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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable PATRICK J. TOOMEY, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

PRAYER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Today's opening prayer will be offered by Giani Sukhvinder Singh, of Gurdwara Philadelphia Sikh Society, Upper Darby, PA.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

''One Universal Creator God. By The Grace Of The True Guru.''

Almighty God, we call You by many names, but You are one. Keep Your Divine Hand over the Members of this Senate as they help steer the future of our great Nation. Keep truth on our tongues, love in our hearts, and sound judgment in our minds. Remind us of our purpose: to love and serve one another and create a more peaceful world.

We ask for blessings unto all leaders as they work for the common good. Give all who govern this land humility and courage, integrity, and compassion. Release each one of us from ego so that we may serve selflessly. Help us remember that we belong to one family.

''Recognize the entire human race as one.''

We ask of the Almighty to also keep watch over our Nation's protectors who work tirelessly, day and night, to ensure our safety and our freedom.

You are everywhere; all are Yours. Whatever is seen, O God, is Your form. My Lord, You are but one. We ask You to bless this great Nation and its people.

''In the name of Nanak, find everlasting optimism. With Your will, Almighty God, may there be welfare of all of humanity.''

Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

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

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, October 16, 2019.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable PATRICK J. TOOMEY, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, to perform the duties of the Chair.

CHUCK GRASSLEY,
President pro tempore.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRAMER). The Senator from Pennsylvania.

550TH BIRTHDAY OF GURU NANAK

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I rise to mark a very special day for the Sikh religion and the Sikh community across America and especially in Pennsylvania—specifically, the birthday of the founder of Sikhism, Guru Nanak.

Guru Nanak was born into a Hindu household in 1469 in what is now modern-day Pakistan. Guru Nanak showed a keen interest in religion from very early on in his life. He had a real aptitude in his youth for philosophizing and writing poetry. He married, had children, and became an accountant like his father. Yet he always believed in the importance of living a spiritual life. Eventually, he underwent a profound personal transformation to become the religious figure and leader for which he is recognized today.

Guru Nanak's most famous teachings include that there is only one God, that people need not go through an intermediary, such as a priest, to access the one God, and that all people are created equal. He preached that his followers should meditate and remember God, that they should earn an honest living, and that they should share with those who are less fortunate than themselves.

Guru Nanak began teaching the Sikh faith around the year 1500, and with around 30 million adherents, the Sikh faith is the sixth largest religion in the world. Approximately 700,000 Sikhs have chosen to make their homes in the United States. There are several Sikh places of worship, known as gurdwaras, in and around the Philadelphia area, Pittsburgh, Allentown, Erie, and across America.

Next month, on November 12, there will be celebrations at gurdwaras across the globe to mark the 550th birthday of Guru Nanak. In addition, Sikh leaders have come to the Capitol today to commemorate the birthday of Guru Nanak.

A few minutes ago, a giani, or a Sikh religious official, gave a prayer as the Senate opened for business. I am proud that he hails from my State of Pennsylvania. This evening, leaders from the Sikh community will convene an interfaith event to promote the peaceful values that all of the world's major religions share.

This morning, I just wanted to add my voice to wish the Sikh community great luck and great joy with this event and to wish Guru Nanak a happy 550th birthday this year.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Barbara McConnell Barrett, of Arizona, to be Secretary of the Air Force.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I mentioned yesterday the contrast between our work in the Senate and what is transpiring over in the House.

On this side of the Capitol, we are focused on working for the American people. We are overcoming the Democrats' historic delay tactics and obstruction to confirm more of the President's impressive nominees for the executive branch as well as for the judiciary. Later today, we will confirm a new Secretary of the Air Force and will then turn to several impressive nominees to district court vacancies in order to continue our renewal of the Federal judiciary.

We will also keep working on the appropriations process and on providing the funding our Armed Forces certainly need, and we are discussing ways to discourage the withdrawal of U.S. forces from the Middle East and ensure the United States continues to provide the essential global leadership that has cornered ISIS and other radical Islamic terrorists and has kept our Nation safe.

So what is going on over in the House?

Those in the House are doubling down on their 3-year-old obsession of finding ways to nullify the decision the American people made back in 2016. Speaker PELOSI's Democrats are blocking the USMCA, which is the landmark trade deal that would create 176,000 new jobs for American workers. They are dragging their heels on funding the government, which is keeping our military commanders in limbo. All of their energy is going into this all-consuming impeachment parade that has been rolling on for 3 years now—ever searching for a rationale.

Remember, it was literally on Inauguration Day of January 2017 when the Washington Post ran this headline: ''The campaign to impeach President Trump has begun.'' Well, the Post got it right. Before President Trump even took office, one prominent House Democrat had already declared he would not be a legitimate President. Just a few months later, another was already promising she would not rest until she impeached him.

From the very beginning of this Presidency, Washington Democrats have lived in a state of denial. They have seemed positive that some inside-the-Beltway maneuver would save them from the consequences of Secretary Clinton's defeat. They had hoped Special Counsel Mueller's report would have validated their theories about the conspiracy between the Trump campaign and the Russians. They used their minority powers in the Senate to effectively try to nullify his Presidency by obstructing even completely uncontroversial nominees to all kinds of government posts simply because this President was the one who nominated them.

There have been 3 years of this. Now, finally, Speaker PELOSI's efforts to hold back her leftwing caucus have officially crumbled, and the House has thrown itself into impeachment.

Given the lip service the House Democrats pay in defending the norms and institutions of American Government, you might think they would at least run this so-called impeachment inquiry by the book. You might think the people who are trying to overrule the American voters and, from Washington, cancel out an election would conduct their process by the very highest standards of fairness and due process.

If you thought that, you would be wrong. Our Democratic colleagues have had their minds made up since long before this inquiry began. Remember, the chairwoman of one of the committees Speaker PELOSI put in charge of the process said in April of 2017: ''I'm going to fight every day until he's impeached.'' That was back in 2017. So this is not about seriously discharging constitutional responsibilities. It is about the end result they have had in mind since day one.

Remember when the campaign to block Justice Kavanaugh began with protest signs with a big, empty blank for the name? It was a fill-in-the-blank protest before they even knew who the nominee was. Now we have the sequel with this fill-in-the-blank quest for impeachment. The Democrats' process already speaks for itself.

