It is particularly fitting that after the passage of the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for 2019 and historic veterans legislation earlier this year, the first group of appropriations bills includes much needed resources for the VA and for military construction projects. This minibus also includes funding under the Energy and Water title for critical maintenance of America's ports and waterways infrastructure, for groundbreaking research on energy development and efficiency, and for improvements to the safety, security, and readiness of our nuclear arsenal.

Our colleagues on the Appropriations Committee, in particular these subcommittee chairmen—Senators ALEXANDER, BOOZMAN, and DAINES—have earned our support. This is worthy legislation. I look forward to passing it today.

FARM BILL

Then, we will turn to another major priority—the farm bill. Under Chairman ROBERTS' leadership, along with Ranking Member STABENOW, the Agriculture Committee has continued its tradition of addressing the needs of America's farmers and ranchers with the serious bipartisanship they deserve.

Today the needs are great. In the face of declines in farm income, growers and producers need certainty and stability, and that is what this bill would help to provide. The committee reported the farm bill to the full Senate by an overwhelming bipartisan margin. This week we will have a chance to pass the bill in the same fashion.

On behalf of the farmers in my home State of Kentucky and around the country, I hope each Senator will take advantage of this opportunity.

TAX REFORM

Now, Mr. President, on one final matter, week after week the evidence continues to mount that tax reform and the rest of the Republicans' pro-growth, pro-family agenda is helping to

reinvigorate our economy and to set the stage for long-term job and wage growth. Just today, CNBC is reporting that the percentage of Americans who say the economy is good or excellent is the highest they have ever recorded in the survey's 10-year history.

But amidst all of the headlines of long-term investments, business expansions, and this favorable economic climate, it is important to remember also all of the immediate ways the tax cuts themselves have already meant direct relief for middle-class American families. Our historic tax reform, which every single Democratic Senator opposed, lowered income tax rates, doubled the standard deduction, and increased the child tax credit. It has given employers the flexibility to immediately pass savings along to their employees in the form of tax reform bonuses, pay raises, and new benefits. It has allowed major utility companies to forego planned rate hikes and, in cases, actually cut the energy prices customers pay.

Every one of these provisions equals real money that will remain in the hands of middle-class families, instead of being shipped off to the IRS. Every one of these and all the other components of tax reform are major improvements that every single Democrat in the House and in the Senate voted against.

Now, if Democratic leaders are serious about wanting to repeal tax reform, the tax cuts that are making it all possible would be right back on the chopping block. Tax cuts used to be a bipartisan affair, but not these days. Republicans will continue to stand up for the American people and help them keep more of their hard-earned money.

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. 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.

SOUTH TEXAS FLOODING

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, on Friday, I traveled to the Rio Grande Valley, right along the U.S.-Mexico border, expecting the front-page news to be about separation of families when our immigration laws were being enforced. Imagine my surprise when the front page of the newspapers in the Rio Grande Valley were talking about the flooding in South Texas.

We heard that late last week, more than 200 water rescues were performed on the border city of Mission alone, and some areas were pounded by more than 15 inches of rain over a 4-day period. Cities in South Texas, such as Harlingen, Mercedes, Weslaco, Brownsville, and others, were affected. I saw it myself when I was in the Valley last week. A feeder road and entire soccer fields were underwater, and county officials were out surveying flood dam-

age around the airport. This has been especially tough news because some of the coastal areas in my State that were impacted by this flood were also hit by Hurricane Harvey less than a year ago and are still recovering from that catastrophe. Just as life started to get back to normal—whatever normal is—the rains came.

As hurricane season is now underway, we will continue to monitor the weather and the conditions there that may arise throughout the remainder of the summer months and to work with all of my constituents and leaders at the local, State, and Federal level to make sure we are as prepared as we can humanly be for the next adverse weather event.

KEEP FAMILIES TOGETHER AND ENFORCE THE LAW ACT

As I said, Mr. President, I went to the border to talk about immigration and family separation policies. I traveled there to tour two facilities in Brownsville, along with Senator CRUZ, that housed young children—some very young and some up to 18, just under 18 years of age—who are being sheltered after their parents crossed illegally into the United States.

It is important to note that in so many respects, life is pretty good in the Rio Grande Valley. Business is booming. Men and women are working hard, going to school, paying their bills, just like the rest of us. It is not all the Wild Wild West, as the press sometimes makes it out to be.

When it comes to immigrant shelters, I think it is very important that we learn what the facts are rather than continue a narrative that has very little basis in fact.

The truth is, the surge of humanity coming across our southern border is nothing new. This year so far—since October 1—there have been roughly 32,000 unaccompanied children who have come across the border, more than 50,000 families, but all told, the Border Patrol has detained roughly 250,000 people coming across our southwestern border.

I know that here in Washington, you could be forgiven for thinking “Well, the border is not a problem. Illegal immigration is not a problem,” but I am here to say it is a problem, and it is a national security threat. The humanitarian crisis we have seen at the border because countries like those in Central America continue to send their young children up across the border into the United States—it creates a huge challenge for us, just as it did in 2014 when President Obama called it a humanitarian crisis, because, frankly, our communities along the border and the Federal Government are not prepared to deal with such an influx of humanity, particularly those who need to be taken care of in a compassionate and humane way, especially the children who come across the border.

Why are children coming across the border unaccompanied and in some instances with family units? Because the

cartels—the criminal organizations that profit from a business model that allows them to exploit vulnerabilities in American law, particularly when it comes to border security—are making millions of dollars trafficking in humanity. They don't just traffic in illegal immigration; they traffic in those who would ply these immigrants for sex trafficking, those who would distribute drugs illegally in the United States, particularly heroin, an opioid, along with fentanyl, coming across the border, perhaps even from China, which is part of the opioid crisis in the United States.

As one gentleman who has a lot of experience in the area phrased it—he said that when it comes to what the cartels and the criminal organizations will transport into the United States, they are commodity agnostic. What he meant by that, I gathered, is that what it is all about is the money. It is the money these large criminal organizations earn trafficking in people, trafficking in drugs, trafficking in contraband across our southwestern border that represents such a challenge to our government officials at the local level, at the State level, and, of course, at the national level.

I know there has been a lot of misinformation about what happens at the border when somebody comes to the border and claims asylum. There are accepted procedures and legal standards that should be applied when somebody comes from another country and claims a credible fear of persecution because of who they are—their race, their religion, and the like.

As Secretary Nielsen, the Secretary of Homeland Security, pointed out, it is not a crime to come to a port of entry—that is, one of the bridges—and ask for asylum. It is a crime for an adult to try to cross the border between those ports of entry into the United States, and that is why we end up with this huge challenge of what to do when they come across with a minor child with them.

After touring these facilities in Brownsville and meeting with various Federal agency officials, nongovernmental organizations, and local elected officials at the Weslaco Border Patrol Station, what we learned is that this situation is far more complex than meets the eye and that many of the narratives that have been spun about what is happening at the border are simply false or may be based in part on fact but in part on nonfactual information.

What we did was we had the Federal officials at the Weslaco Border Patrol Station go through the step-by-step process of what happens to immigrant families when they are apprehended at the border, what happens when they are detained, and what happens when their cases are heard in a court. This is very useful information, and I want to particularly credit Rio Grande Valley Border Patrol Chief Manny Padilla, Custom and Border Patrol's David

Higgerson, and all the men and women on the frontlines who are doing a great job under very difficult circumstances across the border.

I am glad to know that the processes are changing based on the Executive order President Trump issued last week. That order stated that immigrant families should be detained together when appropriate and consistent with law and available resources. The problem is that I am not sure anybody could be prepared for this influx of humanity coming across the border, but they are doing the very best they can.

We know that Executive orders are always subject to legal challenges. We in Congress have introduced legislation to make sure that if, in fact, the President's Executive order ordering families to be kept together is somehow challenged or found deficient in court, that we have legislation to back it up. It is important that we in Congress make clear in statute that the status quo along the border cannot continue.

That status quo has resulted in family members being separated from one another—in some cases, young children from their parents, which is something I know we all want to avoid. We know that in many cases, these children have remained in close touch with their parents throughout the course of their detention. But we still need to make sure these families are kept together where possible.

I, along with a number of my colleagues on this side of the aisle, led by the junior Senator from North Carolina, Mr. TILLIS, introduced a piece of legislation last week to address this situation. It is called the Keep Families Together and Enforce the Law Act. As the title of the bill suggests, there are two parts.

Treating families with compassion by allowing them to remain together and enforcing our immigration laws don't have to be mutually exclusive, and our bill will ensure that they aren't. It will allow children to stay with their parents in a safe facility while they await their court proceedings to see if they perhaps are eligible for some sort of immigration benefit, like asylum. Our bill will also set mandatory standards for care in family residential centers where immigrant families are placed and keep children safe by requiring they be removed from the care of any individual who presents a danger to them.

Just as importantly, it provides additional resources. It will require more than 200 new immigration judges and require the Department of Homeland Security to expedite the court proceedings of families and children. We don't want those family units to remain in detention any longer than necessary to present their case to an immigration judge.

Some have rightfully asked questions about the families who have already been separated. What happens now that the kids have been placed apart from their parents? Our bill requires the ad-

ministration to take steps to reunify as many families as possible who remain in ICE's, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, or HHS's, Health and Human Services, custody.

Believe it or not, as part of this disinformation or misinformation that seems to pervade this topic, some have falsely claimed that our bill promotes the indefinite detention of families, but that is certainly not the intention. Our bill does not mandate the Department of Homeland Security detain parents and their kids together indefinitely. It, simply, removes an arbitrary, court-imposed rule that says families can be held together for no more than 20 days. This is from the so-called Flores case.

In many instances, allowing families to remain together in custody for more than 20 days will allow immigration courts to process their claims faster so that they will literally have better access to justice. Generally, immigrants are detained only until their proceedings in front of immigration judges are completed. So those who claim that the bill would somehow promote the indefinite detention of these families, simply, aren't telling you the truth. These families will remain in residential shelters only until their court proceedings are completed, but we need to prioritize these cases, in particular—to move them to the head of the line—so that these families will not have to wait any longer than necessary.

Other proposals have been put forward in addition to the Tillis proposal. One of the most prominent is the one being offered by our friend, the senior Senator from California. I have worked together on many issues with Senator FEINSTEIN, but on this issue, I think her bill has a number of problems. In fact, there is a huge question of what sort of enforcement, if any, would be permitted under her bill. In effect, this bill would make it impossible to criminally prosecute parents for crossing the border illegally unless their children were able to go into Department of Justice's custody with the parents. This bill doesn't even specify where the families should be held. That is a big problem because children shouldn't go to jails and prisons, run by the Department of Justice, that have hardened, potentially violent criminals.

I don't know anybody who thinks that that is a good idea. That is why, essentially, the bill advocates for catch and release. Nowhere does the bill say where these families should be held since they can't go into the Department of Justice's facilities. Basically, the only alternative left up to immigration enforcement officials is to let them go and issue them notices to appear at future court dates. The bill specifically forces the Department of Homeland Security to release family units without exception, which prevents potential criminals from being prosecuted. Again, it is the adults we are talking about, not the children.

Chief Padilla, the Chief of the Rio Grande Valley sector of the Border Patrol, which is the most active part of the southwestern border, said: If you look at the surges in illegal immigration over recent history, the highest surges in illegal immigration are when the U.S. Government has had a policy of catching and then releasing people who have violated the immigration laws and has ordered them to appear in the future. Of course, most of the people don't show up in the future. They know they will rarely be followed up on and rarely be caught unless, of course, they commit some other crime or offense and are picked up by local police, at which time U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's and local law enforcement's records are matched in order to identify those people.

To suggest that we should not enforce our immigration laws or to suggest that we should catch people who violate those laws and release them and have them appear on future dates, which is far from certain, is itself a huge encouragement and inducement to surges in illegal immigration. One of the main reasons is that the cartels—again, the criminal organizations that control much of the human trafficking, the illegal drug trafficking, and the movement of immigrants across the border—are very smart, and they know when there are gaps in the U.S. Government's policy that can be exploited, like catch and release.

I am not sure everyone who supports the bill that Senator FEINSTEIN has proposed understands what the consequences are of the legislation. Where are the provisions that allow us to enforce our immigration laws? Both of our bills allow for families to be kept together while they are waiting for court proceedings, but only one of them, the Tillis bill, also permits the enforcement of our laws. That seems to be the choice that our Democratic colleagues have made.

With all due respect to our Democratic colleagues, their legislation, simply, doesn't cut it. I don't think the American people will tolerate a situation in which our borders remain open, essentially, to the poison shipped over here from the drug traffickers, to the human trafficking by which people are, simply, sold into modern-day slavery, or whether open borders is used as a way to transport people illegally from one country to another.

We want to make it clear that families should be kept together but, also, that we will enforce the law even when that requires families be held in government custody for a short period of time pending their court hearings. We also want to be clear that where they should be held is in safe residential family housing and away from hardened, potentially violent criminals.

Again, the legislation, which has been proffered by our friend from California, doesn't mandate that. Basically, it just prevents us from enforcing our laws. It promotes catch and re-

lease, and it doesn't specify where families should be held together, which could jeopardize the safety of these children.

With these and other shortcomings, I think the much better option is the bill that our Republican colleagues and I, along with Senator TILLIS, have introduced. I hope the discussions which, I know, have been planned between Senator DURBIN, Senator FEINSTEIN, Senator TILLIS, and Senator CRUZ—perhaps as early as today—are very productive. It would be important to achieve both important goals at once—the continued enforcement of our immigration laws and the unification of families.

I have become disturbed by what I have seen on social media. There is a hashtag in social media called “abolish ICE,” abolish the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. I have read where one Democratic House Member has actually introduced legislation that would abolish our immigration enforcement agency, the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Basically, what that would do is to create an open invitation to the criminal organizations that facilitate illegal immigration, drugs, and other contraband. There will be no limit to the number of people who will be able to enter the country illegally. We will just wave them on through.

In addition to the open borders, which is no solution, there are colleagues who are advocating this sort of notion, who have no plan of how to deal with the influx of humanity, whether it is from a health and safety or a safe and secure facilities perspective. I think it is a half-baked idea and one we should reject.

I urge our colleagues on both sides of the aisle to continue talking and to support the legislation that Senator TILLIS and I and others have introduced.

I would like to see the Senate take swift action. I wish we could have done it last week because we all agree that families should be kept together, and we all agree that this is an emergency situation. We must act quickly. If we come together, we can resolve this situation swiftly and ensure these children will be kept with their families, which is our No. 1 priority.

It is also a priority of all of us to enforce the laws that are on the books and not to, basically, benefit the business model of the drug cartels in the process and see them continue to prey on young, susceptible, vulnerable people who are willing to risk it all just to make their way to the United States, to our borders.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

FAMILY SEPARATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, as we are all aware, the Trump administration's border policy has resulted in thousands of families having been sepa-

rated at the border over the past few months. Despite the administration's recent executive order, thousands of young children remain separated from their parents in cities across the country, across America. According to the New York Times, right now, there are 2,053 children who are stuck in limbo, waiting for various Federal agencies to reunite them with their families.

Some of the most basic questions about their whereabouts and the whereabouts of their families are unknown to Federal officials. Of the thousands of children having been taken away from their parents since the President's family separation policy went into effect, only about 500 children in CBP's custody have been reunited with their families. That is not good enough. Who will be held accountable if these children are not returned to their parents? Some of these children are even too young to know their names.

This unprecedented situation demands a Federal point person to manage the family reunification process and ensure it is resolved as quickly and transparently as possible. Multiple agencies have jurisdiction, including the Department of Homeland Security, Health and Human Services, the Department of Defense, and the Department of Justice. We need someone in power to work across Federal agencies, cut through the bureaucracy, and lead the accurate, humane, and timely reunification of every child who has been separated by President Trump's policies.

I urge President Trump to appoint a family reunification czar to manage this process.

The administration needs to bring in an experienced and competent person to impose order on the chaos that the President's decision has caused—someone to be accountable so that this doesn't go on for months or longer with different agencies pointing fingers at each other while children languish alone in detention. When multiple Federal agencies are involved in responding to a crisis, the response is often cumbersome and slow. Each agency has its different track, its different goals, its different paths. Without someone in the White House to bring order and have them work in sync, all too often, nothing happens.

A czar—this is a good czar, not a bad czar—would help to avoid the situation whereby the agencies would be at cross purposes and paralysis and inaction would result. We did this when Ebola occurred. There were many agencies involved when we were worried about the national threat of Ebola. President Obama wisely appointed a czar—I believe it was Ron Klain. It worked, and the Ebola fear that we all had—thank God—didn't materialize. The same can happen here in the sense that a czar could help solve the problem.

It is agonizing—so agonizing—to see young children, with anguished looks on their faces, being separated from

their parents. This crisis demands a timely and efficient response. A family reunification czar would help get the job done. It is not a political situation whereby it is ideological. It is, simply, getting the bureaucracies to work.

CHINA

Mr. President, on China, this morning, the New York Times reported that in several industrial cities in China's interior, Chinese manufacturers have been using incredibly dangerous chemicals known as CFCs, which destroy the planet's ozone layer and are explicitly banned by an international agreement from the 1980s. The CFCs are more dangerous to our atmosphere even than CO₂, even than methane. That is why the world came together in a rare moment and successfully, for a long time, banned these CFCs.