For the first time ever, Speaker PELOSI has simply ordered the House to conduct an inquiry into impeaching a President without a full vote of the House. Just yesterday, the Speaker doubled down on this unprecedented and undemocratic process by once again refusing to hold a vote on an impeachment inquiry.

Democrats have refused to give Republicans the same rights and fair treatment that Republicans afforded Democrats during the Clinton impeachment—things like equal subpoena power for the ranking members. Likewise, Democrats have refused to give President Trump's counsel the same opportunities that Republicans gave to President Clinton—rights such as attending all hearings, depositions, offering evidence, and cross-examining witnesses.

We have already seen Chairman SCHIFF say in public that his committee had not been in touch with the whistleblower when they actually had been. We have seen Chairman SCHIFF bizarrely and brazenly fabricate what the President actually said to the President of Ukraine during an official hearing that he was chairing, only to claim that his fabrications were a parody—a parody—when Republicans called him out for it.

The same Democrats who are running this circus turn around and claim with a straight face that they are solemnly following the facts and the Constitution wherever it leads.

Give me a break. Give me a break. The entire country can see that that is not what is happening here.

And here is what else the American people can see: The Democrats would rather fight with the White House than work with the Republicans and the administration to pass legislation.

We need real solutions, like full-year funding for our Armed Forces so our men and women in uniform can receive their pay raise and our commanders can engage in long-term planning; real solutions like the USMCA, the major victory for American workers and American businesses that the Trump administration negotiated with Canada and Mexico but which Speaker PELOSI has blocked for months, with 176,000 new American jobs hanging in the balance.

Opportunities are right before us. Senate Republicans have been ready and waiting for weeks and months to do our part and actually make law on these subjects for the benefit of American families. We just need our counterparts across the Capitol to get serious about this.

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.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, just when you think things couldn't get any stranger here in Washington, DC, a few weeks ago, Speaker PELOSI announced that the House was officially beginning proceedings to impeach the President of the United States. While the left has been dreaming of impeachment ever since the President was first elected in 2016, the timing of this was quite a surprise. In fact, last January the Speaker led the effort to table an impeachment resolution, and she and Chairman NADLER and Chairman SCHIFF and other House leaders had said that they recognized that this would never be successful unless it is bipartisan, and I think they were right then and they are wrong now.

We know that the announcement of the Speaker came at a time when the only thing the public knew was about rumors of a whistleblower complaint about a call over which virtually no one knew any details.

But the facts didn't really matter. This was about grabbing ahold of something and using this as a vehicle to do what the left has wanted to do since the President was inaugurated.

Were the initial reports a reason to look into the matter further? Absolutely. That is what the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence that I have the privilege of serving on did. We had the Acting Director of National Intelligence come testify. We had the inspector general come testify about his report.

But that is not the approach that House Democrats have taken. They made no honest effort to investigate before deciding to impeach.

Prior to the Speaker's press conference, in fact, we hadn't seen the complaint. We hadn't seen the transcript or heard from the leaders of the intelligence community. But regardless of the lack of any evidence at the time, they jumped into impeachment feet first. It is almost as if they were waiting for anything—any excuse, any reason at all—to do what they have wanted to do since day one in opposing President Trump.

This confirms to me that this is really not about the facts so much as it is a search-and-destroy mission.

Removing a President from office is no small matter. In fact, the Senate has never done so in American history. You would think that with so much at stake, our House Democrat friends would make every effort to lay out a careful, logical, fact-based case for the American people.

In fact, they said they knew they couldn't be successful unless this was a bipartisan effort, but they made zero effort to make it bipartisan by laying out the facts, by making it transparent, by letting the American people see exactly what was going on.

Ordinarily, you would expect hearings on every major network, witnesses presenting their testimony, subject to questioning by both Republicans and Democrats, and detailed reports of investigations. That is what you would expect, but that is not what we got.

Instead, we got secret hearings, secret witnesses, secret interviews, and secret meetings. But you know what goes along with that kind of secrecy—leaks and more leaks.

Chairman SCHIFF and his cohorts in the House have drawn the cloak of secrecy around this entire proceeding and then proceeded to drip, drip, drip a narrative to the press through leaks that would seem to justify their arguments, but that is not fair. That is not fair to the President. That is not fair to the 65 million American people who voted for President Trump. To try to negate an election through this sort of inappropriate process just defies logic and sense.

We have some idea of whom they are meeting with, but we have no idea as to the details they are talking about. That is because, instead of going through the Judiciary Committee, which would have been an open proceeding, ordinarily, Speaker PELOSI has grabbed this topic from Chairman NADLER and given it to Chairman SCHIFF, the chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, so as to have some sort of justification, as thin as it may seem, for doing things behind closed doors and in secret.

As I said, I am on the Senate Intelligence Committee. I understand that if there is classified information that can't be made public, that is a reason to have closed-door hearings, but there should be some effort to separate the classified information, if there is any, from the nonclassified information and have a public hearing on that part of the information the committee is given, not just closing the door, locking it, and throwing away the key, and keeping it all secret. This is really unjustified.

Well, we know that they have been busy. Chairman SCHIFF has been busy. We know he has been particularly busy on the TV talk shows and giving interviews to the media all day long, every day, and we know that there are bits of information being strategically leaked to the media, which conveniently align with their overall plan, and that is impeachment.

There have been no real and credible details about what has happened behind those closed-door meetings, and I would suggest that every American should be concerned. This is entirely contrary to our basic concepts of fairness and due process—to have secret witnesses, secret interviews, secret hearings, and then use that information to take one of the most dramatic actions that the Constitution provides for, and that is the removal of a President.

This is contrary to any concept of fair play and due process, as guaranteed by the Bill of Rights and our Constitution. You could be charged with a traffic offense and get more transparency and more due process than what the House Democrats are providing to President Trump, because that is what the Constitution requires.

Because the Speaker made a decision to impeach President Trump based at the time solely on rumors and secondhand information, I am left with very little optimism for the way this impeachment inquiry so far has been handled.

Now, there have been some silly hearings in the House of Representatives this year, but the American people should have the benefit of being able to watch these proceedings and draw their own conclusions. They don't have to believe what the press tells them based on strategic leaks. They don't have to believe what Chairman SCHIFF and Speaker PELOSI say. They can judge the facts for themselves.

When it comes to impeachment, arguably one of the most serious responsibilities under our Constitution for Congress, House Democrats have simply drawn the cloak of secrecy around their investigation. Of course, you know what the logical questions are to this sort of bizarre proceeding—questions like this: What are they hiding? What are they afraid of? What is it that they don't want the American people to see?

Of course, as I said, there are going to be some sensitivities and, perhaps, even some classified information, particularly when you are talking about foreign policy.

But the President has already made the key documents public. He has declassified the conversation he had with President Zelensky, and we have seen the report of the inspector general.

This secrecy veil seems to be more of a necessary tool to cloak information that doesn't align with their narrative. They simply don't want people to hear all sides of the story.

I have no doubt that if the facts were on their side, they would allow this process to be in the open. If they actually thought that transparency would benefit them, they would throw the doors wide open and do it out in public and let the American people judge it for themselves, and if facts were on their side, they would then hold a vote on the floor of the House of Representatives authorizing this impeachment inquiry, which has been done each time in the past. But from what we read, Speaker PELOSI is trying to protect her vulnerable House Members from being held accountable for their vote, particularly those in swing districts that won in 2018. So this is more another part of the political calculation at work here.

Instead, what they are doing is constructing this narrative behind closed doors and handpicking which information to leak and which to keep secret.

A true and honest investigation means following the facts where they may lead, gathering evidence, and giving the American people access to that information at every step, but that is a far cry from what is happening today.

While House Democrats are freely leaking the details of the impeachment process to the media, they are being unfair to the American people, particularly the 65 million people who voted for President Trump in the first place—but not just them. We all understand that in elections you win some and you lose some. Even the people who didn't vote for President Trump, I believe, would be committed to a fair process, particularly when going through something as serious as the potential impeachment and removal of a duly elected President of the United States.

What they want to do is to undo the 2016 election, but they should at least have the courage to do it out in the open.

We know what is happening as a result of the Democrats devoting 100 percent of their time and energy to reversing the results of the 2016 election by impeaching President Trump. Their constituents sitting at home are wondering what it is they are actually going to be able to accomplish.

When we have elections, ordinarily candidates run for office and say: If you elect me, I will do this, this, and this. The House Democrats have given up on that. Forget their campaign promises. Forget what they told their voters in the 2018 election. They are all in on the impeachment and removal of the President. The rest of that stuff is just talk—at least that is how it appears.

There are a lot of important things we can and should be doing in Washington as opposed to this political side show. We have had many productive hearings and efforts on such important items as trying to reduce mass violence, which is something we are all concerned about, how to bring down costs and increase choice when it comes to our healthcare system, how to improve trade so we can sell the things we grow and make in America to markets around the world, and how we can continue this incredible trend line when it comes to our economy, where unemployment is at historically low levels and particularly African-American and Hispanic unemployment is at historically the lowest level in recorded history. Forget all of that. House Democrats are full steam ahead on impeachment, which will make it virtually impossible for us to pass productive, bipartisan legislation. It will make it virtually impossible for them to keep the promises they themselves made to their constituents when they ran for election in 2018, and that is a crying shame.

This is the final point I want to make. We are 13 months—13 months—from a general election. President Trump will be on the ballot. These folks, who apparently have never gotten over their loss in 2016, will have a chance to cast their votes again. So will the American people. We will be able to take a look at the Democratic nominee, along with President Trump, the Republican nominee, and we will be able to vote 13 months from now. But, to me, it says the Democrats are not particularly optimistic about the outcome of the 2020 election, given that choice, because they are not going to wait for the election to occur; they want to divide the country, they want to paralyze Congress, and they want to impeach President Trump 13 months before the election.

I hope cooler heads will prevail. Democrats should work with us to pass bipartisan legislation that will actually make our country better off rather than pursuing this purely political agenda of impeachment.

I think it is disgraceful the way the House Democrats have chosen to pursue this clandestine impeachment process rather than focus on what is best for the American people. Let the voters cast their ballots 13 months from now rather than put our country through this divisive and ultimately futile effort to impeach and remove President Trump.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

CONGRATULATING THE ST. LOUIS BLUES

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I want to talk about a very different topic, and that is the Stanley Cup. Yesterday at the White House, the St. Louis Blues were warmly welcomed by the President in a ceremony celebrating their Stanley Cup victory. On June 12, the Blues made history when they defeated the Boston Bruins in game 7 of the Stanley Cup Final.

It was hard to imagine at the beginning of this season that the Blues could have done this. They were the lowest ranked team in the National Hockey League. I think there was a time in the month of January when the odds that the Blues would win the Stanley Cup were 150 to 1. I am not particularly a betting man, but knowing what I know now, we wouldn't have had to put much money on that bet to have won a significant amount of money. As it turned out, however, as you and I know in what we do here and what we have done in our lives, the odds are not really what count; what counts is how you play the season. Just like we often say in politics, candidates matter. In hockey, in sports, the players matter. How they come together as a team matters. Whether or not that team really becomes a team matters, and this one did.

It was a season for the Blues that was filled with record-breaking achievements. Jordan Binnington became the first and only rookie goalie to win 16 games in the Stanley Cup playoffs. Ryan O'Reilly set a franchise record with 23 points in the playoffs and was named the postseason most valuable player. Game 7 of the Stanley Cup Final was the most watched NHL game in 36 years.

For the first time in franchise history, the Blues brought the Stanley Cup trophy to Missouri to celebrate their achievement as the best sports fans in Missouri stepped out. Five hundred thousand people were there when the Stanley Cup parade was in St. Louis for the first time. Five hundred thousand people—in several States represented on the floor, that would be everybody in the State. Five hundred thousand is a pretty big crowd anywhere, as it was in St. Louis that day.

Today, the Stanley Cup trophy will be on display on Capitol Hill so that Blues fans in the area can get a chance to see this legendary trophy in person. The Stanley Cup has already traveled all over the world since the Blues won the Stanley Cup. Ryan O'Reilly brought the Cup to Ontario to share it with his 99-year-old grandmother, who is probably one of the oldest people to see the Stanley Cup. But for sure the youngest baby to be put in the Stanley Cup—the record was broken when the trophy was brought to a mother and her newborn child at Mercy Hospital in St. Louis, the baby barely born, right there in the Stanley Cup, setting the new Stanley Cup ''youngest baby in the Cup'' record.