Now it seems that this is not occurring in China, and it comes as no surprise. China cracks down so effectively on free speech, so one wonders why the state is unable to crack down on the use of environmentally toxic chemicals that have been banned for over 30 years. It took China's Government a matter of days to block online access to HBO after John Oliver poked fun at President Xi on the network. Yet, when it comes to the use of toxic chemicals that are banned by international agreements, China's government can't get its act together? Please. It is a metaphor. What is happening with CFCs is a metaphor for so many of China's policies, most especially for its trade policy.

Many question if China will ever moderate its self-interested, mercantilist behavior and join the community of nations in fair trade by lowering trade barriers, by abiding by international trade rules, and by ending its practice of intellectual property theft. Well, this news shows that when push comes to shove, China always does what is best for China—short-term profit for China—without regard to the well-being of its neighbors or the strictures of international agreements. Whether it is lead in our children's toys, cadmium in exported fish, or CFCs in the atmosphere, time and again, China flouts and skirts international laws, agreements, and vital environmental standards in ferocious pursuit of its economic interests.

We should not be accommodating when it comes to trade with China. We cannot appeal to its better angels and hope for the best—at least with President Xi in charge. We must recognize that China's government will not retreat from its fundamentally self-interested posture until and unless we force it to, through tough penalties for misbehavior and strong incentives to abide by free-market principles.

(Mrs. ERNST assumed the Chair.)

HEALTHCARE

Madam President, on healthcare, last week insurers in Indiana and in the Presiding Officer's State of Iowa requested an increase in 2019 rates. The addition of Indiana and Iowa asking for

increasing rates adds to the growing list of States—including Virginia, Maryland, New York, and Oregon—that have raised rates as a result of Republican healthcare policies.

The CEO of one of the largest insurers in Indiana, Celtic, said insurers could have potentially lowered rates in 2019 if the Trump administration had not attempted to sow mass uncertainty and undermine the market.

Let me repeat that. The CEO of one of the largest insurers in Indiana said that health insurance costs could have gone down if not for President Trump and Congressional Republicans. He went on to say that the rate increases were also a result of the uncertainty caused by the Republicans' repeal of the coverage requirement and the Trump administration's expansion of short-term junk insurance plans.

Think about it for a moment. Middle-class families in Indiana could have saved on their healthcare next year if President Trump, aided and abetted by Republicans here in the Senate, hadn't sabotaged the system. If the Republicans and President Trump would have simply left our healthcare system alone, things would have been so much better. So many people in so many of our States will pay far more in premium increases than they will get benefits from a tax cut—particularly if you are middle-class and not rich. Is that right? Does that put more money in people's pockets? No. Does that get the economy going? Absolutely not.

Sadly, because of a political vendetta against the Affordable Care Act, Republicans have undermined our healthcare system at every turn. They don't have an answer as to what to do. They don't have a new system to put in place. They have tried that for a year and a half, and they haven't gotten anywhere. They just want to sabotage the existing law and make it worse for average Americans because they are so fixated on killing the ACA bill, even though they have nothing to put in its place, and American families are paying the price in the form of higher premiums, higher out-of-pocket costs, and more expensive prescription drugs.

CIVIL DISCOURSE

Finally, Madam President, a word on a different subject. Here in the Senate we disagree with one another frequently and often fervently. I certainly do. Many of us disagree with the policies of the current administration. In a country as large and diverse as ours, politics has always been a noisy, raucous affair—probably even more so today. That is OK, but we all have to remember to treat our fellow Americans—all of our fellow Americans—with the kind of civility and respect that we expect will be afforded to us.

I strongly disagree with those who advocate harassing folks if they don't agree with you. If you disagree with something or someone, stand up and make your voice heard. Explain why you think they are wrong and why you are right. Make the argument. Protest

peacefully. If you disagree with a politician, organize your fellow citizens to action and vote them out of office, but no one should call for the harassment of political opponents. That is not right. That is not American.

Now, I understand those who look at the conduct of this President—a man who habitually engages in bullying, name-calling, slander, and pure nastiness for its own sake—and think: We have to fight fire with fire. I know I felt those emotions myself. I think we all do. I understand those who are outraged at the hypocrisy of this President when he complains about bullying, harassment, or nastiness when it is used against him or his allies, and he uses it as a regular tool almost every day. I am outraged by the double standard that we seem to let this President get away with. But the President's tactics and behavior should never be emulated. They should be repudiated by organized, well-informed, and passionate advocacy. As Michelle Obama, a person who represents the same kind of fineness that we have always had in America, in complete contrast to the coarseness of this President, said: "When they go low, we go high." That is a contrast of civility, honor, and decency to President Trump's coarseness and meanness. It is a contrast that will serve those of us who oppose what the President does so well.

To opponents of the President's policies, the best way to limit what he can do, to show that America is not as coarse, as mean, as hypocritical as his behavior suggests, the best solution is to win elections. That is a far more productive way to channel the legitimate frustrations with this President's policies than harassing members of his administration.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

FAMILY SEPARATION

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, I want to report to the Senate on attending the detention center in my home State of Florida. I stood on the floor last week and reported that a lot had changed. I just returned again from South Florida, where I was finally allowed to go through the detention facility in Homestead where the number has been corrected from what we were told originally. We were told that of the 1,300 children who were there, 94 of them had been separated from their parents. The number I was given on Saturday is that 70 children there have been separated from their families.

This is the same facility that I had visited last Tuesday and where I was denied entry. Despite being the Senator from Florida and despite having oversight responsibility of the Department of HHS, which runs this detention facility, I was not allowed inside on Tuesday to check on the 94 kids being held there.

So I returned on Saturday, and while I was allowed to enter and go through

the facility and talk to the employees, I was still not allowed to see the 70 children separated from their parents or to speak with the one person who has the responsibility and who is in charge of reuniting these children with their parents.

I was told that this individual, and she was named, was not there on Saturday, as she works Monday through Friday. When I was given the name of this individual, I said: Well, I will be calling her on Monday. I must state that we have called and emailed several times and have not been provided the opportunity to speak to this one individual, identified as the person who tries to reunite the kids with their parents there in the Homestead facility.

Since I was given the name Barbara Flotus, why in the world would HHS not allow me to speak to her when she is back at the facility today? It is certainly in the interest of the American people to know that the children are being reunited. If this is the person that is put in charge at that center, then, why wouldn't they let this Senator from Florida speak to her?

Well, other than that, the main takeaway from that trip was that the Executive order that the President signed last week is a sham. It does nothing to reunite the children with their parents.

We have been told that there are over 2,300 children around the country that have been separated from their parents. We have also been told that there are attempts being made to reunite them. Then, why in the world would the Trump administration not want us to be able to tell a good news story?

Based on what I was told by officials at the facility I visited on Saturday, there is no plan in place to reunify these families. Is that the reason they are prohibiting me from speaking to Barbara Flotus today, because there still is no plan? All of this is unacceptable. The American people deserve answers to these questions.

Well, tomorrow this Senator plans to get some of those answers because Secretary Azar of HHS is coming in front of the Senate Finance Committee. Before he testifies, I want to give him a heads-up on the questions I am going to ask—and I expect some answers.

The questions are in regard to the separated children and the reunification with their parents. I want Secretary Azar to know that I would like for him to explain, while he is in front of the Senate Finance Committee under oath, where these children are right now who are all over the country. When are they going to be reunited with their families? Why is the HHS Department denying Members of Congress access to the facilities?

Why is it that when we are given entrance into the facilities, as I was on Saturday, they are not allowing us to speak with the children who have been separated from their parents? Why is HHS refusing to provide us with information about these children, including

what is being done right now to reunite them with their families?

I thought I was going to have a good-news story to report to the Senate today, after talking to Barbara Flotus, whose name I was given, but I have been denied the opportunity to speak with her.

The Secretary should have plenty of time between now and his testimony tomorrow before the Finance Committee to find the information he needs to fully answer these questions.

I want to be very clear about tomorrow's hearing because this Senator will expect full answers to each of the questions—no backtrack, no getting off on a different subject. The American people want to know about these children and when are they going to be reunited, and that was not covered in the President's Executive order. There is no reason why this administration should be putting up barriers and preventing Members of Congress from doing their jobs and checking on the welfare of these children.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I come here to raise an issue, not with the actual bill we will be voting on today but with language included in a committee report accompanying the bill.

The Environmental Protection Agency has reportedly given out unprecedented numbers of so-called small refinery hardship waivers to the renewable fuel standard. These are given, in some cases, to huge multibillion-dollar companies that probably would not be entitled to what is really a hardship.

The EPA has yet to disclose what waivers it has granted and the rationale, but based on what has been reported, its actions seem pretty darn fishy, from my point of view. Refiners speaking with the press have noted:

Anyone with a brain submitted an application. The EPA was handing out those exemptions like trick or treat candy.

The EPA is hiding behind a very narrow court case for specific refineries, as well as report language accompanying last year's Energy and Water appropriations bill. Neither I nor any other Senator voted for this report language. Report language accompanying bills are not actually law so they are not legally binding.

Still, I wrote to the subcommittee that it should not include language purporting to tell the EPA to do anything other than follow the law. The law mandates blending 15 billion gallons of renewable fuels into our fuel supply. Estimates are that these retroactive waivers have reduced that by as much as 1.63 billion gallons. Every billion gallons lost equates to a loss of more than 2 million acres of harvested corn and an increase in emissions.

My constituents are outraged at this activity by the EPA. Agriculture Secretary Perdue has called these waivers, in his words, "demand destruction" for biofuels.

I wrote to the Energy and Water Subcommittee that it should urge the EPA to disclose the waivers it gives and the rationale for any of these grants and that any waivers should not result in a lowering of the 15 billion gallon renewable volume obligation in the law.

I am disappointed that the appropriators didn't include my commonsense language about transparency, but I am very upset that it renewed the previous language purporting to direct EPA how to consider small refinery waivers. The Appropriations Committee should drop the controversial report language and EPA should simply follow the law.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. DAINES. Madam President, I would like to thank my colleagues for their work on the Legislative Branch portion of the appropriations package because, for the first time in nearly a decade—a decade—the Legislative Branch bill received floor consideration outside of the year-end omnibus.

Because it is our job to ensure the timely funding of our government, returning to regular order on the Legislative Branch bill and all our other appropriations bills is a much needed change.

The Legislative Branch appropriations bill is good news for transparency, for accountability, for taxpayers, and for security of the Capitol.

This bill will increase public access to campaign filings. It will strengthen accountability in how government property is used. It will also make investments that will help meet security needs on the Capitol campus.

I thank Senator MURPHY, my ranking member, for working with me, in a bipartisan manner, on amendments to the Legislative Branch division. The resulting bill makes sound investments in numerous priorities and will help ensure the operations of the legislative process.

I also very much appreciate the leadership and efforts of Chairman SHELBY and Vice Chairman LEAHY on returning to regular order. I thank Senators ALEXANDER, FEINSTEIN, BOOZMAN, and SCHATZ for their work on the other two bills in this package.

I urge my colleagues to support the adoption of this package of appropriations bills.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam President, for the first time in a long time, we are bringing appropriations bill to the floor, debating amendments, and voting on legislation.

Shortly, the Senate will be voting on the first fiscal year 2019 spending bills. I am pleased the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and related agencies appropriations bills are part of this package.

This is a bipartisan bill that funds the critical infrastructure for our Nation's servicemembers, their families,

and takes care of America's 20 million veterans. This is a good step in returning to regular order, with the Senate considering appropriations legislation in a timely fashion.

We owe thanks to Chairman SHELBY and Ranking Member LEAHY for providing leadership for the transparent, bipartisan process.

This bill was crafted in a truly open and collegial way. The subcommittee made thoughtful decisions about how to provide maximum readiness for the warfighter and prioritize investments to the VA so they can take care of our veterans.

We took into account the request and preferences of all Members on both sides of the aisle and balanced it with the administration's budget submission. Within this framework, we have created a thoughtful and responsible path forward for both Departments and our related agencies.

The bill provides \$97.1 billion in discretionary spending, which is \$5.1 billion over last year's level. Within that, the Department of Veterans Affairs has provided a new record level of resources of \$86.4 billion in discretionary funding, which is \$5 billion over last year's level and \$1.1 billion over the President's request. These resources will provide healthcare and other important benefits earned by U.S. servicemembers.

The bill also provides \$10.3 billion to support military construction and family housing needs, a \$228 million increase over last year's level. This will fund a total of 169 military construction projects that restore warfighter readiness and increase the lethality of our installations.

A lot of time and energy has gone into putting this legislation together. I thank my staff, Patrick Magnuson, Jennifer Bastin, Joanne Hoff, and Carlos Elias, and, of course, Senator SCHATZ and his staff—again, both groups working together in a very bipartisan manner, working hard to address the needs of our servicemembers and our veterans.

This is a good bill. It was reported out of committee without a single dissenting vote, and I hope we will have unanimous support when we vote on final passage. I ask my colleagues to support this bill.

Thank you.

With that, I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, U.S. Senators shouldn't get an award for restoring the appropriations process any more than Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts should get a merit badge for telling the truth because that is what we are supposed to do, but the fact is, last week and tonight we have taken an appropriations process, which has been incomplete and broken for the last several years, and we have done what we are supposed to do.

Sometimes the U.S. Senate has been like joining the Grand Ole Opry and not being allowed to sing.

Senator McCONNELL said before he became majority leader in 2015 that his goal was to follow the example of the Senate majority leader, Mike Mansfield, who was the leader when MITCH McCONNELL was a young legislative intern. MITCH McCONNELL said he wanted to open up the Senate, and for quite a while, that turned out to be the case.

As Senator McCONNELL has said: In the last year of the Democratic majority in 2014, there were only 15 rollcall votes on amendments the entire year. In the first year of the Republican majority—that is 2015—there were over 200.

One example from the committee of which I chair—the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee—was the bill fixing No Child Left Behind. Working with Senator MURRAY, on the floor we considered 81 amendments. We had rollcall votes on 24, and we adopted 11. We had voice votes to accept 28, and we agreed to 27 amendments by unanimous consent. That was the bill to fix No Child Left Behind.

Another example is the Energy and Water appropriations bill we considered 2 years ago. Working with Senator FEINSTEIN of California, the Senate voted on 21 amendments and adopted 14.

This year, we have fallen back into our bad habits with few amendment votes, but over this past week, we took an important step toward restoring the practice of considering appropriations bills under regular order.

Just on the Energy and Water appropriations bill—one of the three we will be voting on tonight—we have worked together in a fair and bipartisan manner to get a result. We held three hearings, a subcommittee markup, a full committee markup. Eighty-three Senators made suggestions during the committee process—almost all of which we tried to accommodate in one way or another. Then, in committee, seven amendments were included in the managers' package, plus we had two rollcall votes and adopted one amendment.

Then, on the floor, the Energy and Water appropriations bill has been considered with Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies appropriations bill and the Legislative Branch appropriations bill. For this package of bills, we adopted 7 amendments by rollcall and another 34 by unanimous consent. That adds up to what one might call restoring the practice of regular order for appropriations from start to finish.

The committee process has almost always been done. The part that has often been missing was the last part, the floor consideration. That is what is different about this year.

I thank Senator McCONNELL and Senator SCHUMER—the two leaders—working with Senator SHELBY and Senator LEAHY—the chairman and ranking member—for creating an environment in which we can get this done. It wouldn't have happened if they had not done that.

I also thank Senator BOOZMAN, Senator DAINES, Senator FEINSTEIN, Senator MURPHY, as well as Senator SCHATZ. We all worked together last week and got a result.

As I said at the beginning, Senators shouldn't get a pat on the back for doing what we are supposed to do any more than Boy Scouts should get a merit badge for telling the truth, but we have done what we are supposed to do. It is an encouraging sign, and I hope it sets a precedent.

For several years now, bipartisan majorities in Congress have appropriated record levels of taxpayer dollars for government-sponsored research, science, and technology. This hasn't always been noticed. President Trump has signed two of these appropriation bills, and I want to suggest that the President include government-sponsored research, science, and technology as part of his "America First" agenda.

A principal reason the United States produces 24 percent of all the money in the world for just 5 percent of the people is the extraordinary concentration of brain power in the United States, supported by Federal dollars through our National Institutes of Health, our National Laboratories, the National Science Foundation, and other agencies.

Senator GARDNER of Colorado dropped by my office the other day, and he said this: I was flying over the Middle East, and I looked down, and there were cars everywhere. I thought, well, Henry Ford invented the assembly line. Then it got to be dark, and there were lights everywhere, and I thought, well, Thomas Edison invented the light bulb. We were flying at 30,000 feet, and I thought, well, the Wright brothers invented the airplane. They are all Americans. I got to thinking, of course, that is not all. We have invented the internet, polio vaccine, the personal computer, nuclear power.

You could make a long list. It is hard to think of any major technological invention since World War II that didn't have some support from government-sponsored research.

So I would like to tell President Trump and the Office of Management and Budget that science, research, innovation, and technology is what helped to make America first and that he include that in his America First agenda.

The funding in this bill is a good first step toward doing that. It prioritizes Federal spending to keep America first in energy research, and it increases funding to build the fastest supercomputers in the world, and develop the next generation of supercomputers.

Two weeks ago, Energy Secretary Rick Perry traveled to Oak Ridge, where he announced that the United States will regain the No. 1 position in supercomputing in the world. We compete for that every year with China and Japan. To stay ahead of China and Japan and other countries—those in

Europe, for example—that are emphasizing science and technology and research costs money, but it is important to note that we have been able to do that with bipartisan majorities over the last several years—not by overspending. We did it by setting priorities.

The record funding that is part of this bipartisan budget agreement is a part of the 30 percent of the spending in the Federal budget that has been going up at about the rate of inflation for the last 10 years, and, according to the Congressional Budget Office, it will go up a little bit more than the rate of inflation for the next 10 years.

So our record funding is achieved by setting priorities within budget limits. It is not the part of the Federal budget that is breaking the bank. That is the entitlement part, not the National Laboratories, not the national defense, not the National Institutes of Health, and not the national parks. They are within the part of the budget that is under control.

Funding in this bill supports several important agencies, including the U.S. Department of Energy, the Corps of Engineers, the National Nuclear Security Administration, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the Bureau of Reclamation, the Regional Commissions, including the Appalachian Regional Commission and the Delta Regional Authority.

For the fourth consecutive year, as I was saying, we have included record funding levels in regular appropriations bills for the following activities: The U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Science. This is the outfit that funds our 17 National Laboratories—our secret weapon. No other country in the world has National Laboratories like we do. The Office of Science is the Nation's largest supporter of research in the physical sciences. It is funded at \$6.65 billion, a new record level of funding.

The Office of Science provides funding for the laboratories, including the Oak Ridge National Laboratory. Funding for the Office of Science would increase by 6 percent next year if this legislation becomes law.

Or let's take supercomputing. I mentioned that Secretary Perry went to the Oak Ridge National Laboratory last week. This bill provides a total of \$1.68 billion for high-performance computing, including \$980 million within the Office of Science and \$703 million within the National Nuclear Security Administration. This amount includes \$677 million to deliver at least one exascale machine in 2021 to reassert U.S. leadership in this critical area.

This funding has been provided, on a bipartisan basis, for 10 years. I remember Senator Bingaman of New Mexico encouraging me to go to Japan to see their supercomputer when Japan was No. 1 in the world. Because of that after 10 years of effort and support from Presidents Bush, Obama, and Trump, when they signed the bill,

America is now No. 1 in supercomputing.

Or take an agency we call ARPA-E. It is funded at \$375 million, record funding for a regular appropriations bill. ARPA-E, which is sort of a funny name, has a cousin with a funny name that is a little better known, named DARPA. DARPA is in the Department of Defense. Out of it has come wondrous new technologies from stealth to the internet, for example.

So, 10 years ago, Congress decided to make an energy equivalent of DARPA, and we fund it every year to invest in high-impact energy technologies and quickly get these technologies out into the private sector.

Another important part of this bill is the focus on efforts to clean up hazardous materials on Cold War-era sites. It provides \$7.2 billion to support environmental cleanup, which is \$581 million above the President's budget request.

Still another important part of this bill is the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which touches the lives of almost all Americans. Based upon the number of appropriations requests we get each year, the Corps of Engineers is the Federal Government's most popular agency.

The Corps maintains our inland waterways. It deepens and keeps our ports open. It looks after many of our recreational waters and lands. It manages the river levels to prevent flooding. And its dams provide emission-free, renewable hydroelectric energy.

I can recall when I was a member of the Environment and Public Works Committee, after the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers flooded, a whole room full of Senators showed up to ask for more money for their States to deal with what was wrong and to make things right. There is a real interest in what the Corps does.

The bill restores \$2.142 billion that was cut by the President's budget request, bringing the Corps' budget up to \$6.9 billion—a new record level of funding in a regular appropriations bill.

For the fifth consecutive year, the bill makes full use of the Inland Waterways Trust Fund revenues for water infrastructure projects. What that means is we take the tax money we collect from people who use the locks, and we spend it all on what we are supposed to spend it for, which is making the locks better.

The bill also provides funding that exceeds the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund spending targets established by the Water Resources Development Act in 2014.

This is the fifth consecutive year that the bill has met or exceeded that target, which is necessary to adequately fund our Nation's harbors, including the ones in Mobile, in Savannah, in Long Beach, and many others across the country.

There is \$14.8 billion for the National Nuclear Security Administration, including \$1.9 billion for six life exten-

sion programs, which fix or replace components of weapons systems to make sure they are safe and reliable.

We fund the Nuclear Regulatory Commission which oversees our 99 nuclear reactors. Nuclear power provides 20 percent of our electricity and more than half of our carbon-free electricity.

We include funding to ensure that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission is prepared to review applications for new reactors, particularly small reactors, advanced reactors, and to extend the licenses of our existing reactors when it is safe to do so.

The bill also provides \$47 million for research and development for the Department of Energy to support existing reactors, \$30 million for the Center for Advanced Simulation of Light Water Reactors, and \$30 million for the transformational challenge reactor.

The legislation also includes a pilot program that Senator FEINSTEIN especially has pushed, and I have joined her, to consolidate nuclear waste and move it away from the sites where they now are. Funding is also there to take the first steps toward being able to store nuclear waste in private facilities.

In conclusion, it is important that the American people know that the Republican majority in Congress has worked with Democrats to provide record levels of funding for science, research, and technology. We want to keep America first on both sides of the aisle, and this bipartisan support is not limited to the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Subcommittee. It is true in our other subcommittees as well.

The National Science Foundation has increased by \$200 million this year and another \$300 million for next year. It gives 11,000 grants to universities and institutions around the country. And, perhaps most important, in fiscal year 2018, for the third straight year, the subcommittee chaired by Senator BLUNT and Senator MURRAY provided increased funding for the National Institutes of Health and biomedical research—\$2 billion additional dollars in the first year, \$2 billion the second year, and \$2 billion the third year, which is in addition to the money—nearly \$5 billion—in the 21st Century Cures Act that focuses on the Precision Medicine Initiative and the Cancer Moonshot, among other things.

Senator BLUNT says that over 3 years, that is a 23-percent increase.

So I would say two things to those who haven't noticed this quiet development. No. 1: Congress is doing what it is supposed to do. We are not asking for an award any more than the Boy Scouts get a merit badge for telling the truth, but we are doing what we are supposed to do on appropriations from start to finish on these three bills.

No. 2: We are funding science and research and technology at record levels—record levels. It is important to keep America competitive in the world.

I thank our staffs who have worked together on this bill. On my staff are Tyler Owens, Adam DeMella, Meyer Seligman, Jen Armstrong, Molly Marsh, and Rachel Littleton.

On Senator FEINSTEIN's staff are Doug Clapp, Chris Hanson, and Samantha Nelson.

I look forward to continuing with the regular order and going to conference with the House of Representatives. I urge my colleagues to vote in support of this legislation.

I thank Senator LEAHY and Senator SCHATZ, who are both on the floor, as well as Senator SCHUMER, Senator MCCONNELL, and the other Senators who have spoken today for creating an environment that allows us to succeed.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. SCHATZ. Madam President, I want to thank Chairman ALEXANDER as well as Vice Chair LEAHY, Chairman SHELBY, Chairman BOOZMAN, and many other people who have made this minibus work. We are going to adopt it tonight. I hope that our work over the last week has set the tone for the Senate's consideration of the remaining appropriations bills.

We have opened debate and considered a number of amendments, and we have avoided controversial issues that have too often torpedoed our work in prior years. Between rollcall votes and the managers' package, we have adopted 40 amendments, including 14 to the MILCON-VA appropriations bill. This speaks volumes to the bipartisan cooperation that I expect will continue as we try to get back to some semblance of the regular order as it relates to the appropriations process.

I especially want to thank my colleague from Arkansas, Chairman BOOZMAN, for managing a fair amendment process and for working to keep the bill bipartisan. I want to thank subcommittee staff Patrick Magnuson, Jennifer Bastin, and Joanne Hoff. And from my subcommittee staff, I thank Chad Schulken and Jason McMahon. They worked late nights reviewing hundreds of amendments.

I also want to thank our counterparts on the Energy and Water and Legislative Branch Subcommittees, and their staffs, for their great work over the past few months to put together bills that I believe will pass overwhelmingly today.

Lastly, it is important to thank Chairman SHELBY and Vice Chairman LEAHY for getting us to this point. By the end of the week, we will have reported out of the full committees all 12 government funding bills with 3 having passed the floor, and all before July 4. That is what is possible when there is a commitment to making this place work.

I will just call out one particular moment that actually impressed me. Things got a little wobbly when the rescissions package, which was a privileged matter, hit the floor. We had a

couple of tough conversations, but we navigated our way through that. Then there was an amendment offered that was in order, but it was about waters of the United States. Without getting into great detail about this, there is probably nothing that causes people to go put on their partisan jerseys more than WOTUS—waters of the United States. Chairman SHELBY and many Republicans, including Leader MCCONNELL, said, essentially: Listen, I am with you, Senator LEE, in principle, but this is not the bill on which to do this. That is the kind of discipline that is going to be required of both parties if we are going to keep the appropriations process on track and allow it to be held harmless from some of our more partisan disputes.

Their strong leadership and that of their staffs—Shannon Hines, Jonathan Graffeo, and David Adkins from the majority and, of course, Chuck Kieffer, Chanda Betourney, and Jessica Berry from the minority—have gotten us where we are today. I urge all of my colleagues to support the minibus package.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I appreciate the comments of the Senator from Tennessee and the Senator from Hawaii. I have enjoyed working with both of them because look where we are. This is somewhere we have not been for a number of years. It is where we used to be—certainly for the first few decades I was here. It is where we were when Senator ALEXANDER or my hero, Senator Baker, were here.

What we are doing is voting on final passage of the first package of Senate appropriations bills for fiscal year 2019. The minibus before us contains a string of appropriations bills: the Energy and Water appropriations bill, the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs appropriations bill, and the Legislative Branch appropriations bill. We will have these votes in a matter of half an hour, and they will only take a few minutes, but there are hours and hours and days and weeks that went into this by both Republicans and Democrats.

Chairman SHELBY and I worked very closely with Senator MCCONNELL and Senator SCHUMER. Both Senator SHELBY as chairman and I as vice chairman committed to getting the appropriations process back on track. We both have been here when the Senate has been in a better place because the appropriations process worked. Our strategy has been to advance appropriations bills that have bipartisan support, comply with the budget deal and are free of poison pill riders or controversial authorizing legislation. What we have before us is the first test of that strategy. I think both Republicans and Democrats should be pretty pleased with the result.

We had a good debate on this package of bills, including the last eight rollcall votes. We adopted a managers' package

that contained 32 amendments on which we have reached agreement. This minibus is the result of hard work and compromise on the part of the chair and ranking member of each subcommittee, and I urge Senators to vote ay on final passage.

Importantly, during the debate on this package of bills, as just mentioned, the Senate voted to table a controversial amendment offered by Senator LEE to overturn the 2015 clean water rule related to waters of the United States. This rule was designed to prevent pollutants from spreading through tributaries into our Nation's drinking water supply. I felt that the amendment not only would have driven a stake through the heart of the clean water rule, it would have done so without having to abide by the Administrative Procedure Act, it would have effectively eliminated the American public from any participation in the process, and it would have sidestepped and allowed arbitrary and capricious standards, which we cannot have, if we had repealed the rule.

I opposed this amendment not only because I believe that repealing the clean water rule would be shortsighted, and that doing it in this manner would set a terrible precedent for the next bedrock environmental regulation, but also because this is precisely the type of poison pill policy rider both Republicans and Democrats have worked so hard to avoid.

The adoption of the Lee amendment would have endangered our ability to complete our work on the minibus. We tabled the amendment, and we had votes from both sides of the aisle, including from Senators who agreed with the substance of the Lee amendment, but they recognized this reality as well—that adopting it would stop the whole bill. That is how the process should work. By focusing on funding matters, by avoiding controversial policy riders, we have ended the Senate debate with a bipartisan product that both Democrats and Republicans can support.

I went on at some length on this because I am concerned that the House is pursuing a different path. They are taking up partisan bills and filling them with poison pill riders that cannot and will not pass the U.S. Senate, and they know that, including a rider similar to the defeated Lee amendment. Democrats proceeded to this package of bills in good faith, and we will go into conference negotiations with that same approach, but if our progress is to continue, we cannot sign conference reports on bills that can't pass the Senate. They must be bills that can pass the Senate, bills that both Republicans and Democrats can vote for, and that means they have to be free of poison pills from the right or the left.

This minibus provides significant resources for the support and care of our Nation's veterans and their family

members, and it makes critical investments in our country's water infrastructure and energy programs. It should not be used as a vehicle to advance a partisan political agenda.

Before concluding my remarks, there is one issue we were not able to address in the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs bill that must be addressed in conference. The bill still does not provide enough money to cover the costs associated with the VA Choice Program, which was transferred to the discretionary side of the budget under the MISSION Act. The MISSION Act only provided funding for this program through May of 2019, leaving the balance unaddressed. To cover the shortfall, we are going to need an estimated \$1.6 billion more in fiscal year 2019 and an additional \$8.6 billion in fiscal year 2020 and \$9.5 billion in fiscal year 2021 to cover the Veterans Affairs Choice Program. These costs were not accounted for when we negotiated the budget caps in the bipartisan budget deal, so the chairman and the ranking member of the subcommittee were unable to address the shortfall within their allocation without cutting funding for other important programs.

Senator SHELBY and I filed an amendment—the Complete the MISSION amendment—which would have provided the flexibility needed to make sure we fulfill this commitment to our veterans without triggering sequestration or without having to cut other valuable veterans programs.

I would note that on June 19, we received a letter from 33 veterans service organizations representing millions of veterans, servicemembers, and their families in support of the amendment Chairman SHELBY and I filed. I ask unanimous consent to have this letter printed in the RECORD at the conclusion of my remarks.

Unfortunately, we were not able to reach agreement to get a vote on our amendment or have it included in the managers' package, but Chairman SHELBY and I remain committed to solving this problem in conference. If we don't do so, we will jeopardize the healthcare and well-being of the men and women who have faithfully served our country, who relied on the promises made by our country when they served our country, and I am not willing to accept going back on our country's promise.

I thank Chairman SHELBY, and I thank the Republican chairs and the Democratic ranking members of each subcommittee for their hard work. As the longest serving Member of this body, I think we provided a roadmap to consider the rest of the appropriations bills, going back to doing it the way we have done it under both Republican and Democratic leadership and where the country is better off.

I also want to thank Shannon H. Hines, Jonathan Grafeo, David Adkins, Tyler Owens, Jen Armstrong, Adam DeMella, Meyer Seligman, Rachel Littleton, Molly Marsh, Sarah

Boliek, Lucas Agnew, Patrick Magnuson, Jennifer Bastin, Joanne Hoff, and Carlos Elias of the majority staff and Charles Kieffer, Chanda Betourney, Doug Clapp, Chris Hanson, Samantha Nelson, Melissa Zimmerman, Jean Kwon, Chad Schulken, Jason McMahon, Jessica Berry, and Jordan Stone on the minority staff for their work on these bills.

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

JUNE 19, 2018.

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

Hon. JOHNNY ISAKSON,
Chairman, Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee,
Washington, DC.

Hon. CHUCK SCHUMER,
Minority Leader,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Hon. JON TESTER,
Ranking Member, Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee,
Washington, DC.

DEAR LEADER MCCONNELL, LEADER SCHUMER, CHAIRMAN ISAKSON AND RANKING MEMBER TESTER: On behalf of the millions of veterans, service members and family members we represent and advocate for, we want to first thank you for passage of the VA MISSION Act (P.L. 115-182), historic legislation that will consolidate and reform VA's community care programs; strengthen VA's ability to recruit, hire and retain medical personnel; review, realign and modernize VA's health care infrastructure; and extend eligibility to VA's comprehensive caregiver assistance program to veterans severely injured before September 11, 2001. With the law set to begin taking effect next year, it is imperative that Congress now ensure that VA has the resources necessary to fully and faithfully implement the many critical provisions of this legislation.

For that reason, we urge you and all Senators to support and vote for Chairman Shelby and Vice Chairman Leahy's new "Complete the Mission" amendment, which would allow Congress to provide VA with sufficient resources required to implement the provisions of the VA MISSION Act, without triggering sequestration or requiring cuts to other VA programs.

As you know, the VA MISSION Act would effectively move funding responsibility for care currently provided through the Veterans Choice Program from mandatory appropriations to a new discretionary program that must fit within overall domestic discretionary caps. However, the current domestic discretionary budget cap for FY 2019, and the anticipated caps for FY 2020 and FY 2021, did not contemplate the new and increased costs associated with the VA MISSION Act. As such, Congress may not have the ability to fully fund all of the programs, benefits and services that our veterans, their families and survivors have earned.

It is imperative that VA not be forced to choose between fully funding its hospitals and clinics for veterans seeking care inside the VA health care system, or fully funding community care for veterans who would otherwise be forced to wait too long or travel too far to access VA care. We do not want to return to a time when veterans were forced onto waiting lists to get the care they have earned through their service and sacrifice.

The new Shelby-Leahy "Complete the Mission" amendment would allow Congress to appropriate additional discretionary funding to meet the new requirements of the VA MISSION Act without triggering sequestration. However, unlike a prior amendment

that had been discussed, this amendment would limit the amount of such funding to just \$1.6 billion for FY 2018, \$8.67 billion for FY 2019 and \$9.5 billion for FY 2020.

We are very concerned that without assurance of sufficient funding, reform and modernization of the VA health care system—which millions of ill and injured veterans rely on—could be delayed or endangered. Further, tens of thousands of caregivers for severely injured veterans might have to continue waiting before they can receive the benefits they deserve. For these reasons, it is absolutely critical that the Shelby-Leahy "Complete the Mission" amendment to the MilCon-VA Appropriations bill be adopted by the Senate, approved by the House, and enacted into law.