We will never forget the image of Laila Anderson. Laila, a young girl battling a life-threatening disease, in many ways became the No. 1 fan of the team. Laila, by the way, was at the White House in the Rose Garden yesterday, and she was called up to stand by the President and the Stanley Cup, with the team surrounding both of them. The night they won, she was on the ice with the players celebrating as the Stanley Cup was passed around at the end of game 7.

The day after the Blues received their championship rings, two players visited Laila to personally deliver her very own ring. I saw those rings yesterday, and they are just about as big as Laila's hand. They were big rings. Her name was inscribed on the diamond-studded championship ring that was given to her, which also included the words ''Play Gloria,'' which became the theme song, fight song, inspirational song for the Blues at the end of the season.

Blues fans have plenty to be excited about this season. The majority of the names of the players that are now etched on the Stanley Cup are back this year. The roster is even better with the addition of defenseman Justin Faulk.

We are also proud to say that St. Louis will host the 2020 NHL All-Star Game in January. That game, of course, brings together the most talented players in professional hockey. I know St. Louis is ready to welcome them, and we will all be excited to further solidify St. Louis's place as one of the great sports cities in America.

It has been a great year for Blues fans, and I hope the team will once again have the opportunity to visit the White House next year. This will be the first year of many years where those of us in the Missouri delegation will get to host the Stanley Cup in the Capitol.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, the House of Representatives continues to investigate the circumstances of the President's interaction with Ukrainian President Zelensky and whether he used the power of his office to pressure

a foreign leader to intervene in an American election on his behalf. The facts that are already in the public domain are so deeply troubling and must be taken very seriously. I know that our colleagues in the House of Representatives did not run for office to begin an impeachment inquiry, but this task was thrust upon them by the President's alleged conduct and the demands of the Constitution of our Republic.

Here in the Senate, our job is even more austere. We are assigned the power not only to examine the evidence but to render judgment. We all have a solemn duty to follow the facts impartially and let ourselves be governed by reason, rather than by passion or by politics. That role means that we have a responsibility to behave impartially, in a nonpartisan manner from the outset. As my friend Leader MCCONNELL said during the 1998 impeachment debate, ''it's been my view that I don't, as a potential juror, if it's serious enough to warrant a potential impeachment proceeding, I don't think I ought to pre-judge the case.''

Yet already a few of my Senate Republican colleagues seem determined to turn this serious inquiry into another partisan exercise. My friend the Republican leader, here on the floor yesterday, made the sadly predictable attack of calling the work of the majority in the House partisan. Another of my colleagues, Senator GRAHAM, said he was trying to organize a letter of Senate Republicans promising they would not vote to convict the President before the House even completes its inquiry—before any articles of impeachment are even drafted, let alone voted on, before a scrap of evidence was considered in the Senate trial, if it comes to that. Senator GRAHAM seems to be advocating ''Alice in Wonderland'' justice—first the verdict, then the trial. I hope he will rethink that.

Over the State work period, the Republican leader ran an advertisement in which he declared: ''The way that impeachment stops is a Senate majority with me as majority leader.'' That is a far cry from what he said in 1998: ''not prejudging the case.''

We are several steps away from a potential trial in the Senate. The House continues to do its work diligently, even handedly, with only the facts in mind. So I remind my Republican colleagues in this Chamber that committing today to vote not guilty is contrary to their oath to do impartial justice. That is their oath. Instead of prejudging, I remind my Republican colleagues in this body that you have a responsibility to put country over party. Our national security, the rule of law, and our democracy are at stake.

TURKEY AND SYRIA

Mr. President, we are witnessing in realtime the collapse of American foreign policy in the Middle East. Five years of hard fighting in Syria to first destabilize and then to degrade ISIS has potentially been undone in one phone call. The President's abrupt decision to withdraw U.S. forces has abandoned the field to our enemies—ISIS, Iran, Putin, and Bashar al-Assad—and it has put our friends in danger, including two of the closest friends we have in the Middle East, the Syrian Kurds and Israel.

I want to be very clear. The President's decision poses a threat to our national security here in the United States. By green-lighting President Erdogan's operation and abandoning the Syrian Kurds to face the onslaught on their own, the President has made an already fragile situation in northern Syria more dangerous and handed a ''get out of jail free'' card to potentially more than 10,000 ISIS fighters. ISIS has threatened the United States and our allies repeatedly, taken Americans hostages and executed them, and will undoubtedly continue to threaten our security if they experience a resurgence.

We New Yorkers know best, unfortunately, how a small group of fanatics half a world away can do incredible damage and kill thousands of Americans here on our soil. Now, with ISIS prisoners escaping, unfortunately, the chances of that are increasing, not just according to me but to an expert like General Mattis.

Make no mistake. The President's incompetence has put American lives in danger. Today, the House of Representatives will consider a resolution that condemns the President's decision and demands that he reverse course. It should pass with bipartisan support and should be the first order of business for us here in the Senate—the first order of business. Sanctions against Erdogan are fine and good. President Erdogan should be punished for his military adventurism and his aggression, but sanctions alone are insufficient, and they are particularly insufficient in regard to ISIS. Sanctions will not put ISIS fighters back on the run or back in their cells. They will not stop Iran and Putin's growing influence in the region, nor will they undo America's betrayal of our partners and allies. Sanctions can be an effective tool, but they are not the only tool, especially when the crisis in this case is of the President's own making. The simplest and most effective remedy would be for the President to admit his mistake and correct course.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. President, earlier this summer, both Houses of Congress and the White House arrived at a budget agreement that gave us a blueprint for funding the government, but in September, Republicans unilaterally walked away from our agreement and proposed taking $12 billion from domestic programs—including Head Start, HHS, and even the Pentagon—to fund the President's border wall. This is a nonstarter. There aren't enough votes in the Chamber to pass it.

As we look to get the appropriations back on track, I was disappointed that Senate Republicans let the entire State work period pass without responding to Democratic offers. Instead of spending that time negotiating with House Democrats on allocations, Senate Republicans have sat on their hands, and now we are back in session this week at the same impasse. Republicans are insisting on the same thing they unsuccessfully shut down the government for last year: $12 billion for a border wall that President Trump promised Mexico would pay for.

If Senate Republicans don't wake up and resume good-faith negotiations with Democrats, I fear we are headed down the same road.