As leaders of the nation's veterans and military service organizations, we again want to thank you for approving the VA MISSION Act in order to fulfill the promises our nation owes to the men and women who served. We now call on you to ensure that VA has sufficient funding to implement this legislation by supporting and voting for the Shelby-Leahy "Complete the Mission" amendment to the MilCon-VA Appropriations bill. Millions of injured and ill veterans and their family caregivers are counting on your support.

Respectfully,

Garry J. Augustine, Washington Executive Director, DAV (Disabled American Veterans); Louis Celli, Jr., Executive Director, Government & Veterans Affairs, The American Legion; Joseph R. Chenely, Executive Director, AMVETS; Dana T. Atkins, Lieutenant General, U.S. Air Force (Ret.), President, Military Officers Association of America; Robert E. Wallace, Executive Director, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States; Carl Blake, Executive Director, Paralyzed Veterans of America; Rick Weidman, Executive Director for Policy, Vietnam Veterans of America; Rene Bardof, Senior Vice President, Government & Community Relations, Wounded Warrior Project; Paul Rieckhoff, Founder and CEO, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America; Steve Schwab, Executive Director, Elizabeth Dole Foundation; Norman Rosenshein, Chairman, Jewish War Veterans of the USA; Jon Ostrowski, Senior Chief, USCGR, Retired, Director, Government Affairs, Non Commissioned Officers Association; RADM Christopher Cole, USN (Ret.), National Executive Director, Association of the United States Navy; Michael Cowan MD, VADM USN (Ret.), Executive Director, AMSUS; Neil Van Ess, National Commander, Military Order of the Purple Heart.

Deirdre Park Holleman, Esq., Washington Executive Director, The Retired Enlisted Association; Bonnie Carroll, President and Founder, Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors; Randy Reid, Executive Director, U.S. Coast Guard Chief Petty Officers Association; Paul K. Hopper, Colonel, USMC (Ret.), National President, Marine Corps Reserve Association; Kristina Kaufman, Executive Director, Code of Support Foundation.

Joseph C. Bogart MA, Executive Director, Blinded Veteran's Association; John H. Madigan, Jr., Vice President and Chief Public Policy Officer, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention; James T. (Jim) Currie, Ph.D., Colonel, USA (Ret.), Executive Director, Commissioned Officers Association, of the U.S. Public Health Service; CW4 (Ret.) Jack Du Teil, Executive Director, United States Army Warrant Officers Association; E.J. Sinclair, Army Aviation Association of America; Harriet Boyden, Gold Star Wives of America; James R. Sweeney, Reserve Officers Association; Thomas J. Snee, National

Executive Director, Fleet Reserve Association; Jim Lorraine, President/CEO, America's Warrior Partnership; Keith Reed, Executive Director, Air Force Sergeants Association; Representative of the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the US; Michael P. Hughes, Naval Enlisted Reserve Assn.; Lydia Watts, Service Women's Action Network.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF LETTER SIGNERS

1. Air Force Sergeants Association (AFSA)
2. American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP)
3. America's Warrior Partnership
4. The American Legion
5. AMSUS, The Society of Federal Health Professionals
6. AMVETS (American Veterans)
7. Army Aviation Association of America (AAAA)
8. Association of the US Navy (AUSN)
9. Blinded Veterans Association (BVA)
10. Code of Support Foundation (COSF)
11. Commissioned Officers Association of the US Public Health Services Inc (COA)
12. DAV (Disabled American Veterans)
13. Elizabeth Dole Foundation (EDF)
14. Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the US (EANGUS)
15. Fleet Reserve Association (FRA)
16. Gold Star Wives of America (GSW)
17. Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA)
18. Jewish War Veterans (JWV)
19. Marine Corps Reserve Association (MCRA)
20. Military Officers Association of America (MOAA)
21. Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH)
22. Naval Enlisted Reserve Association (NERA)
23. Non Commissioned Officers Association of the USA (NCOA)
24. Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA)
25. Reserve Officers Association (ROA)
26. Service Women's Action Network (SWAN)
27. The Retired Enlisted Association (TREA)
28. Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS)
29. US Army Warrant Officers Association (USAWOA)
30. USCG Chief Petty Officers Association (CPOA)
31. Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)
32. Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA)
33. Wounded Warrior Project (WWP)

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I do not see anybody seeking recognition.

I suggest the absence of a quorum, with the time equally divided.

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

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SHELBY. 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. SHELBY. Mr. President, before we vote this afternoon, I want to thank my colleagues in the Senate, provide a status update on the appropriations processes before us, and urge the Senate to stay the course.

First, I thank Leaders McCONNELL and SCHUMER for bringing this package to the floor and facilitating an open amendment process.

I also thank the bill managers—particularly Senator ALEXANDER—for their work in crafting strong bipartisan bills and keeping the process on track.

In addition, I express my appreciation to Senator LEAHY, the vice chairman of the Appropriations Committee. Vice Chairman LEAHY is a man of his word, and that has been essential to the committee's ability to move bills.

Finally, I thank all of my colleagues for their cooperation and their input during floor consideration of this package.

At the outset of this debate, I challenged all Senators to follow through on their calls for a return to regular order. To that end, several amendments received up-or-down votes on the floor, and dozens more from both sides were included in the managers' package. We also rejected controversial authorizing provisions for the good of the process.

As we are getting ready to vote on final passage, I hope my colleagues agree that we are headed in the right direction. I recognize that this package must still be reconciled with the House version before we can get it to the President's desk, but I am optimistic that we can do that in short order.

We also cannot forget that nine other appropriations bills remain. The Appropriations Committee has already reported seven of these remaining bills to the full Senate, all with strong bipartisan margins.

This week, the committee will mark up the final two appropriations bills—Defense and Labor-HHS—and I am hoping for a similar result.

While we are about a quarter of a way through the 2019 appropriations process, we still have a long way to go, but we do have a framework for success—no poison pill riders, no new authorizations of law, no nongermane provisions. I have said it many times before, and I will keep saying it: This is the basis of the agreement I have with Vice Chairman LEAHY. This is the approach our subcommittee chairmen and ranking members have adopted in producing strong and balanced bills. This is the way to avoid the catch-all spending measures and shutdowns we all detest. This is how the appropriations process is supposed to work. This is simply what the American people expect both parties to do.

Looking ahead, I don't think any of us are naive about the potential for partisan politics to snake its way back into the appropriations process. Tomorrow is a different day, as we know, after all. But we all have a constitutional responsibility to allocate taxpayer money in a deliberate manner, and we have a viable path forward. So it is my hope that today marks a new day for the appropriations process in the U.S. Senate.

To all of my colleagues, I want to thank you for your cooperation. I ask that you continue to work with us in the weeks ahead so that we can suc-

cessfully pass all 12 appropriations bills on the Senate floor.

With that, I urge my colleagues to support the bill that will come before the Senate in a few minutes.

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

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

The amendment was ordered to be engrossed and the bill to be read a third time.

The bill was read the third time.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. McCAIN), and the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO), the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH), and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 86, nays 5, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 139 Leg.]

YEAS—86

Alexander	Feinstein	Murkowski
Baldwin	Fischer	Murphy
Barrasso	Gardner	Murray
Bennet	Grassley	Nelson
Blumenthal	Harris	Perdue
Blunt	Hassan	Peters
Boozman	Hatch	Portman
Brown	Heinrich	Reed
Burr	Heitkamp	Risch
Cantwell	Heller	Roberts
Capito	Hirono	Rounds
Cardin	Hoover	Rubio
Carper	Hyde-Smith	Sanders
Casey	Inhofe	Sasse
Cassidy	Johnson	Schatz
Collins	Jones	Schumer
Coons	Kaine	Scott
Corker	Kennedy	Shaheen
Cornyn	King	Shelby
Cotton	Lankford	Smith
Crapo	Leahy	Stabenow
Cruz	Manchin	Tester
Daines	McCaskill	Thune
Donnelly	McConnell	Tillis
Durbin	Menendez	Toomey
Enzi	Merkley	Udall
Ernst	Moran	

Van Hollen Warner	Whitehouse Wicker	Wyden Young	Collins Coons Corker Cornyn	Inhofe Isakson Johnson Jones	Roberts Rounds Rubio Sanders
NAYS—5					
Gillibrand Lee	Markey Paul	Warren	Cotton Crapo Cruz	Kaine Kennedy King	Sasse Schatz Schumer
NOT VOTING—9					
Booker	Flake	Klobuchar	Daines Donnelly	Lankford Leahy	Scott
Cortez Masto	Graham	McCain	Durbin	Manchin	Shaheen
Duckworth	Isakson	Sullivan	Enzi	Markey	Shelby
The bill (H.R. 5895), as amended, was passed.					

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 483, H.R. 2, an act to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2023, and for other purposes.

Mitch McConnell, John Cornyn, Deb Fischer, Mike Rounds, John Barrasso, John Hoeven, Roger F. Wicker, Shelley Moore Capito, Steve Daines, John Boozman, Orrin G. Hatch, Thom Tillis, David Perdue, Mike Crapo, Richard Burr, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Pat Roberts.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the motion to proceed to H.R. 2, an act to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2023, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), and the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO), the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH), and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) are necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 89, nays 3, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 140 Leg.]

YEAS—89

Alexander	Blunt	Capito
Baldwin	Boozman	Cardin
Barrasso	Brown	Carper
Bennet	Burr	Casey
Blumenthal	Cantwell	Cassidy

Collins	Inhofe	Roberts
Coons	Isakson	Rounds
Corker	Johnson	Rubio
Cornyn	Jones	Sanders
Cotton	Kaine	Sasse
Crapo	Kennedy	Schatz
Cruz	King	Schumer
Daines	Lankford	Stabenow
Feinstein	Leahy	Tester
Donnelly	Manchin	Thune
Durbin	Markey	Tillis
Enzi	Ernst	Toomey
Gillibrand	McCaskill	Udall
Grassley	McConnell	Van Hollen
Harris	Merkley	Warner
Hassan	Moran	Whitehouse
Hatch	Nelson	Warren
Heinrich	Perdue	Wicks
Heitkamp	Peters	Wright
Hirono	Portman	Wyden
Hoeven	Reed	Young
Hyde-Smith	Risch	

NAYS—3

Heller	Lee	Menendez
NOT VOTING—8		
Booker	Flake	McCain
Cortez Masto	Graham	Sullivan
Duckworth	Klobuchar	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 89, the nays are 3.

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

AGRICULTURE AND NUTRITION ACT OF 2018—MOTION TO PROCEED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion to proceed.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 483, H.R. 2, a bill to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2023, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

EXECUTIVE SESSION**EXECUTIVE CALENDAR**

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 726; that the Senate vote on the nomination with no intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; that no further motions be in order; and that any statements relating to the nomination be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Shall the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Frank T. Brogan, of Pennsylvania, to be Assistant Secretary for Elementary

and Secondary Education, Department of Education?

The nomination was confirmed.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at a time to be determined by the majority leader, in consultation with the Democratic leader, the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 601. I ask consent that there then be 5 hours of debate, equally divided, and that following the use or yielding back of time, the Senate vote on the nomination with no intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; that no further motions be in order; and that any statements related to the nomination be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION**MORNING BUSINESS**

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate resume legislative session for 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.

REMEMBERING FRANCIS VOIGT

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, it is with a mixture of pride and sadness that I recognize the life of a friend, Francis "Fran" Voigt, the cofounder of the New England Culinary Institute of Montpelier, VT. Fran passed away in May, leaving a strong legacy and many family and friends.

Fran Voigt was an innovator, who originally came to Vermont to teach at Goddard College. In 1969, he came to Vermont with his wife, poet Ellen Bryant Voigt, who would later serve as Vermont's poet laureate. He was part of a faculty and staff at Goddard that changed the culture of central Vermont. While at Goddard, Fran developed programs in many fields, including social ecology and art therapy. Fran believed in hands-on education, both at Goddard and later at the New England Culinary Institute, known locally as NECI, which he cofounded in 1980.

The New England Culinary Institute, which began in the basement of Montpelier's Capitol Plaza Hotel and Conference Center, grew quickly and garnered national attention. Fran and NECI were soon at the forefront of our

country's progressive culinary education movement and were recognized by President Bill Clinton as first runner-up for the Nation's small business of the year in 1994. In 2000, Fran was named Vermont Citizen of the Year by the Vermont Chamber of Commerce.

Vermont's culinary landscape was forever changed by the New England Culinary Institute, as its students opened and worked at restaurants throughout the State.

In memory of Fran Voigt, I ask unanimous consent that the article by Stephen Mills in the May 22 edition of the Barre Montpelier Times Argus, "NECI founder revered for student model," be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Barre Montpelier Times Argus, May 22, 2018]

NECI FOUNDER REVERED FOR STUDENT MODEL
(By Stephen Mills)

MONTPELIER.—The Capital City reacted to news of the death of Fran Voigt, co-founder of the New England Culinary Institute, who died at his Cabot home Monday. He was 78.

Voigt and co-founder John Dranow, and their wives, Ellen Bryant Voigt and Louise Gluck, respectively met at Goddard College and started the legendary cooking school with seven students in the basement of the Capitol Plaza Hotel & Conference Center on State Street in 1980.

At the height of its success, the business was honored in 1994 by former President Bill Clinton as first runner-up for the nation's small business of the year. It boasted a high of 800 students, and a number of academic offerings and outlets that still include the flagship NECI on Main restaurant and La Brioche bakery and cafe, and food service at National Life and the cafeteria at Vermont College of Fine Arts, all in Montpelier. Other operations, included a second campus in Essex and NECI Commons, a restaurant on Church Street in Burlington, which were discontinued. More recent contracts included a \$200,000 contract to train cooks for the U.S. Coast Guard and a three-year contract to design and deliver a training program for culinary staff at Sandals resorts in the Caribbean. But NECI also was at the center of a protracted legal dispute in 1999 that landed in the Vermont Supreme Court after Voigt and the wives had a falling out with Dranow who was ousted, and sued but finally settled. NECI is now run by Milan Milasinovic, who is also president of Virginia Marti College of Art and Design in Ohio and merged the two schools last June after Voigt stepped down as president in January 2017. It has about 200 students. Voigt's daughter, Dudley, said there would be no public service, but the family hoped to hold a memorial service later.

"We would just say that he died at home after a long illness," she said.

"We feel that we're very proud of NECI," Dudley Voigt said. "We watched him build it, and it was a unique coalescing of all of his talents and gifts and curiosities."

According to an obituary provided by the family to be published in The Times Argus, Francis George Wilhelm Voigt was born in Oskaloosa, Iowa, March 27, 1940, after his parents emigrated from Germany. He graduated from Wesleyan University in 1962 and earned a graduate degree in political theory from the University of Iowa where he met his wife, Ellen Bryant Voigt. The couple came to central Vermont as educational

idealists in 1969. Fran Voigt accepted a teaching position at Goddard College and developed some of the skills he used to build the hands-on education that became the model for NECI where students started in the kitchen in the classroom and the student-teacher ratio was 7-1. The NECI motto was: "Learning by doing."

In addition to his lifelong work at NECI, Voigt was also an active member of the Vermont Business Roundtable, Rotary International, the Cabot School and the Vermont Chamber of Commerce, which named him Vermont Citizen of the Year in 2000. He was also recognized in the community for his signature bow ties and antique Citroëns.

Milan Milasinovic credited Voigt with visionary leadership and commitment to the NECI model of culinary arts and being a mentor to all at the school.

"He became a dear friend of mine in the last couple of years of his life," he said. "It's a huge loss. He was our founding father and he made NECI very innovative and a force as a culinary school in the United States. It's all because of his entrepreneurial spirit. I'm sure the people at NECI will miss him greatly. We loved this man a lot."

U.S. Sen. Patrick Leahy credited Voigt with being "at the forefront of the progressive culinary education movement nationally," and said the Vermont food scene would not be what it is today without Voigt's contribution and leadership.

"His vision, hard work and dedication in founding and continually reinventing NECI leaves a lasting legacy that extends well beyond Vermont," Leahy said. "He helped give expression to Vermont's tradition of quality, taste and excellence. Vermont's culinary landscape owes a significant debt to his vision, and so do the communities that were nourished, enriched and enlivened by those trained under his leadership."

Montpelier Mayor Anne Watson added: "Fran Voigt made substantial cultural contributions to Montpelier, and I'm certainly saddened to have lost him. We send our condolences to his family."

The family has requested that in lieu of flowers, donations be made in Voigt's name to the NECI scholarship fund or to the Vermont Foodbank.

TAX REFORM

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, as you may know, I was a strong supporter of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act that passed this body and was signed into law last year. With every passing day, we are hearing more about the positive effects this law is having on the economy as a whole and about companies, both large and small, making investments in their employees and in their businesses. In identifying the positive impacts that the law has had on the overall economy and for individual taxpayers, it is sometimes forgotten that small businesses have also benefited from the law. As chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, I supported the tax law because I believed it would reduce taxes for the small businesses that employ millions of workers all across America, while allowing small business owners to invest in new equipment and increase economic growth. A few weeks ago, I began this series of speeches to bring attention to small businesses that have benefited from this law.

While many news reports have focused on the impact that the new tax

law has had on individuals and large corporations, I rise today to discuss how Quake Manufacturing, a small business in Fort Wayne, IN, has benefited from tax reform. Quake Manufacturing produces high-quality machined parts for its customers. The company uses high-tech computer numerical control, CNC, machines to manufacture several types of metal and plastic fixtures, gauges, prototype parts, and mass-produced parts. Quake Manufacturing employs 12 workers, has an 8,000-square-foot facility, four CNC machining centers, and six lathes. Hermann Quake started the company in 1990 and has watched as the company has expanded into the automotive and consumer goods sectors. In 1999, Hermann retired, and his son Paul took over day-to-day operations of the family business.