PENSIONS

Mr. President, for decades, millions of Americans labored in construction and mining and truck driving and other industries with the promise of a secure retirement when they reached old age through their pension. But through no fault of their own, forces like a financial crisis, a dwindling labor force, and inaction on the part of the Federal Government, their pension plans are now at risk of becoming insolvent within a decade. This is an immediate problem. It is going to destroy the security of millions of retirees—people who worked all their lives. They put a little bit of money away that they could have spent when they needed it, but they put it in for their retirement hoping that the day they retire they wouldn't become rich, but at least they could live decently. Now that may be vanished—vanished. Congress has the power to stop this problem dead in its tracks. Just 2 months ago, the House passed the Butch Lewis Act, which would provide immediate relief to ''critical and declining'' pension plans so we can keep our promise to our workers. Leader MCCONNELL and Senate Republicans, once again, inexplicably, have refused to take action on this bipartisan legislation. Senate Republicans blocked us from even debating it last night. So in a short time, I will join my colleagues, including Senators BROWN, STABENOW, MANCHIN, MURRAY, and WYDEN to demand that Leader MCCONNELL allow us a vote on legislation to protect these millions of workers and secure the retirements they have earned.

President Trump often claims to be looking out for the American worker, but his policies set them further and further adrift. This one is notorious. Retirement, a decent retirement, is part of the American dream and part of the American way. Here is a chance for President Trump to actually defend American workers instead of hurting them.

If President Trump is truly the champion of the American worker, he will prevail on our Republican colleagues to start working with Democrats to make sure—make sure—we protect the pensions that millions of families rely on for their security and have paid for.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. BLACKBURN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION OF BARBARA MCCONNELL BARRETT

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, later today, the Senate will vote to confirm Barbara Barrett as Secretary of the Air Force. I have come to the floor directly from a meeting with her this morning.

Ambassador Barrett has had an impressive career both inside and outside of government. Among other things, she has served as U.S. Ambassador to Finland, Deputy Administrator of the FAA, and as a member of the Civil Aeronautics Board. Most importantly, she has a deep understanding of the U.S. Air Force, thanks to her work as a civilian adviser to the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs.

As a member of the Defense Advisory Committee on women in the services, she fought to expand opportunities for women in the military. She became the first civilian woman to land an F–18 on an aircraft carrier, which was part of a mission to demonstrate women's fitness to fly in combat. Thanks, in part, to her work in 1993, the military changed its regulations to allow women to fly combat aircraft.

I am always particularly interested in making sure we have an outstanding Air Force Secretary because my State of South Dakota is lucky enough to play host to Ellsworth Air Force Base, home of the 28th Bomb Wing and future home of the B–21 bomber.

Over the State work period in October, I was able to visit Ellsworth to sit down with the new commander of the 28th Bomb Wing, Col. David Doss, as well as CCM Rochelle Hemingway. We had a great discussion, and we had a chance to talk about the needs of the base going forward, including what will be needed as Ellsworth prepares to serve as the first home of the B–21.

Ensuring that the base has the necessary resources and infrastructure to fully support the B–21 mission will be a priority of mine not just as we await the mission but for decades to come.

Since I came to Congress, I have worked with the base and the Greater Rapid City community to build up Ellsworth. We have gone from fighting to keep the base open, to adding an MQ–9 Reaper mission and supporting the B–1 as a workhorse of the bomber fleet, to hosting the largest training airspace in the continental United States, and to being chosen to host both the B–21 training mission and first operational squadron.

I am incredibly proud of all that Ellsworth airmen have accomplished, and I am looking forward to seeing everything the team at the base will be able to do in the future.

TURKEY AND SYRIA

Madam President, as I reflect on the critical role our military plays in the world, I want to take a moment to talk about what is happening in Syria right now and the U.S. response.

This is a complex situation. Given its proximity to several fronts of conflict and unrest, Turkey is facing immense pressure to address security concerns and is straining to support a huge number of refugees.

Turkey also has an understandable interest in rooting out terrorists within its country and stemming any factions that support them, but the Kurdish militias the United States has backed in Syria are not the same as the group Turkey has struggled to contain in its own country.

Turkey's decision to attack Kurdish forces in Syria will do nothing but exacerbate the humanitarian crisis on the border. It will also strengthen the Assad regime and foster greater influence in the region by Russia and Iran. Most alarmingly, Turkey's incursion will force the Kurds to pull resources that would otherwise be committed to keeping ISIS fighters imprisoned. It is deeply concerning that the withdrawal of U.S. forces has set this into motion.

As you know, a major reason for ISIS's rise was President Obama's decision to withdraw U.S. forces from Iraq on a timetable that he announced to our enemies and before the security situation was stable. The departure of U.S. forces created a vacuum in the region that ISIS quickly stepped in to fill. It is important that we don't allow history to repeat itself.

U.S. and Kurdish forces have been working together against ISIS for years now and have succeeded in drastically shrinking ISIS's territory and weakening this terrorist organization. Thanks to their work, in many respects ISIS can be said to be on the run, but this achievement could quickly be undone by a U.S. withdrawal from the country.

I hope we will be able to have some fruitful discussions here in Washington this week about the need to maintain our strategic gains against ISIS and avoid creating a vacuum for our enemies to fill, and I hope our NATO ally Turkey is listening closely.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

IMMIGRATION

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I rise today on the Senate floor to address an issue that is really fundamental to who we are as Americans. It is the issue of immigration.

We just celebrated, this past week, a day dedicated to Christopher Columbus, who, supposedly, discovered America. Of course, we know better. Native Americans were here and discovered it before him, but he was the first European to discover America and really triggered an immigration to this part of the world that has really changed America and the world forever.

This immigration from all over the world has created one of the most diverse nations on Earth. I am a beneficiary of that immigration. My mother was an immigrant to America in 1911, coming here from Lithuania to East St. Louis, IL, where she was raised and where I had the chance to grow up, as well.

Today, her son—this immigrant mother's son—has been serving as a U.S. Senator from Illinois with humility and pride. It is an indication of our family's story, but it is also America's story—how immigrants came from far and wide to America and made lives and great futures and built families that continue to serve this Nation to this day.

You would think, since immigration is such a central part of who we are as Americans, that there would be a general consensus about the issue, but it turns out to be one of the most hotly contested and debated issues almost since the arrival of the Mayflower.