Because of the tax law that was passed last year, this family-owned small business has already been able to invest more in its employees. After the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act was signed into law, demand for manufactured parts increased and business quickly picked up for the company. Due to this renewed economic confidence, Paul was able to give all of his employees a one-time \$1,000 bonus and a gym membership and increase employee benefits by adding long-term disability, short-term disability, and dental insurance to their health plans. These investments in his employees will help him to attract and maintain qualified workers, which is important in an industry that prides itself on attention to detail. Tax reform has had a tangible impact on small businesses like Quake Manufacturing and their employees. Overall, the new law has increased small businesses' confidence, allowed businesses to increase employee bonuses and benefits, while also lowering taxes and spurring new capital investment.

TANZANIA

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I rise to call attention to the trend of increasing restrictions on basic freedoms in Tanzania, a country that appeared to be on a path toward greater democracy and political openness. I am deeply concerned about reports of Tanzanian security forces' use of repressive laws, decrees, and actions to harass those who disagree with the current regime and unattributed attacks on democratically elected opposition party officials. I call upon the Trump administration to increase its efforts to encourage the government of Tanzania to support individual and collective freedoms, freedom of expression, and civil liberties. Such norms are the hallmarks of a healthy democracy and are among the basic rights and duties guaranteed to Tanzania's citizens under their constitution.

These reports are troubling because, on the whole, Tanzania is among the most stable and peaceful countries in the region. Tanzania is a top African

contributor of personnel to international peacekeeping operations, and we honor the sacrifice of the Tanzanian people, who have lost nearly 50 peacekeepers during these vital missions, including 14 killed in the Democratic Republic of Congo. It is one of the leading African economies and had the sixth largest GDP in Africa, according to IMF data published in April.

U.S.-Tanzanian ties have, for many years, been cordial, and U.S. bilateral aid expanded significantly under the previous two U.S. administrations. The U.S. has had a robust development relationship with Tanzania, including investments in some of our premier development programs, such as Feed the Future, the Global Health Initiative, the Global Climate Change Initiative, Power Africa, the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief—PEPFAR—and Trade Africa. Since 1962, Tanzania has hosted a Peace Corps program. In 2013, Tanzania also successfully completed a Millennium Challenge Corporation, MCC, funded compact.

Upon taking office in October 2015, President John Pombe Magufuli pledged to stamp out public corruption and make his government accountable to ordinary citizens, and he has taken some steps to do so. He made an unannounced visit to the Ministry of Finance to see civil servants at work on his first day as President and redirected funds from Independence Day celebrations toward anticholera operations. He initiated corruption reviews of the Tanzanian Port Authority and Tanzanian Revenue authority, resulting in the dissolution of an ineffective board and purging of civil servant rolls of "phantom staff." According to AfroBarometer surveys, the government's handling of corruption in public office has had a positive impact, reducing citizens' perceptions of institutional corruption in key public agencies.

By many measures, Tanzania is doing fairly well. My purpose is not to offer gratuitous criticisms of Tanzania or its people, but to register my strong concern that the progress of the last decade and a half in the areas of democracy and respect for civil liberties may be undergoing a reversal right before our eyes. Tanzania's success in advancing economically and politically is what makes the current political backsliding so troubling. I fear that while we are all rightly focused on the resolving the many crises on the continent and around the globe, the gradual downward spiral of respect for civil liberties in Tanzania is proceeding unnoticed, unremarked, and unchallenged by its friends and partners. As we address crises throughout the region and the world, we must also be mindful of the maintenance of strong democratic institutions, good governance, and accountability which ultimately secure resilient communities.

The Magufuli Presidency has been marked by three troubling trends.

First is the rise in recent years in the harassment of opposition political figures and restrictions on their activities. In September 2017, Tundu Lissu, a Member of Parliament—MP—and Parliamentary chief whip of the opposition Chadema party was shot by unknown assailants and seriously wounded. Lissu, who is also the president of the Tanganyika Law Society, is a fierce critic of President Magufuli and his government, but also a longstanding critic of corruption who may face hostility from many quarters. Lissu has often been arrested for his longstanding criticism of the government.

Other opposition Parliamentarians face police harassment. In late September 2017, police arrested a Chadema MP after a party event, and at least two other MPs complained that police were prohibiting meetings with constituents.

In February of this year, the U.S. Embassy released a statement of concern about the rise in politically related confrontations after reports of kidnapping and violence in Tanzania that resulted in the death of Daniel John, who was a leader of a local opposition party, and the injury of opposition supporter Reginald Mallya.

Second is closing media space. According to the 2017 World Press Freedom Index, published by Reporters Without Borders, RSF, Tanzania dropped 12 places between 2016 to 2017 to 83 out of 180. While this is the best score in east Africa, RSF stated that the climate for journalism "has not improved since John Magufuli's election." Tanzania was ranked alongside Turkey, which indicates just how significantly Tanzania's democratic space has shrunk under the Magufuli regime. Newspapers have faced suspension or other sanction for coverage deemed critical of the government. In September 2017, the government banned the publication of two newspapers, in one case for 90 days and in another for 2 years, and 3 months after another publication was also shuttered for 2 years. In January 2018, the Committee to Protect Journalists reported that Tanzania's regulatory commission imposed fines on five television stations for ostensibly "broadcasting seditious and unbalanced content." The stations were fined after reporting on human rights abuses by security personnel and unidentified assailants during a November 2017 ward by-election.

President Magufuli signed the controversial media services bill just a month into his tenure. The bill replaced independent media oversight mechanisms with a government-controlled one, and requires all journalists to get accreditation from a government-appointed board. This leaves them vulnerable to manipulation and undue pressure to provide coverage favorable to the state and majority party.

In April 2016, then-Information Minister Nape Nnauye ordered a halt to live broadcasts of Tanzania's Par-

liamentary proceedings, denying journalists the ability to report accurate information and denying the public the right to transparency from their government. In November, President Magufuli signed into law the Media Service Act 2016, which, among other measures, requires media houses to "broadcast or publish news or issues of national importance as the government may direct," effectively giving the government outsize influence in controlling media messaging. The government then moved to restrict online content when, in September 2017, Tanzania's National Assembly passed the Electronic and Postal Communications (Online Content) Regulations. The regulations empower the Tanzanian Communications Regulatory Authority to monitor and surveil online blogs and internet cafes and ban "offensive, morally improper" content. This restricts debate and has a chilling effect on the expression of views critical of government.

If there is any doubt as to whether the government seeks to control the media, we have only to look at what President Magufuli himself said in March 2017: "I would like to tell media owners—be careful, watch it. If you think you have that kind of freedom, (it is) not to that extent." A day later, a rap musician was arrested after he released a song deemed insulting to the government. Magufuli's 2017 warning followed the late 2016 arrest of a founder of a corruption-reporting and whistle-blowing website, Jamii Forums, and a police demand that the site reveal its users' names. The website's cofounder was charged on several counts of obstructing justice and running an unregistered website.

These and other actions clearly demonstrate a disturbing deliberate government effort to censor the press and curtail the constitutionally guaranteed freedom of expression of Tanzania's citizens. I was pleased to see the announcement that the U.S. Agency for International Development or USAID, which supports good governance projects around the world, is funding a civil society and media-strengthening project that will work with media houses and radio stations in Dar es Salaam, Zanzibar, and other areas of the country. I am unconvinced, however, that this well justified effort alone will be adequate to address the broad range of worrying trends that I have outlined. I would welcome additional efforts of a similar nature by USAID and other organizations, such as the National Endowment for Democracy.

The third troubling trend is the closing space for civil society. In March, the President promised to crack down on anyone who participates in demonstrations deemed illegal by the government, vowing not to let his economic reforms be derailed by street protests. The reforms, some of which are not endorsed by the International Monetary Fund's most recent economic review, include reducing tax evasion,

halting copper concentrate exports, and banning imports of coal and gypsum. Prior to planned antigovernment demonstrations on April 26, a senior law enforcement official stated that “Those who plan to demonstrate tomorrow will seriously suffer . . . they will be beaten like stray dogs.” Because the Tanzanian authorities deployed a heavy police presence and threatened to use force, the protests failed to move forward.

Magufuli’s repression extends to sexual orientation and HIV policies. Homosexuality is illegal in Tanzania, and homosexuals and transgender persons have repeatedly faced threatening comments by government officials, as well as police harassment. Under previous Tanzanian governments, the country’s HIV policies called for dedicated outreach to key populations. Such efforts have been halted under Magufuli’s government. In 2016, the government raided and closed drop-in centers and private clinics that provide services to those in the LGBTI community, sex workers, and people who use drugs. Several organizations reported that the crackdown has resulted in HIV-positive men failing to access their antiretroviral treatment, while others no longer access testing and preventive services.

Young women also find themselves under attack, for reasons which remain unclear. President Magufuli forcefully endorsed a law dating back to the 1960s that allows all state schools in Tanzania to ban young mothers from attending, saying in June 2017, “As long as I am president . . . no pregnant student will be allowed to return to school . . . After getting pregnant, you are done.” He said that young mothers could opt for vocational training or become entrepreneurs, but should not be permitted to pursue formal education in public schools. Critics say the ban lacks public support, is misogynistic, and breaks international human rights conventions. It also contradicts a promise set out in the ruling party’s 2015 election manifesto, which pledged to allow pregnant school girls to continue with their studies. According to the Tanzania Bureau of Statistics, about 21 percent of Tanzanian girls aged 15 to 19 have given birth. This troubling pattern of discouraging women from completing their education inhibits Tanzania’s potential for economic growth and undermines women’s potential to contribute to Tanzania’s workforce. It also is counter to Tanzania’s commitments under the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

Finally, Tanzania has, for decades, hosted refugees from various conflicts and political crises in the conflict-afflicted and densely inhabited countries in the Great Lakes region of central Africa—some for extended periods—and has played a mediating role in attempts to resolve such crises. In 2014, Tanzania also naturalized a large num-

ber of long-term Burundian refugees. Instability in Burundi has led to hundreds of thousands of Burundians to seek refuge and safety in Tanzania. In fact, Tanzania very generously hosts 245,584 Burundian refugees and asylum seekers, more than any other country, according to the latest statistics from the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees.

In July of 2017, however, President Magufuli ordered the suspension of the registration and naturalization of thousands of Burundian refugees. He said, “It’s not that I am expelling Burundian refugees. I am just advising them to voluntarily return home . . . I urge Burundians to remain in their country, I have been assured, the place is now calm.” During the same month, the Commission of Inquiry on Burundi, deployed by the U.N. Human Rights Council, reported the “persistence of serious human rights violations in a climate of widespread fear.” Such violations included “extrajudicial executions, acts of torture and other inhuman and degrading treatment, sexual and gender-based violence, arbitrary arrests and detention and enforced disappearances.” With peace talks stalled in Burundi—and the May 2018 constitutional referendum accompanied by widespread violence and intimidation, including 15 killings—Tanzania risks pushing refugees back to unstable and unsafe communities.

The pattern of crackdowns on civil society, media, refugee, and public health providers under the Magufuli administration are contrary to the values that the United States has long supported both at home and abroad and are cause for concern. It is essential that the United States take a strong and proactive stance on these matters. Toward that end, I recommend that the administration take several actions.

Immediately nominate an ambassador to lead our diplomatic efforts to push back against the tide of anti-democratic actions. The post has been vacant for well over a year.

Conduct a review of assistance aimed at ensuring that the democracy, human rights and governance components of our bilateral assistance programs, which are an essential complement to sustainability in other areas of development that we support, are robustly funded and adequately address current challenges.

Increase assistance to build the capacity of civil society and media stakeholders in Tanzania.

Join with likeminded partners in the diplomatic community in Tanzania and in multilateral fora to jointly condemn President Magufuli’s war on democratic freedoms and civil liberties and urge the Tanzanian Government to take concerted action to ensure that all political and civic rights guaranteed under the Tanzanian Constitution are fully respected.

It seems to me that, at the same time President Magufuli is waging a war against poor governance, there is

in fact another more pernicious effort being undertaken to roll back democratic freedoms and civil liberties. It is imperative that the United States, as a champion of democracy and freedom, raise its voice in support of Tanzanians who are pushing back against growing oppression. The Tanzanian Constitution states that “the civic rights, duties and interests of every person and community shall be protected.” Let us stand with those who are fighting to see that those guarantees are protected.

FAYETTEVILLE VETERAN AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTER

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I wish to highlight an incident that occurred in my home State of Arkansas that has negatively impacted veterans and their families. A former pathologist at the Fayetteville VA Medical Center was found to be impaired, was immediately removed from clinical care, and has since been terminated. A thorough independent review of all cases read by this pathologist is currently underway. This review will be handled by entities outside of the Fayetteville VA Medical Center to include other VA facilities and academic affiliates. At this time, a small percentage of cases have been found to be misdiagnosed. In total, 33,000 samples will be reviewed using a tiered risk prioritization.

In response, I have submitted an amendment cosponsored by the entire Arkansas, Missouri, and Oklahoma delegation. This amendment would require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to submit to the congressional committees of jurisdiction a Departmental response plan that can be applied in Fayetteville and in all future incidents and for recommendations about changes necessary to prevent such incidents in the future.

I am very concerned with the procedures and policies that allowed this situation to occur. As the chairman of the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Subcommittee and member of the Senate VA Committee, I am intent on working with the VA to ensure that we enact policies and put in place procedures to prevent such misconduct in the future, both here in Fayetteville and around the country. It is clear that our veterans deserve the best care available, and it is our duty to ensure the Department of Veterans Affairs is providing that service. This is an issue that I will continue to monitor, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Ridgway, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages

from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGES

REPORT ON THE CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY THAT WAS ORIGINALLY DECLARED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 13466 OF JUNE 26, 2008, WITH RESPECT TO NORTH KOREA, RECEIVED DURING ADJOURNMENT OF THE SENATE ON JUNE 22, 2018—PM 44

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days before the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to the Western Balkans that was declared in Executive Order 13219 of June 26, 2001, is to continue in effect beyond June 26, 2018.

The existence and risk of proliferation of weapons-usable fissile material on the Korean Peninsula; the actions and policies of the Government of North Korea that destabilize the Korean Peninsula and imperil United States Armed Forces, allies, and trading partners in the region, including its pursuit of nuclear and missile programs; and other provocative, destabilizing, and repressive actions and policies of the Government of North Korea continue to constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13466 with respect to North Korea.

DONALD J. TRUMP.
THE WHITE HOUSE, June 22, 2018.

REPORT ON THE CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY THAT WAS ORIGINALLY DECLARED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 13219 OF JUNE 26, 2001, WITH RESPECT TO THE WESTERN BALKANS, RECEIVED DURING ADJOURNMENT OF THE SENATE ON JUNE 22, 2018—PM 45

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days before the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to the Western Balkans that was declared in Executive Order 13219 of June 26, 2001, is to continue in effect beyond June 26, 2018.

The threat constituted by the actions of persons engaged in, or assisting, sponsoring, or supporting (i) extremist violence in the Republic of Macedonia and elsewhere in the Western Balkans region, or (ii) acts obstructing implementation of the Dayton Accords in Bosnia or United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 of June 10, 1999, in Kosovo, has not been resolved. In addition, Executive Order 13219 was amended by Executive Order 13304 of May 28, 2003, to take additional steps with respect to acts obstructing implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement of 2001 relating to Macedonia.

The acts of extremist violence and obstructionist activity outlined in these Executive Orders are hostile to United States interests and continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency with respect to the Western Balkans.

DONALD J. TRUMP.
THE WHITE HOUSE, June 22, 2018.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 3:02 p.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 bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 6. An act to provide for opioid use disorder prevention, recovery, and treatment, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House agreed to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 931) to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to develop a voluntary registry to collect data on cancer incidence among firefighters.

The message further announced that the House agreed to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2229) to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide permanent authority for judicial review of certain Merit Systems Protection Board decisions relating to whistleblowers, and for other purposes.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

H.R. 6. An act to provide for opioid use disorder prevention, recovery, and treatment, and for other purposes.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. HATCH, from the Committee on Finance, without amendment:

S. 3120. An original bill to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to help end addictions and lessen substance abuse disorders, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 115-284).

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. HATCH:

S. 3120. An original bill to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to help end addictions and lessen substance abuse disorders, and for other purposes; from the Committee on Finance; placed on the calendar.

By Mr. PAUL:

S. 3121. A bill to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, the Safe Drinking Water Act, and the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act of 2014 to require maximum open and free competition in procurement for projects receiving assistance under those Acts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Ms. CANTWELL (for herself and Mr. CASSIDY):

S. 3122. A bill to support coding education; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BENNET:

S. 3123. A bill to create a more representative and accountable Congress by prohibiting partisan gerrymandering and ensuring that any redistricting of congressional district boundaries results in fair, effective, and accountable representation for all people; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. HEITKAMP (for herself and Mr. TESTER):

S. 3124. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to provide for no accrual of interest on Federal Direct Loans for individuals employed in public service; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. ROUNDS:

S. 3125. A bill to modify the H-2B nonimmigrant returning worker exemption; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE:

S. 3126. A bill to allow State manufacturing extension partnerships to award grants to small and medium sized manufacturers for the purpose of training new workers to replace departing experienced workers; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN:

S. 3127. A bill to protect the right of the American public under the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States to receive news and information from disparate sources by regulating the use of automated software programs intended to impersonate or replicate human activity on social media; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. KENNEDY:

S. 3128. A bill to reauthorize the National Flood Insurance Program; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Ms. HIRONO:

S. 3129. A bill to amend the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 in order to improve career and technical education, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mr. BOOZMAN, and Mr. TESTER):

S. 3130. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the disapproval of any course of education for purposes of the educational assistance programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs unless the educational institution providing the course permits individuals to attend or participate in courses pending payment by Department, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. HARRIS (for herself, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. BLUMTHAL, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. WARREN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. UDALL, and Ms. CORTEZ MASTO):

S. 3131. A bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide increased labor law protections for agricultural workers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. NELSON, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. KAINES, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. LEE):

S. Res. 556. A resolution reaffirming the commitment of the United States to hold the Ortega regime accountable for acts of violence and human rights abuses perpetrated against the Nicaraguan people; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 339

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 339, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to repeal the requirement for reduction of survivor annuities under the Survivor Benefit Plan by veterans' dependency and indemnity compensation, and for other purposes.

S. 384

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Maryland

(Mr. VAN HOLLEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 384, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the new markets tax credit, and for other purposes.

S. 808

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 808, a bill to provide protections for certain sports medicine professionals who provide certain medical services in a secondary State.

S. 868

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 868, a bill to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to require a lifetime income disclosure.

S. 1109

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1109, a bill to amend title VIII of the Public Health Service Act to extend advanced education nursing grants to support clinical nurse specialist programs, and for other purposes.

S. 1112

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1112, a bill to support States in their work to save and sustain the health of mothers during pregnancy, childbirth, and in the postpartum period, to eliminate disparities in maternal health outcomes for pregnancy-related and pregnancy-associated deaths, to identify solutions to improve health care quality and health outcomes for mothers, and for other purposes.

S. 1158

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1158, a bill to help prevent acts of genocide and other atrocity crimes, which threaten national and international security, by enhancing United States Government capacities to prevent, mitigate, and respond to such crises.

S. 1338

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1338, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the United States Army Dust Off crews of the Vietnam War, collectively, in recognition of their extraordinary heroism and life-saving actions in Vietnam.

S. 1351

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1351, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act with respect to the designation of general surgery shortage areas, and for other purposes.

S. 1464

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin

(Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1464, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand the exclusion for energy conservation subsidies provided by public utilities to include subsidies provided by public utilities and State and local governments for water conservation and storm water management.

S. 1913

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1913, a bill to amend the Federal Crop Insurance Act and the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 to make the native sod provisions applicable to the United States and to modify those provisions, and for other purposes.

S. 2086

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2086, a bill to amend the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 to extend and modernize the sugar program, to extend and subsequently repeal the feedstock flexibility program for bioenergy producers, to extend and subsequently replace flexible marketing allotments for sugar, and for other purposes.

S. 2497

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the names of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2497, a bill to amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 and the Arms Export Control Act to make improvements to certain defense and security assistance provisions and to authorize the appropriations of funds to Israel, and for other purposes.

S. 2540

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. JONES) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2540, a bill to provide predictability and certainty in the tax law, create jobs, and encourage investment.

S. 2553

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) and the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) were added as cosponsors of S. 2553, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to prohibit health plans and pharmacy benefit managers from restricting pharmacies from informing individuals regarding the prices for certain drugs and biologicals.

S. 2619

At the request of Ms. SMITH, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2619, a bill to amend the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 to reauthorize energy programs through fiscal year 2023, and for other purposes.

S. 2835

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr.

SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2835, a bill to require a study of the well-being of the newsprint and publishing industry in the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 3029

At the request of Mr. BENNET, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH), the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) and the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 3029, a bill to revise and extend the Prematurity Research Expansion and Education for Mothers who deliver Infants Early Act (PREEMIE Act).

At the request of Mr. ALEXANDER, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3029, *supra*.

S. 3034

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3034, a bill to amend the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act to reauthorize the rural business investment program, and for other purposes.

S. 3040

At the request of Mr. SCOTT, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3040, a bill to amend the Fair Credit Reporting Act to clarify Federal law with respect to reporting certain positive consumer credit information to consumer reporting agencies, and for other purposes.

S. 3046

At the request of Ms. SMITH, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3046, a bill to allow the Secretary of Agriculture to enter into self-determination contracts with Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations to carry out supplemental nutrition assistance programs.

S. 3093

At the request of Mr. TILLIS, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3093, a bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to address the protective custody of alien children accompanied by parents, and for other purposes.

S. 3104

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3104, a bill to amend the Rural Electrification Act of 1936 to expand substantially underserved trust area authority to all rural development programs of the Department of Agriculture.

S. 3110

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3110, a bill to support educational entities in fully implementing title IX and reducing and preventing sex discrimination in all areas of education.

S. 3113

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3113, a bill to promote dairy product innovation, including in specialty cheese, and value-added dairy product development for the economic benefit of United States dairy farmers and their communities.

S.J. RES. 8

At the request of Mr. UDALL, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 8, a joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relating to contributions and expenditures intended to affect elections.

AMENDMENT NO. 3039

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 3039 intended to be proposed to H.R. 5895, a bill making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 556—RE-AFFIRMING THE COMMITMENT OF THE UNITED STATES TO HOLD THE ORTEGA REGIME ACCOUNTABLE FOR ACTS OF VIOLENCE AND HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES PERPETRATED AGAINST THE NICARAGUAN PEOPLE

Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. NELSON, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. Kaine, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. LEE) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 556

Whereas, on April 19, 2018, protests began in Managua, Nicaragua as a result of changes made to the social security system by the Ortega regime that would have raised workers' contributions and cut retirees' pensions;

Whereas Transparency International's 2017 Corruption Perceptions Index ranks Nicaragua as tied for 151 of 180, the third worst ranking for a country in the Western Hemisphere, after Venezuela and Haiti;

Whereas numerous media outlets have reported on allegations regarding the involvement of Nicaraguan government officials in corruption, including misappropriating billions of dollars provided to Nicaragua by the Government of Venezuela;

Whereas, on April 23, 2018, tens of thousands of people—workers, students, farmers, and representatives of the private sectors—demonstrated in Managua demanding an end to the repression, with some calling for the departure of the President of Nicaragua Daniel Ortega;

Whereas, on April 24, 2018, the United Nations called on the Government of Nicaragua to carry out “prompt, thorough, independent and transparent investigations into these deaths,” saying a number of the killings may have been “unlawful”;

Whereas, on May 13, 2018, the Catholic Church organized a national dialogue between the protesters and the Government of Nicaragua;

Whereas, on May 17, 2018, the Executive Secretary of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the Organization of American States, Paulo Abrão, arrived in Nicaragua to investigate the human rights violations that took place during the recent protests;

Whereas, on May 21, 2018, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the Organization of American States issued a statement that described the excessive use of force by Nicaraguan security forces and armed irregular groups that resulted in “dozens of persons killed and hundreds wounded; illegal and arbitrary detentions; practices of torture, cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment; censorship and attacks on the press; and other forms of intimidation”;

Whereas, on May 21, 2018, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the Organization of American States “emphatically condemn[ed] the deaths, attacks and arbitrary detentions of students, demonstrators, journalists and other citizens that have occurred in Nicaragua since the beginning of the protests”;

Whereas, on May 23, 2018, Cardinal Leopoldo Brenes declared that talks had been suspended between the Ortega regime, the opposition, and civil society;

Whereas, on May 29, 2018, Amnesty International released a report entitled “Shoot to Kill: Nicaragua’s Strategy to Repress Protest”, which documented the lethal use of weapons, specifically noting that gunshots fired by pro-government groups were aimed to kill and targeted specific individuals;

Whereas, on May 30, 2018, a peaceful “Mother’s Day protest” turned deadly, with an estimated 16 people killed and 88 injured during clashes;

Whereas, on June 15, 2018, the National Dialogue resumed, resulting in a ceasefire agreement;

Whereas, the next day, on June 16, 2018, armed irregular groups killed 6 members of a family in an arson attack against their home and business;

Whereas, on June 18, 2018, the Department of State released a statement that affirmed, “The United States condemns the ongoing government-sponsored violence and intimidation campaign in Nicaragua . . . We urge immediate and full implementation of the June 15 National Dialogue agreement on human rights.”;

Whereas the June 2018 statement released by the Department of State stated, “We note the widespread call among Nicaraguans for early elections. The United States believes early elections represent a constructive way forward”; and

Whereas, as of June 18, 2018, there were at least 178 deaths and more than 1,000 people injured as a result of the protests, according to data from the Centro Nicaraguense de Derechos Humanos (Nicaraguan Center for Human Rights, or Cenidh); Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) condemns the violence perpetrated against the citizens of Nicaragua by the Ortega regime and affiliated armed irregular groups;

(2) calls on the Government of Nicaragua to end the repressive practices of its security forces and enact constitutional and legal reforms to better protect its citizens;

(3) supports efforts by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the Organization of American States to conduct a credible, independent investigation into the killing of at least 178 protesters;

(4) encourages the Government of Nicaragua to commit to negotiations with representatives of the Catholic Church, civil society, student movement, private sector, and political opposition to bring about an end to

the current political crisis, which should include a commitment to hold early elections that meet democratic standards and include international observation;

(5) urges the international community to denounce the human rights abuses and violence perpetrated against the Nicaraguan people by the Ortega regime; and

(6) calls on the President of the United States to exercise the authorities included in the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act (subtitle F of title XII of Public Law 114-328; 22 U.S.C. 2656 note) to impose sanctions with respect to any person who—

(A) is responsible for extrajudicial killings, torture, or other gross violations of human rights in Nicaragua; or

(B) is responsible for or complicit in ordering, controlling, or otherwise directing acts of significant corruption in Nicaragua.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3069. Ms. HARRIS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 2, to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2023, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3070. Ms. SMITH (for herself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, and Mr. UDALL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 2, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3071. Ms. SMITH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 2, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3072. Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. JONES) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3073. Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. JONES) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3074. Mr. LEE (for himself, Mr. BOOKER, and Ms. HASSAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3075. Mr. SANDERS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3076. Mr. SANDERS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3077. Mr. SANDERS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3078. Mr. SANDERS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3079. Mr. SANDERS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3080. Mr. SANDERS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3081. Mr. JONES (for himself and Mr. SCOTT) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3082. Ms. SMITH (for herself, Mr. DONNELLY, and Mr. SULLIVAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 2, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3083. Mr. PETERS (for himself and Mrs. CAPITO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3084. Ms. HEITKAMP submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 2, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3069. Ms. HARRIS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 2, to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2023, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. TRACKING CASES OF COCCIDIOMYCOSIS.

(a) REGISTRY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services (referred to in this section as the “Secretary”), acting through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and in consultation with the Secretary of Agriculture, shall establish a registry for reports of cases of coccidioidomycosis.

(2) GRANT PROGRAM.—The Secretary shall award grants to States and State and local departments of health for the purpose of supporting the surveillance of cases of coccidioidomycosis within the applicable State, and the reporting of any such cases to the registry established under paragraph (1).

(3) YEAR OF DIAGNOSIS.—In listing cases of coccidioidomycosis in the registry established under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall attribute each case to the year in which it was diagnosed.

(b) PROTOCOLS AND GUIDELINES.—The Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Agriculture, shall make publicly available any protocols and guidelines developed by the Department of Agriculture, the National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, or appropriate professional health care organizations, for purposes of educating health care providers, farmers, and other agricultural workers regarding the most recent scientific and medical information on the etiology, transmission, diagnosis, surveillance, and treatment of coccidioidomycosis.

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out this section.

SA 3070. Ms. SMITH (for herself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, and Mr. UDALL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 2, to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2023, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle E of title XII, insert the following:

SEC. 12512. SELF-DETERMINATION FOR SNAP.

Title I of the Indian Self-Determination Act (25 U.S.C. 5321 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 112. SELF-DETERMINATION FOR SNAP.

“(a) AGRICULTURE SELF-DETERMINATION AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary of Agriculture shall enter into self-determination contracts, in accordance with subsection (b),

with Indian tribes and tribal organizations, upon the request of any Indian tribe by tribal resolution, to plan, conduct, and administer any function, service, or activity of a supplemental nutrition assistance program established under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.) for the Indian tribe.

“(b) SELF-DETERMINATION CONTRACT.—A self-determination contract entered into under subsection (a) shall have the same terms and conditions, and be subject to the same procedures, regulations, and requirements, as a self-determination contract entered into under section 102, except that the Secretary of Agriculture and the Department of Agriculture shall be the appropriate Secretary and agency for purposes of a self-determination contract under this section.

“(c) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Office of Self-Governance of the Bureau of Indian Affairs shall provide technical assistance regarding the self-determination contracts authorized under this section to the Secretary of Agriculture, and to Indian tribes and tribal organizations who request such assistance.”.

SA 3071. Ms. SMITH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 2, to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2023, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In section 2204, strike paragraph (1)(B) and insert the following:

(B) in paragraph (1), by inserting “to the maximum extent practicable,” before “enroll”; and

SA 3072. Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. JONES) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2, to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2023, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

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

SEC. 12 _____. COTTON CLASSIFICATION SERVICES.

Section 3a of the Act entitled “An Act Authorizing the Secretary of Agriculture to collect and publish statistics of the grade and staple length of cotton”, approved March 3, 1927 (7 U.S.C. 473a) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (g) as subsection (h); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (f) the following:

“(g) HIRING AUTHORITY.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, an employee hired to provide cotton classification services under this section may—

“(1) work not more than 240 calendar days in a service year; and

“(2) be rehired noncompetitively each year in the same or a successor position if that employee meets performance and conduct expectations, as determined by the Secretary.”.

SA 3073. Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. JONES) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2, to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2023, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

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

SEC. 12. UPLAND COTTON.

(a) LOAN RATES FOR NONREOURSE MARKETING ASSISTANCE LOANS.—Section 1202 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (7 U.S.C. 9032) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (6), by striking “In the case” and inserting “Subject to subsection (d), in the case”; and

(B) in paragraph (7), by striking “\$0.7977” and inserting “\$0.95”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(d) UPLAND COTTON.—The loan rate determined under subsection (a)(6) shall not equal less than an amount equal to 98 percent of the loan rate for base quality of upland cotton that was applied the preceding year.”.

(b) SPECIAL COMPETITIVE PROVISIONS FOR EXTRA LONG STAPLE COTTON.—Section 1208(b)(2) of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (7 U.S.C. 9038(b)(2)) is amended by striking “134” and inserting “113”.

SA 3074. Mr. LEE (for himself, Mr. BOOKER, and Ms. HASSAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2, to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2023, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, add the following:

SEC. _____. OPPORTUNITIES FOR FAIRNESS IN FARMING.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the “Opportunities for Fairness in Farming Act of 2018”.

(b) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

(1) the generic programs to promote and provide research and information for an agricultural commodity (commonly known as “checkoff programs”) are intended to increase demand for all of that agricultural commodity and benefit all assessed producers of that agricultural commodity;

(2) although the laws establishing checkoff programs broadly prohibit the use of funds in any manner for the purpose of influencing legislation or government action, checkoff programs have repeatedly been shown to use funds to influence policy directly or by partnering with organizations that lobby;

(3) the unlawful use of checkoff programs funds benefits some agricultural producers while harming many others;

(4) to more effectively prevent Boards from using funds for unlawful purposes, strict separation of engagement between the Boards and policy entities is necessary;

(5) conflicts of interest in the checkoff programs allow special interests to use checkoff program funds for the benefit of some assessed agricultural producers at the expense of many others;

(6) prohibiting conflicts of interest in checkoff programs is necessary to ensure the proper and lawful operation of the checkoff programs;

(7) checkoff programs are designed to promote agricultural commodities, not to damage other types of agricultural commodities through anticompetitive conduct or otherwise;

(8) prohibiting anticompetitive and similar conduct is necessary to ensure proper and lawful operation of checkoff programs;

(9) lack of transparency in checkoff programs enables abuses to occur and conceals abuses from being discovered; and

(10) requiring transparency in the expenditure of checkoff program funds is necessary

to prevent and uncover abuses in checkoff programs.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) BOARD.—The term “Board” means a board, committee, or similar entity established to carry out a checkoff program or an order issued by the Secretary under a checkoff program.

(2) CHECKOFF PROGRAM.—The term “checkoff program” means a program to promote and provide research and information for a particular agricultural commodity without reference to specific producers or brands, including a program carried out under any of the following:

(A) The Cotton Research and Promotion Act (7 U.S.C. 2101 et seq.).

(B) The Potato Research and Promotion Act (7 U.S.C. 2611 et seq.).

(C) The Egg Research and Consumer Information Act (7 U.S.C. 2701 et seq.).

(D) The Beef Research and Information Act (7 U.S.C. 2901 et seq.).

(E) The Wheat and Wheat Foods Research and Nutrition Education Act (7 U.S.C. 3401 et seq.).

(F) The Floral Research and Consumer Information Act (7 U.S.C. 4301 et seq.).

(G) Subtitle B of the Dairy Production Stabilization Act of 1983 (7 U.S.C. 4501 et seq.).

(H) The Honey Research, Promotion, and Consumer Information Act (7 U.S.C. 4601 et seq.).

(I) The Pork Promotion, Research, and Consumer Information Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 4801 et seq.).

(J) The Watermelon Research and Promotion Act (7 U.S.C. 4901 et seq.).

(K) The Pecan Promotion and Research Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6001 et seq.).

(L) The Mushroom Promotion, Research, and Consumer Information Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6101 et seq.).

(M) The Lime Research, Promotion, and Consumer Information Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6201 et seq.).

(N) The Soybean Promotion, Research, and Consumer Information Act (7 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.).