How many people should be allowed to come to this country? Where are they going to come from? What will they do when they come here? What impact will they have on those of us who are already here? All of these questions of national security have led us into an ongoing national debate about immigration.

Today, this morning, I come to the floor to discuss one aspect of it. This last Sunday morning, I was back in Illinois and was invited to a Democratic Party event in Schaumburg, IL. It was a fairly routine breakfast meeting of the Democratic township organization. I have been to many of them. It is great to see old friends.

When I arrived at the event, I was surprised to see demonstrators, protesters—perhaps 200 of them—holding signs with my name on them. It is not exactly the way you want to start a Sunday morning, greeting 200 people with signs about this fellow named Durbin. I had a chance to talk to them. I didn't run away from them because I wanted to find out who they were and why they were there.

By and large, they were people from India who are currently living in the United States and want to become legal citizens here. Most of them came to the United States bringing special skills that were needed. Many of them are in the Silicon Valley high-tech industries—engineers who came to the United States once companies certified that they couldn't find an American to fill the job, which is a requirement. Having been unable to find an American, these companies asked permission to bring in these highly skilled people from India to serve as engineers in the United States.

They come in on what is known as H–1B visas, by and large, and that allows them to work in the United States for several years and to renew that work status on a recurring basis. But there reached a point where they wanted to stay here. They have lived here awhile. They bring their families and raise their families here, and they want to become part of America's future. They apply for what is known as an employment-based immigrant visa, which leads to a green card. A green card is the ticket to legal, permanent residency, which can lead to citizenship.

So these people from India, who were waiting to see me and say a few words to me, stated the fact that the waiting list for those in this category from India has now passed 520,000. There are 520,000 who are seeking permanent status in our country.

I met one of them from my hometown of Springfield, IL, a young Indian physician who is serving at one of our hospitals in Springfield. He brought with him his daughter. His daughter is 12 years old. He is worried because if he, the physician who came here to work from India, is not allowed to legally stay in this country and his daughter reaches the age of 21, her status changes. She is no longer his dependent. She now has her own immigration status, and she is not technically, legally, beyond the age of 21, allowed to stay in this country.

So he says to me: Here is my daughter, who has been here for 10 years. This is the country she knows and loves and wants to be a part of, and if I don't get approval to stay as a doctor in this country, she is technically undocumented at that point, and we run into problems with the future.

For example, it is no surprise that this doctor wants to see his daughter go to college. Well, his daughter, undocumented, will not qualify for any assistance in the United States by way of Pell grants or loans. How is she going to pay for college? Where would she go? Our immigration system says, at that point, if her father doesn't reach this green card status, she would return to India, a place she maybe never remembers and that was part of her infancy in her early time here on Earth.

So it is a complicated situation. There is a debate under way here about how to stop this backlog of people who are waiting in line 10 years, 20 years, and more to reach green card status. You can imagine the uncertainty in their lives, the uncertainty for their children, and why they are looking for some relief.

I came to this issue never dreaming that I would end up being in the middle of most debates in the Senate on immigration, but I welcome it because it is such an important issue and because I have strong feelings myself about America's immigration policy.

I serve as the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Border Security and Immigration for the Senate Judiciary Committee. As I have said, my own personal family and life experience have really made me warm to the subject, and I try to learn as much as I can about a complex field. Make no mistake, the immigration system of the United States of America is badly, badly broken. How to fix it is hotly debated here in the Senate and in the House and across the Nation.

Last night, when I was watching the Presidential debates, groups were running ads on a regular basis on the issue of immigration. Many believe that it is going to be a hot topic in the 2020 election. It is quite possible that it will be. We know that in State legislatures and city halls, on cable news and social media, and almost everywhere, there is a debate under way about immigration. But there is one place where there is no debate about immigration—here in the U.S. Senate.

This year, we had one hearing in the Border Security and Immigration Subcommittee. And the Senate Judiciary Committee voted on only one immigration bill. The chairman limited debate to only one hour and didn't allow any amendments, and we have not had any debates on the floor of the Senate.

I look to the Galleries and the people who come to the Senate and expect to see a debate on an issue—an important issue. Here is one: immigration. But all they have is a speech from this Senator and a few others, instead of addressing the issue of immigration.

Senator KENNEDY has come to the floor, and I am going to make a unanimous consent request in just a few minutes. He is a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, too, and I think he appreciates, as I do, what a great honor it is to serve on this storied committee. But the fact is that to have the titles of Judiciary Committee and Border Security and Immigration Subcommittee and to do nothing, I think, is a dereliction of duty.

We are supposed to step up and debate these things and come to the best bipartisan conclusion we can to solve problems in this country. Here is a problem we are not solving: how to deal with a backlog of people, highly skilled and important people, like the doctor from my hometown of Springfield, from India, who wants to have a green card, giving him an opportunity to become an American citizen.

Do you know what? I want that doctor to become an American citizen. I want him to get a green card. We need him in my hometown and many more just like him, and I want his family to be there with him so that his life is complete as he pursues his professional responsibilities.

Now, in recent weeks, there has been an effort to pass a bill to address this issue. The bill is S. 386. It is known as the Fairness for High-Skilled Immigrants Act. Unfortunately, there was an effort to pass it without any debate or a chance to even offer an amendment.

Now, this bill makes significant changes in our immigration laws, but there has never been a hearing on the bill or a vote in the committee. The lead sponsor of the legislation is MIKE LEE, who is the senior Senator from Utah and a personal friend. He has negotiated several amendments in private with his Republican Senators, but there has been no conversation with myself or any other Democratic Senators about these negotiations.

That is not how the Senate should work. I believe I have seen the Senate at its best, and, unfortunately, it was 7 years ago. We decided—eight of us in the Senate, four Democrats and four Republicans—to actually sit down and try to fix the immigration system. It is a pretty ambitious task, but we had some pretty talented people engaged in it. Leading on the Republican side was John McCain from Arizona. Next to him was LINDSEY GRAHAM from South Carolina, Jeff Flake from Arizona, and MARCO RUBIO from Florida.

On our side, I was engaged with Senator CHUCK SCHUMER, who is now the Democrat Senate leader, as well as BOB MENENDEZ, of course, a Hispanic Senator from the State of New Jersey, and MICHAEL BENNET from Colorado.