(O) The Fluid Milk Promotion Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6401 et seq.).

(P) The Fresh Cut Flowers and Fresh Cut Greens Promotion and Information Act of 1993 (7 U.S.C. 6801 et seq.).

(Q) The Sheep Promotion, Research, and Information Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 7101 et seq.).

(R) Section 501 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (7 U.S.C. 7401).

(S) The Commodity Promotion, Research, and Information Act of 1996 (7 U.S.C. 7411 et seq.).

(T) The Canola and Rapeseed Research, Promotion, and Consumer Information Act (7 U.S.C. 7441 et seq.).

(U) The National Kiwifruit Research, Promotion, and Consumer Information Act (7 U.S.C. 7461 et seq.).

(V) The Popcorn Promotion, Research, and Consumer Information Act (7 U.S.C. 7481 et seq.).

(W) The Hass Avocado Promotion, Research, and Information Act of 2000 (7 U.S.C. 7801 et seq.).

(3) CONFLICT OF INTEREST.—The term “conflict of interest” means a direct or indirect financial interest in a person or entity that performs a service for, or enters into a contract or agreement with, a Board for anything of economic value.

(4) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Agriculture.

(d) REQUIREMENTS OF CHECKOFF PROGRAMS.—

(1) PROHIBITIONS.—

(A) INFLUENCING GOVERNMENT POLICY OR ACTION.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—A Board shall not enter into any contract or agreement to carry out checkoff program activities with a party that engages in activities for the purpose of influencing any government policy or action that relates to agriculture.

(ii) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—Nothing in clause (i) prohibits a contract or agreement entered into between a Board and an institution of higher education for the purpose of research, extension, or education.

(B) CONFLICT OF INTEREST.—A Board shall not engage in, and shall prohibit the employees and agents of the Board, acting in their official capacity, from engaging in, any act that may involve a conflict of interest.

(C) OTHER PROHIBITIONS.—A Board shall not engage in, and shall prohibit the employees and agents of the Board, acting in their official capacity, from engaging in—

(i) any anticompetitive activity;

(ii) any unfair or deceptive act or practice; or

(iii) any act that may be disparaging to, or in any way negatively portray, another agricultural commodity or product.

(2) AUTHORITY TO ENTER INTO CONTRACTS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, on approval of the Secretary, a Board may enter directly into contracts and agreements to carry out generic promotion, research, or other activities authorized by law.

(3) PRODUCTION OF RECORDS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Each contract or agreement of a checkoff program shall provide that the entity that enters into the contract or agreement shall produce to the Board accurate records that account for all funds received under the contract or agreement, including any goods or services provided or costs incurred in connection with the contract or agreement.

(B) MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS.—A Board shall maintain any records received under subparagraph (A).

(4) PUBLICATION OF BUDGETS AND DISBURSEMENTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Board shall publish and make available for public inspection all budgets and disbursements of funds entrusted to the Board that are approved by the Secretary, immediately on approval by the Secretary.

(B) REQUIRED DISCLOSURES.—In carrying out subparagraph (A), the Board shall disclose—

(i) the amount of the disbursement;

(ii) the purpose of the disbursement, including the activities to be funded by the disbursement;

(iii) the identity of the recipient of the disbursement; and

(iv) the identity of any other parties that may receive the disbursed funds, including any contracts or subcontractors of the recipient of the disbursement.

(5) AUDITS.—

(A) PERIODIC AUDITS BY INSPECTOR GENERAL OF USDA.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, and not less frequently than every 5 years thereafter, the Inspector General of the Department of Agriculture shall conduct an audit to determine the compliance of each checkoff program with this section during the period of time covered by the audit.

(ii) REVIEW OF RECORDS.—An audit conducted under clause (i) shall include a review of any records produced to the Board under paragraph (3)(A).

(iii) SUBMISSION OF REPORTS.—On completion of each audit under clause (i), the Inspector General of the Department of Agriculture shall—

(I) prepare a report describing the audit; and

(II) submit the report described in subparagraph (I) to—

(aa) the appropriate committees of Congress, including the Subcommittee on Antitrust, Competition Policy and Consumer Rights of the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate; and

(bb) the Comptroller General of the United States.

(B) AUDIT BY COMPTROLLER GENERAL.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Not earlier than 3 years, and not later than 5 years, after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall—

(I) conduct an audit to assess—

(aa) the status of actions taken for each checkoff program to ensure compliance with this section; and

(bb) the extent to which actions described in item (aa) have improved the integrity of a checkoff program; and

(II) prepare a report describing the audit conducted under subclause (I), including any recommendations for—

(aa) strengthening the effect of actions described in subclause (I)(aa); and

(bb) improving Federal legislation relating to checkoff programs.

(ii) CONSIDERATION OF INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORTS.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall consider reports described in subparagraph (A)(iii) in preparing any recommendations in the report under clause (i)(II).

(e) SEVERABILITY.—If any provision of this section or the application of such provision to any person or circumstance is held to be unconstitutional, the remainder of this section, and the application of the provision to any other person or circumstance, shall not be affected.

SA 3075. Mr. SANDERS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2, to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2023, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

After section 4112, insert the following:

SEC. 4113. PARTICIPATION OF PUERTO RICO AND AMERICAN SAMOA IN SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) DEFINITIONS.—Section 3 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2012) is amended—

(A) in subsection (r), by inserting “the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, American Samoa,” after “Guam,”; and

(B) in subsection (u)(3), by inserting “the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, American Samoa,” after “Guam.”

(2) ELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLDS.—Section 5 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2014) is amended—

(A) in subsection (b), in the first sentence, by inserting “the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, American Samoa,” after “Guam.”;

(B) in subsection (c)(1), by striking “and Guam,” and inserting “Guam, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and American Samoa.”; and

(C) in subsection (e)—

(i) in paragraph (1)(A), by inserting “the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, American Samoa,” after “Hawaii,” each place it appears; and

(ii) in paragraph (6)(B), by inserting “the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, American Samoa,” after “Guam.”.

(3) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The amendments made by this subsection shall be effective with re-

spect to the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico or American Samoa, as applicable, on the date described in subparagraph (B) if the Secretary submits to Congress a certification under subsection (f)(3) of section 19 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2028).

(B) DATE DESCRIBED.—The date referred to in subparagraph (A) is, with respect to the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico or American Samoa, the date established by the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico or American Samoa, respectively, in the applicable plan of operation submitted to the Secretary under subsection (f)(1)(A) of section 19 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2028).

(b) TRANSITION OF PUERTO RICO AND AMERICAN SAMOA TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.—Section 19 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2028) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(f) TRANSITION OF PUERTO RICO AND AMERICAN SAMOA TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.—

“(1) SUBMISSION OF PLAN BY PUERTO RICO AND AMERICAN SAMOA.—

“(A) SUBMISSION AND REVIEW OF PLAN OF OPERATION.—If a State agency is designated by a governmental entity and submits to the Secretary a request to participate in the supplemental nutrition assistance program and a plan of operation under section 11 (including a date on which the governmental entity will begin to participate in the supplemental nutrition assistance program), the Secretary shall determine whether that governmental entity and State agency satisfy the requirements that would apply under this Act for approval of that plan if the governmental entity were 1 of the several States.

“(B) DETERMINATION BY SECRETARY.—

“(i) APPROVAL.—The Secretary shall approve a plan of operation under subparagraph (A) if the governmental entity and State agency satisfy the requirements described in that subparagraph.

“(ii) DISAPPROVAL.—If the Secretary does not approve a plan of operation under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall provide to the governmental entity a statement that describes each requirement that is not satisfied by the plan.

“(2) APPROVAL OF RETAIL FOOD STORES.—If the Secretary approves a plan of operation under paragraph (1)(B)(i), the Secretary shall accept from retail food stores located in the applicable governmental entity applications under section 9 for approval to participate in the supplemental nutrition assistance program.

“(3) SUBMISSION OF CERTIFICATION TO CONGRESS.—The Secretary shall submit to Congress a certification that a governmental entity qualifies to participate in the supplemental nutrition assistance program as if the governmental entity were a State if the Secretary—

“(A) approves the plan of operation under paragraph (1)(B)(i); and

“(B) approves the applications under paragraph (2) of a number of retail food stores located in the governmental entity requesting to participate in the supplemental nutrition assistance program that would be sufficient to satisfy the requirements of this Act if the governmental entity were 1 of the several States.

“(4) CASH BENEFITS PROVIDED IN PUERTO RICO.—As part of a plan of operation submitted under paragraph (1)(A), the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico may submit to the Secretary a request to provide benefits under the supplemental nutrition assistance program in the form of cash.

“(5) FAMILY MARKET PROGRAM IN PUERTO RICO.—As part of a plan of operation submitted under paragraph (1)(A), notwithstanding subsection (g), the Secretary shall

allow the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico to continue to carry out, under the supplemental nutrition assistance program, the Family Market Program established under this section.

“(6) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry out this subsection and the amendments made by section 2 of the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 such sums as are necessary for fiscal year 2019, to remain available until expended.

“(g) TERMINATION OF EFFECTIVENESS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Subsections (a) through (e) shall cease to be effective with respect to the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico or American Samoa, as applicable, on the date described in paragraph (2) if the Secretary submits to Congress a certification under subsection (f)(3).

“(2) DATE DESCRIBED.—The date referred to in paragraph (1) is, with respect to the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico or American Samoa, the date established by the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico or American Samoa, respectively, in the applicable plan of operation submitted to the Secretary under subsection (f)(1)(A). _____

SA 3076. Mr. SANDERS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2, to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2023, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

After section 4103, insert the following:

SEC. 4104. ELIGIBILITY OF STUDENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

Section 6(e) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(e)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (7) by striking “or” at the end;

(2) in paragraph (8) by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(9) has an expected family contribution of zero, as determined by the procedures established in part F of title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087kk et seq.); or

“(10) is determined to be ‘independent’ based on one of the criteria specified in subparagraphs (B), (C), (D), (G), and (H) of section 480(d)(1) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087vv(d)(1)).”

SA 3077. Mr. SANDERS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2, to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2023, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title II, insert the following:

SEC. 2. NITROUS OXIDE EMISSIONS REDUCTIONS.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

(1) fertilizer is a significant cost input in many agricultural operations;

(2) opportunities exist for agricultural producers—

(A) to reduce the amount of fertilizer inputs; and

(B) to increase the efficiency of fertilizer use through the development of more effective fertilizer application protocols that maximize the uptake of fertilizer by crops while maintaining or increasing yields; and

(3) improving the application of nitrogen fertilizers at the correct rate, in the correct manner, at the correct time, and in the correct place will provide significant benefits to the environment, including reductions of—

(A) nitrogen runoff, which will improve water quality; and

(B) emissions of nitrous oxide, a powerful greenhouse gas associated with climate change.

(b) NITROUS OXIDE EMISSIONS REDUCTIONS.—Chapter 5 of subtitle D of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839bb et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

SEC. 1240S. NITROUS OXIDE EMISSIONS REDUCTIONS.

“(a) AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH DATA.—

“(1) FEDERALLY FUNDED RESEARCH DATA.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary shall make available all relevant data relating to fertilizer application in a format that is—

“(i) aggregated so as not to divulge proprietary or confidential business information; and

“(ii) searchable and accessible to the public, including, to the maximum extent practicable, all federally funded research data, including data of—

“(I) the Department of Agriculture; and

“(II) land-grant colleges and universities (as defined in section 1404 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3103)).

“(B) EXCEPTIONS.—Subparagraph (A) shall not apply to the release of data or information in a format that may divulge proprietary or confidential business information.

“(2) NON-FEDERALLY FUNDED RESEARCH DATA.—The Secretary shall develop incentives to encourage the sharing of non-federally funded research data relating to fertilizer application, including data from—

“(A) research funded through a State program; and

“(B) independent or privately held research.

“(b) NITROGEN UPTAKE PILOT PROGRAM.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish and carry out a 5-year pilot program for the development and optimization of nitrogen fertilizer application rates, timing, location, and formulation for—

“(A) corn;

“(B) soybeans;

“(C) wheat;

“(D) barley;

“(E) cotton;

“(F) oats;

“(G) sorghum;

“(H) rice; and

“(I) potatoes.

“(2) REQUIREMENTS.—The pilot program described in paragraph (1) shall—

“(A) consist of projects in a diverse range of—

“(i) geographies;

“(ii) soil types;

“(iii) drainage conditions;

“(iv) tillage practices; and

“(v) climatic conditions; and

“(B) take into consideration—

“(i) the effect of crop rotation;

“(ii) the use of cover crops;

“(iii) the use of soil amendments; and

“(iv) any other factor that the Secretary determines to be appropriate—

“(I) to enhance the optimization of fertilizer application practices that reduce the generation of nitrous oxide and leached nitrogen; and

“(II) to support high agricultural yields.

“(c) ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM.—The Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service shall carry out a nitrous oxide reduction initiative within

the environmental quality incentives program established under chapter 4 to foster the adoption and continued use of fertilizer application protocols that reduce the production of nitrous oxide associated with the use of nitrogen fertilizer.

“(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry out this section \$30,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2019 through 2023.”

SA 3078. Mr. SANDERS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2, to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2023, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. HONEY AND MAPLE SYRUP LABELING REQUIREMENTS.

Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commissioner of Food and Drug shall revise the regulations with respect to added sugars labeling under section 403(q) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 343(q)), such that pure honey and pure maple syrup are not considered added sugars.

SA 3079. Mr. SANDERS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2, to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2023, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In section 1672(d) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5925(d)) (as amended by section 7209(a)), add at the end the following:

“(15) NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT TECHNOLOGY.—Research and extension grants may be made under this section for the purposes of identifying, evaluating, and demonstrating innovative nutrient management technologies for animal waste management, water quality, aquatic ecosystems, and animal feed that are focused on—

“(A) rural areas adjacent to urban or suburban areas in connection with waste management activities carried out in urban or suburban areas;

“(B) the development of alternative uses and renewable energy;

“(C) the regional nature of nutrient distribution; and

“(D) downstream markets for recovered nutrients.”

SA 3080. Mr. SANDERS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2, to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2023, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title II, insert the following:

SEC. 2 _____. SOIL QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.

Chapter 2 of subtitle D of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3838 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“Subchapter C—Soil Quality Improvement

“SEC. 1238H. SOIL QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.

“(a) NO-TILL FARM EQUIPMENT GRANT AND LOAN PROGRAM.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish, in the Natural Resources Conservation Service, a program to provide grants and loans to agricultural producers with the goal, not later than January 1, 2026, of increasing to 50 percent the total percent of farmed acres in the United States under continuous no-till cultivation.

“(2) GRANTS.—The Secretary shall use not less than 20 percent of the funds made available for the program established under paragraph (1) to make grants.

“(3) PURCHASE OR LEASE OF EQUIPMENT.—An agricultural producer may use funds made available under this section to finance or otherwise incentivize the purchase or lease of equipment necessary to carry out continuous no-till cultivation, as determined by the Secretary.

“(4) EDUCATION AND OUTREACH.—In establishing the program under this section, the Secretary shall include an education and outreach program, carried out by the Secretary in coordination with—

“(A) State and local farm agencies;

“(B) institutions of higher education;

“(C) the National Institute of Food and Agriculture;

“(D) the National Association of Conservation Districts;

“(E) the Soil and Water Conservation Society; and

“(F) the Agricultural Tri-Societies.

“(b) REPORT ON SOIL CARBON UPTAKE.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary shall publish a report that includes—

“(1) methodologies and protocols for tracking practices (including conservation tillage, continuous no-till cultivation, and the use of cover crops) that increase the uptake of carbon into soils, including—

“(A) the use of satellite-based and other remote sensing technologies; and

“(B) methods for monitoring net carbon transfer rates between soils and the atmosphere, including biogeochemical process models; and

“(2) an assessment of—

“(A) carbon stocks in United States soils as of the date of the report;

“(B) the potential for United States soils as a reservoir for carbon;

“(C) the net mass transfer rate of carbon between soils and the atmosphere on agricultural land and rangeland, including—

“(i) conservation tillage land;

“(ii) no-till cultivated land; and

“(iii) land on which cover crops are used in rotation; and

“(D) rangeland management practices that increase soil carbon sequestration.

“(c) ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM.—The Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service shall carry out a soil carbon uptake initiative within the environmental quality incentives program established under chapter 4 to foster the adoption and sustained use of practices that increase the amount and the rate of carbon uptake in soils.

“(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry out this section \$30,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2019 through 2023.”

SA 3081. Mr. JONES (for himself and Mr. SCOTT) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2, to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of

Agriculture through fiscal year 2023, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

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

SEC. 125. ELIGIBILITY FOR OPERATORS ON HEIRS PROPERTY LAND TO OBTAIN A FARM NUMBER.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ELIGIBLE DOCUMENTATION.—The term “eligible documentation”, with respect to land for which a farm operator seeks assignment of a farm number under subsection (b)(1), includes—

(A) in States that have adopted a statute consisting of an enactment or adoption of the Uniform Partition of Heirs Property Act, as approved and recommended for enactment in all States by the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws in 2010—

(i) a court order verifying the land meets the definition of heirs property (as defined in that Act); or

(ii) a certification from the local recorder of deeds that the recorded owner of the land is deceased and not less than 1 heir of the recorded owner of the land has initiated a procedure to retitle the land in the name of the rightful heir;

(B) a fully executed, unrecorded tenancy-in-common agreement that sets out ownership rights and responsibilities among all of the owners of the land that—

(i) has been approved by a majority of the ownership interests in that property;

(ii) has given a particular owner the right to manage and control any portion or all of the land for purposes of operating a farm or ranch; and

(iii) was validly entered into under the authority of the jurisdiction in which the land is located;

(C) the tax return of a farm operator farming a property with undivided interests for each of the 5 years preceding the date on which the farm operator submits the tax returns as eligible documentation under subsection (b);

(D) self-certification that the farm operator has control of the land for purposes of operating a farm or ranch; and

(E) any other documentation identified by the Secretary under subsection (c).

(2) FARM NUMBER.—The term “farm number” has the meaning given the term in section 718.2 of title 7, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on the date of enactment of this Act).

(b) FARM NUMBER.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall provide for the assignment of a farm number to any farm operator who provides any form of eligible documentation for purposes of demonstrating that the farm operator has control of the land for purposes of defining that land as a farm.

(2) ELIGIBILITY.—Any farm number provided under paragraph (1) shall be sufficient to satisfy any requirement of the Secretary to have a farm number to participate in a program of the Secretary.

(c) ELIGIBLE DOCUMENTATION.—The Secretary shall identify alternative forms of eligible documentation that a farm operator may provide in seeking the assignment of a farm number under subsection (b)(1).

SEC. 125. LOANS TO PURCHASERS OF LAND WITH UNDIVIDED INTEREST AND NO ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITY.

(a) REAUTHORIZATION OF BEGINNING FARMER AND RANCHER INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNTS PILOT PROGRAM.—Section 333B(h) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1983b(h)) (as amended by section 5301) is amended by striking “2023” and inserting “2024”.

(b) PILOT PROGRAM.—Subtitle D of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1981 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 333D the following:

“SEC. 333E. FARMER LOAN PILOT PROJECTS.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may conduct pilot projects of limited scope and duration that are consistent with subtitles A, B, C, and this subtitle to evaluate processes and techniques that may improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the programs carried out under subtitles A, B, C, and this subtitle.

“(b) NOTIFICATION.—The Secretary shall—

“(1) not less than 60 days before the date on which the Secretary initiates a pilot project under subsection (a), submit notice of the proposed pilot project to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate; and

“(2) consider any recommendations or feedback provided to the Secretary in response to the notice provided under paragraph (1).”.

(c) RELENDING PROGRAM.—Subtitle A of title III of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1922 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 310. RELENDING PROGRAM TO RESOLVE OWNERSHIP AND SUCCESSION ON FARMLAND.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may make or guarantee loans to eligible entities described in subsection (b) using amounts made available for farm ownership loans under this subtitle so that the eligible entities may lend the funds to individuals and entities for the purposes described in subsection (c).

“(b) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—Entities eligible for loans and loan guarantees described in subsection (a) are cooperatives, credit unions, and nonprofit organizations with—

“(1) certification under section 1805.201 of title 12, Code of Federal Regulations (or successor regulations) to operate as a lender;

“(2) experience assisting socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers (as defined in section 2501(a) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 2279(a))) or limited resource or new beginning farmers and ranchers, rural businesses, cooperatives, or credit unions, including experience in making and servicing agricultural and commercial loans; and

“(3) the ability to provide adequate assurance of the repayment of a loan.

“(c) ELIGIBLE PURPOSES.—The proceeds from loans made or guaranteed by the Secretary pursuant to subsection (a) shall be lent by eligible entities for projects that assist heirs with undivided ownership interests to resolve ownership and succession on farmland that has multiple owners.

“(d) PREFERENCE.—In making loans under subsection (a), the Secretary shall give preference to eligible entities—

“(1) with not less than 10 years of experience serving socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers; and

“(2) in States that have adopted a statute consisting of an enactment or adoption of the Uniform Partition of Heirs Property Act, as approved and recommended for enactment in all States by the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws in 2010, that lend to owners of heirs property (as defined in that Act).

“(e) LOAN TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—The following terms and conditions shall apply to loans made or guaranteed under this section:

“(1) The interest rate at which intermediaries may borrow funds under this section shall be equal to the rate at which farm ownership loans under this subtitle are made.

“(2) The rates, terms, and payment structure for borrowers to which intermediaries lend shall be—

“(A) determined by the intermediary in an amount sufficient to cover the cost of operating and sustaining the revolving loan fund; and

“(B) clearly and publicly disclosed to qualified ultimate borrowers.

“(3) Borrowers to which intermediaries lend shall be—

“(A) required to complete a succession plan as a condition of the loan; and

“(B) be offered the opportunity to borrow sufficient funds to cover costs associated with the succession plan under subparagraph (A) and other associated legal and closing costs.

“(f) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report describing the operation and outcomes of the program under this section, with recommendations on how to strengthen the program.

“(g) FUNDING.—The Secretary shall carry out this section using funds otherwise made available to the Secretary.”.

SEC. 125. FARMLAND OWNERSHIP DATA COLLECTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall collect and, not less frequently than once every 5 years report, data and analysis on farmland ownership, tenure, transition, and entry of beginning farmers and ranchers (as defined in section 343(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1991(a))) and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers (as defined in section 2501(a) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 2279(a))).

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out subsection (a), the Secretary shall, at a minimum—

(1) collect and distribute comprehensive reporting of trends in farmland ownership, tenure, transition, barriers to entry, profitability, and viability of beginning farmers and ranchers and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers;

(2) develop surveys and report statistical and economic analysis on farmland ownership, tenure, transition, barriers to entry, profitability, and viability of beginning farmers and ranchers, including a regular follow-on survey to each Census of Agriculture with results of the follow-on survey made public not later than 3 years after the previous Census of Agriculture; and

(3) require the National Agricultural Statistics Service—

(A) to include in the Tenure, Ownership, and Transition of Agricultural Land survey questions relating to—

(i) the extent to which non-farming landowners are purchasing and holding onto farmland for the sole purpose of real estate investment;

(ii) the impact of these farmland ownership trends on the successful entry and viability of beginning farmers and ranchers and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers;

(iii) the extent to which farm and ranch land with undivided interests and no administrative authority identified have farms or ranches operating on that land; and

(iv) the impact of land tenure patterns, categorized by—

(I) race, gender, and ethnicity; and

(II) region; and

(B) to include in the report of each Tenure, Ownership, and Transition of Agricultural Land survey the results of the questions under subparagraph (A).

SA 3082. Ms. SMITH (for herself, Mr. DONNELLY, and Mr. SULLIVAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 2, to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2023, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

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

SEC. 125. BUY AMERICAN REQUIREMENTS.

Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall—

(1) define and enforce any Buy American requirements under the jurisdiction of the Secretary; and

(2) submit to Congress a report on the actions the Secretary has taken and plans to take to comply with paragraph (1).

SA 3083. Mr. PETERS (for himself and Mrs. CAPITO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2, to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2023, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

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

SEC. 6211. COMMUNITY BROADBAND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS.

(a) DEFINITION OF ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—In this section, the term “eligible entity” means—

(1) a local government agency;

(2) a regional agency;

(3) a nonprofit organization with relevant expertise; or

(4) a public-private partnership.

(b) GRANTS.—The Secretary shall make broadband technical assistance and planning grants to eligible entities to conduct assessments and develop action plans for the expansion of broadband services in the area served by the eligible entity.

(c) QUALIFIED ACTIVITIES.—An eligible entity may use a grant awarded under this section to—

(1) establish a multi-stakeholder broadband planning team;

(2) determine the extent to which broadband service is accessible in the community or region served by the eligible entity by—

(A) undertaking a physical comprehensive inventory of broadband infrastructure assets and capabilities; and

(B) developing a geographic information system (commonly known as “GIS”)-based map of existing serviceability;

(3) assess current broadband adoption rates in the community or region;

(4) assess advertised broadband service pricing in the community or region across all available providers;

(5) obtain professional advice or guidance on—

(A) options to expand broadband service, including public-private partnerships;

(B) potential sustainable financial models; or

(C) grant writing; or

(6)(A) identify and analyze government policies, ordinances, or statutes that may be hindering broadband expansion; and

(B) make recommendations for modification.

(d) AWARD AMOUNT LIMITATION.—The amount of a grant awarded under this section shall not be more than \$200,000.

(e) TERM.—A grant awarded under this section—

(1) shall be for an initial term of 1 year; and

(2) may be renewed by the Secretary for a single additional term of 1 year in the same amount as initially provided.

(f) FUNDING.—The Secretary shall carry out this section using—

(1) amounts made available for technical assistance and pre-development planning activities under section 779 of division A of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018 (Public Law 115-141); and

(2) any other amounts available to the Secretary.

(g) OTHER CONDITIONS.—The requirements under section 779 of division A of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018 (Public Law 115-141) shall apply to grants awarded under this section, except to the extent that those requirements are inconsistent with this section.

(h) PROGRAM DURATION.—The Secretary shall carry out this section during fiscal year 2018 and each fiscal year thereafter, subject to the availability of funds.

SA 3084. Ms. HEITKAMP submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 2, to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2023, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

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

SEC. 125. STATE AND TRIBAL REGULATION OF FORM OF AGRICULTURAL BUSINESS ENTITIES.

(a) DECLARATION OF POLICY.—It is the policy of Congress that it is in the public interest for each State and Indian Tribe to continue to regulate the form of a business entity that may engage in farming or livestock production within the State or territory of the Indian Tribe or own agricultural land within the State or territory of the Indian Tribe, including through laws or regulations that restrict or prohibit certain types of business entities from—

(1) engaging in farming or livestock production within the State or territory of the Indian Tribe; or

(2) owning agricultural land within the State or territory of the Indian tribe.

(b) CONSENT TO STATE AND TRIBAL REGULATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A State or Indian Tribe may regulate the form of a business entity that may—

(A) engage in farming or livestock production within the State or territory of the Indian Tribe; or

(B) own agricultural land within the State or territory of the Indian Tribe.

(2) CONSTRUCTION.—Paragraph (1) and the policy described in subsection (a) shall be construed to eliminate any barrier under the Commerce Clause of section 8 of article I of the Constitution of the United States to the regulation by a State or Indian tribe described in paragraph (1).

(3) EFFECT OF SILENCE.—Silence in any law of Congress enacted before, on, or after the date of enactment of this Act with respect to the regulation by a State or Indian Tribe described in paragraph (1) shall not be construed to preclude that regulation.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, on behalf of Senator MURRAY, I ask unanimous consent that a fellow on Senator MUR-

RAY’s Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee staff, Lori Achman, be granted floor privileges through August 3, 2018.

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

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—H.R. 6

Mr. McCONNELL. 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 legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 6) to provide for opioid use disorder prevention, recovery, and treatment, and for other purposes.

Mr. McCONNELL. 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 having been heard, the bill will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, JUNE 26, 2018

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Tuesday, June 26; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed. I further ask that following leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 2. Further, I ask that the Senate recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly conference meetings. Finally, I ask that all time during recess, adjournment, morning business, and leader remarks count postclosure on the motion to proceed to H.R. 2.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senator BROWN.

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

The Senator from Ohio.

GENERAL MOTORS

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, last Friday was a dark day for American workers and a dark day for the American auto industry. On the very same day that General Motors laid off the entire

second shift at the historic Lordstown plant in the Mahoning Valley in Northeast Ohio, we got word that GM plans to build its new Chevy Blazer in Mexico. That is right—the company bypasses American workers, lays off an entire shift, and sends more jobs to Mexico. All this comes on the heels of the windfall GM got from the tax bill Congress passed last year.

GM now can bring some \$7 billion in overseas cash back to the United States at a dramatically lower tax rate, they can immediately deduct the cost of any new investments in plants and equipment, and their overall corporate tax rate dropped by about one-third. They could use that extra cash to invest in Lordstown, to build more cars in America, but what do they do instead? They lay off 1,500 workers—1,500 Ohio workers, 1,500 families affected—in Niles, Ravenna, Kent, Reminderville, Youngstown, Girard, Lordstown, and all over the Mahoney Valley and beyond. That is just a year after they laid off the third shift—more than 1,000 workers—at the same plant. They have some nerve.

The workers at this plant are among the best in the world. The car they make, the Chevy Cruze, beat out the foreign competition in its class last year. For the 2018 models, J.D. Power and Associates named the Cruze among the top two cars in its class. They named the Lordstown plant among the six top plants in the Americas. Anyone who has been to Lordstown wouldn't be surprised.

Ten years ago, the Federal Government rescued the auto industry.

Eight years ago, I actually drove one of the first cars—with Governor Strickland and others—off the line, one of the first Chevy Cruzes coming out of the Lordstown plant.

Two years ago, I stood in Lordstown for the plant's 50th anniversary, and I saw the pride the community takes in that plant. GM estimated that more than 10,000 people—young and old, families with children, workers who had been there almost the entire 50 years, vintage car buffs, former workers—turned out to watch the parade and to celebrate the plant. The line to get into the plant for a tour stretched down the street and around the block. That is what this plant means to the communities it serves. That is what the auto industry means to the communities it serves. It appears General Motors has forgotten some of that. That is why we worked so hard to save this industry, including General Motors, after the economic crisis.

In addition to the Federal auto rescue, the State of Ohio gave GM more than \$80 million in tax incentives. But now, after Ohio gave millions to this company, GM turns its back on Ohio—all while making record profits, all while reaping the rewards of the tax bill paid for by taxpayers.

As a country, as a State, we are invested in this industry. GM needs to invest in America and in Ohio. It needs to invest in the workers and in the communities that built this company and made it great. Instead of making plans to invest in Mexico, GM should be working with workers, with the union, with local officials—with all of us—to invest, instead, in American workers. We have invested in GM; GM should invest in Ohio workers.

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 6:46 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, June 26, 2018, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

RAE OLIVER, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE INSPECTOR GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, VICE DAVID A. MONTOYA, RESIGNED.

AMTRAK BOARD OF DIRECTORS

RICK A. DEARBORN, OF OKLAHOMA, TO BE A DIRECTOR OF THE AMTRAK BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR A TERM OF FIVE YEARS, VICE JEFFREY R. MORELAND, TERM EXPIRED.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

LYNDA BLANCHARD, OF ALABAMA, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA.

ROBERT A. DESTRO, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND LABOR, VICE TOMASZ P. MALINOWSKI.

DERECK J. HOGAN, OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA.

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE

JOSEPH MAGUIRE, OF FLORIDA, TO BE DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL COUNTERTERRORISM CENTER, OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE, VICE NICHOLAS J. RASMUSSEN, RESIGNED.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

ROBERT S. BREWER, JR., OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS, VICE LAURA E. DUFFY, RESIGNED.

JASON R. DUNN, OF COLORADO, TO BE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLORADO FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS, VICE JOHN F. WALSH, RESIGNED.

BRADLEY JAY LAROSE, OF VERMONT, TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE DISTRICT OF VERMONT FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS, VICE DAVID EDWARD DEMAG, TERM EXPIRED.

MATTHEW J. SCHNEIDER, OF MICHIGAN, TO BE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS, VICE BARBARA L. MCQUADE, RESIGNED.

MARC B. SHEPHERD, OF MISSISSIPPI, TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF MISSISSIPPI FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS, VICE GEORGE WHITE, TERM EXPIRED.

PETER G. STRASSER, OF LOUISIANA, TO BE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS, VICE KENNETH ALLEN POLITE JR., RESIGNED.

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

To be major

MICHAEL A. BASSO-WILLIAMS

WILLIAM J. BERGLIND
DAVID A. KEPHART, JR
SAINT A. L. MORRIS
TIMOTHY J. SCHAFFNER
IRSHAD A. SHAKIR

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

VIKYAT S. BEBARTA
THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

To be major

MARY F. STUEVER
LAVANYA VISWANATHAN

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

ROCHELL A. MAIER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

ROBERT C. SOPER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY AS CHAPLAINS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be major

VINCENTE G. ALCIVAR

RICHARD B. AMMONS

COREY R. ARNOLD

CHRISTOPHER R. BALL

ANGEL L. BERRIOS

CARL O. BROWN

JAMES E. BRYAN

ANDREW E. CALVERT

JOSHUA A. CHITTIM

MATTHEW C. CHRISTENSEN

ROBERT G. COX

ANTHONY B. CUCHENS

ROBERT W. DAVIS, JR.

CHRISTOPHER DOERING

JAMES J. DUWORS

JOHN C. FIMBLE

WALTER L. FRYE

STEVEN W. GLENN

CHRISTIAN E. GROENENDAL

MATTHEW J. HEEBE BRAND

JEFFERY B. HERDEN

JASON E. HILL

RICHARD A. HILL

JASON C. HOHNBERGER

MICHAEL S. KIM

VINCENT J. LUTTRELL

JOSEPH R. MASON

JOSEPH T. MESSINGER

ERIC J. MILLER

MARK J. MUSSER

MICHAEL J. OROURKE, JR.

JEREMY E. PLEVKA

PETER M. ROBINSON

THOMAS L. SEARLE

JACOB D. SNODGRASS

JASON W. SOUTHARD

JAMES M. SOUZA

ANDREW T. SPRINSMA

DAVID L. S. SPRINKLE

ROBERT W. STERLING

SEUNGIL SUH

ADAM D. TIETJE

JONATHAN D. TODD

PAUL D. TOLBERT

DREW D. TURNER

UZOMA E. UWAKWE

JAMES WARD

JASON V. WEBSTER

MATTHEW L. WHITEHEAD

NATHAN B. WHITHAM

ROY M. WINSTON

DEWAYNE E. WOLF

EDWARD W. WRIGHT

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate June 25, 2018:

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

FRANK T. BROGAN, OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.