So the eight of us came together. We did what I think the Senate is supposed to do. We sat down and took our time and spent months, every single week, sometimes several evenings each week, going through a different section of our immigration law and trying to make it work, reform it, and change it. It took us months—some 6 months of meetings. That is what we are elected to do.

We produced a comprehensive immigration reform bill that was supported by virtually everyone. Groups of business leaders, as well as groups of labor leaders, the church community, and all sorts of people from the conservative side of politics to the liberal side of politics said that this was a good, fair, bipartisan compromise.

So in 2013, we reported this bill to the floor, after our Democratic Judiciary Committee chairman at that time, PATRICK LEAHY from Vermont, had a lengthy hearing. We considered over 100 amendments—amendments offered by those who were voting against the bill, like Jeff Sessions from Alabama, and amendments offered by those supporting the bill, like MAZIE HIRONO from Hawaii. Each person offered an amendment, debated it, and we voted. It sounded like the U.S. Senate; didn't it? We were actually voting on amendments on a critically important bill. Thanks to Chairman LEAHY's skill and patience, I might add, after hundreds of amendments were considered, the bill was reported out of the Senate Judiciary Committee, came to the floor of the Senate in 2013, and we called for a vote. It passed 68 to 32. After all that work, on a bipartisan basis, we finally got it right. I thought we did, and I voted for it.

Sadly, that bill was sent across the Rotunda, over to the House of Representatives, as the Constitution requires, and, unfortunately, the Republican Speaker, John Boehner, refused

to call the bill or debate an alternative to it. It literally died from lack of any effort to deal with the issue in the U.S. House of Representatives.

So one would ask—that was more than 6 years ago—what has happened since? The answer is nothing—virtually nothing—except decisions by the Trump administration, for example, to eliminate some aspects of our immigration law, like the DACA provision.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent for 3 additional minutes.

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

Mr. DURBIN. In light of an attempt to pass the Fairness for High-Skilled Immigrants Act without hearings or debate, I come to the floor today to present an alternative. I am introducing the Resolving Extended Limbo for Immigrant Employees and Families Act, known as the RELIEF Act, which will treat all immigrants fairly by eliminating immigrant visa backlogs.

One of the most serious problems of our immigration system is that there are not enough immigrant visas, known as green cards. As a result, immigrants are stuck in crippling backlogs for decades. Close to 4 million future Americans, many of whom already live and work in the United States, are on the State Department's immigrant visa waiting list. However, under current law, only 226,000 family green cards and 140,000 employee green cards are available each year. Children and spouses of lawful permanent residents, known as LPRs, count against these caps, which further limit the number of available green cards.

The backlogs are a tremendous hardship on families caught in this situation. Children of parents waiting to become LPRs often age out, as I described earlier, because they are no longer children by the time the green cards are available for them. The solution is clear: increase the number of green cards.

Let's be clear. Lifting green card country caps alone, without increasing green cards, as the bill that Senator LEE is sponsoring would do, will not eliminate the backlog for Indian immigrants, the nationality with the most people in the employment backlog, and it will dramatically increase backlogs for the rest of the world.

Mr. Ira Kurzban, who is the Nation's expert on immigration laws, has said that we are virtually trying to solve the problem with Senator LEE's bill for Indian immigrants at the expense of everyone else in the world. He says:

> From 2023 until well into the 2030s, there will be zero EB–2 visas for the rest of the world. None for China, South Korea, Philippines, Britain, Canada, Mexico, every country in the [European Union] and all of Africa. Zero.

It would also choke off green cards for every important profession that isn't in the information technology field.

More than 20 national organizations have now rallied against the Lee legislation and have said things such as that the bill offers a ''zero-sum approach,'' pitting one group of immigrants against another to fight the broken immigration system.

The RELIEF Act, which I am introducing today, is a solution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 2603

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, as in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has used his extra 3 minutes.

Mr. DURBIN. I am making a unanimous consent request.

As in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 2603, introduced earlier today; further, that the bill be considered read three times and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam President, reserving the right to object, no one in this Chamber has more respect for the senior Senator from Illinois and the Democratic whip than I do. I share much of his frustration. I also share, and I believe what the Senator also believes, that immigration is an extraordinarily important subject that this body should be addressing. We are a nation of immigrants. The American people support legal immigration. I know the senior Senator from Illinois supports it. I certainly support it.

I am rising to object because a number of my colleagues—and I don't want to simply put it on them; I join with them in this—would like a little additional time to study this bill. Equally important, if not more important, many of my colleagues' sentiment is that we should take this bill up first in the Judiciary Committee.

I commit to the minority whip that I will join with him in trying to get our esteemed chairman to take this bill up. I don't think we ought to be afraid of this issue. I don't think we ought to be reluctant to take difficult votes. That is why we are here in the U.S. Senate. I also cannot think of a subject that is more important for this body to address than the subject of immigration, including but not limited to legal and illegal immigration.

The fact of the matter is that the American people deserve an immigration system that looks like somebody designed it on purpose.

For the reasons I just expressed, Madam President, I respectfully object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. I thank my colleague from Louisiana. We have worked on things together, and I hope we will continue to do so in the future.

This is controversial, but it is so timely and important. The hundreds of people who demonstrated against this Senator last Sunday were people I welcomed into this country and believe will be an important part of our future. I am willing to find a solution to the problem, and I am willing to work on a bipartisan basis to do it. Your help will be invaluable.

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 bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

> We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Frank William Volk, of West Virginia, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of West Virginia.
>
> Mitch McConnell, Martha McSally, Rick Scott, John Thune, Mike Crapo, Lamar Alexander, Johnny Isakson, John Cornyn, Roy Blunt, Roger F. Wicker, John Hoeven, Mike Rounds, Kevin Cramer, Steve Daines, John Boozman, Cindy Hyde-Smith, James E. Risch.

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 nomination of Frank William Volk, of West Virginia, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of West Virginia, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), and the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) would have voted ''yea'' and the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) would have voted ''yea.''

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 90, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 315 Ex.]

YEAS—90

Baldwin	Blumenthal	Braun
Barrasso	Blunt	Brown
Blackburn	Boozman	Burr

Cantwell	Heinrich	Roberts
Capito	Hoeven	Romney
Cardin	Hyde-Smith	Rosen
Carper	Inhofe	Rounds
Casey	Jones	Rubio
Cassidy	Kaine	Sasse
Collins	Kennedy	Schatz
Coons	King	Schumer
Cornyn	Lankford	Scott (FL)
Cortez Masto	Leahy	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Lee	Shaheen
Cramer	Manchin	Shelby
Crapo	Markey	Sinema
Cruz	McConnell	Smith
Daines	McSally	Stabenow
Duckworth	Menendez	Sullivan
Durbin	Merkley	Tester
Enzi	Moran	Thune
Ernst	Murkowski	Tillis
Feinstein	Murphy	Toomey
Fischer	Murray	Udall
Gardner	Paul	Van Hollen
Gillibrand	Perdue	Warner
Graham	Peters	Whitehouse
Grassley	Portman	Wicker
Hassan	Reed	Wyden
Hawley	Risch	Young

NOT VOTING—10

Alexander	Hirono	Sanders
Bennet	Isakson	Warren
Booker	Johnson	
Harris	Klobuchar	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 90, the nays are 0.

The motion is agreed to.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the remaining votes in the series be 10 minutes in length.

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

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Charles R. Eskridge III, of Texas, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Texas.

Mitch McConnell, Martha McSally, Rick Scott, John Thune, Mike Crapo, Lamar Alexander, Johnny Isakson, John Cornyn, Roy Blunt, Roger F. Wicker, John Hoeven, Mike Rounds, Kevin Cramer, Steve Daines, John Boozman, Cindy Hyde-Smith, James E. Risch.

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 nomination of Charles R. Eskridge III, of Texas, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Texas, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), and the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) would have voted ''yea'' and the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) would have voted ''yea.''

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 61, nays 29, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 316 Ex.]

YEAS—61

Barrasso	Fischer	Risch
Blackburn	Gardner	Roberts
Blunt	Graham	Romney
Boozman	Grassley	Rounds
Braun	Hawley	Rubio
Burr	Hoeven	Sasse
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Scott (FL)
Cardin	Inhofe	Scott (SC)
Carper	Kaine	Shaheen
Cassidy	Kennedy	Shelby
Collins	King	Sinema
Coons	Lankford	Sullivan
Cornyn	Lee	Thune
Cotton	McConnell	Tillis
Cramer	McSally	Toomey
Crapo	Moran	Warner
Cruz	Murkowski	Whitehouse
Daines	Murphy	Wicker
Enzi	Paul	Young
Ernst	Perdue	
Feinstein	Portman	

NAYS—29

Baldwin	Heinrich	Rosen
Blumenthal	Jones	Schatz
Brown	Leahy	Schumer
Cantwell	Manchin	Smith
Casey	Markey	Stabenow
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Tester
Duckworth	Merkley	Udall
Durbin	Murray	Van Hollen
Gillibrand	Peters	Wyden
Hassan	Reed	

NOT VOTING—10

Alexander	Hirono	Sanders
Bennet	Isakson	Warren
Booker	Johnson	
Harris	Klobuchar	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 61, the nays are 29.

The motion is agreed to.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of David John Novak, of Virginia, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Virginia.

Mitch McConnell, John Boozman, John Cornyn, Mike Crapo, Pat Roberts, Mike Rounds, Thom Tillis, Roger F. Wicker, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Kevin Cramer, John Hoeven, Rob Portman, Dan Sullivan, Chuck Grassley, Richard Burr, John Thune, Roy Blunt.

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 nomination of David John Novak, of Virginia, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Virginia, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

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

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), and the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) would have voted ''yea'' and the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) would have voted ''yea''.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 86, nays 4, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 317 Ex.]

YEAS—86

Baldwin	Fischer	Reed
Barrasso	Gardner	Risch
Blackburn	Graham	Roberts
Blumenthal	Grassley	Romney
Blunt	Hassan	Rosen
Boozman	Hawley	Rounds
Braun	Hoeven	Rubio
Brown	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Burr	Inhofe	Schatz
Cantwell	Jones	Schumer
Capito	Kaine	Scott (FL)
Cardin	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Carper	King	Shaheen
Casey	Lankford	Shelby
Cassidy	Leahy	Sinema
Collins	Lee	Smith
Coons	Manchin	Stabenow
Cornyn	McConnell	Sullivan
Cortez Masto	McSally	Tester
Cotton	Menendez	Thune
Cramer	Merkley	Tillis
Crapo	Moran	Toomey
Cruz	Murkowski	Udall
Daines	Murphy	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Murray	Warner
Durbin	Paul	Whitehouse
Enzi	Perdue	Wicker
Ernst	Peters	Young
Feinstein	Portman	

NAYS—4

Gillibrand	Markey	
Heinrich	Wyden	

NOT VOTING—10

Alexander	Hirono	Sanders
Bennet	Isakson	Warren
Booker	Johnson	
Harris	Klobuchar	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 86, the nays are 4.

The motion is agreed to.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The 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 nomination of Rachel P. Kovner, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of New York.

Mitch McConnell, John Boozman, John Cornyn, Mike Crapo, Pat Roberts, Mike Rounds, Thom Tillis, Roger F. Wicker, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Kevin Cramer, John Hoeven, Rob Portman, Dan Sullivan, Chuck Grassley, Richard Burr, John Thune, Roy Blunt.

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 nomination of Rachel P. Kovner, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of New York, 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. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), and the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) would have voted ''yea'' and the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) would have voted ''yea.''

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 85, nays 3, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 318 Ex.]

YEAS—85

Baldwin	Collins	Gardner
Barrasso	Coons	Graham
Blackburn	Cornyn	Grassley
Blumenthal	Cortez Masto	Hassan
Blunt	Cotton	Hawley
Boozman	Cramer	Hoeven
Braun	Crapo	Hyde-Smith
Brown	Cruz	Jones
Burr	Daines	Kaine
Cantwell	Duckworth	Kennedy
Capito	Durbin	King
Cardin	Enzi	Lankford
Carper	Ernst	Leahy
Casey	Feinstein	Lee
Cassidy	Fischer	Manchin
Markey	Risch	Smith
McConnell	Roberts	Sullivan
McSally	Romney	Tester
Menendez	Rosen	Thune
Merkley	Rounds	Tillis
Moran	Rubio	Toomey
Murkowski	Sasse	Udall
Murphy	Schatz	Van Hollen
Murray	Schumer	Warner
Paul	Scott (FL)	Whitehouse
Perdue	Scott (SC)	Wicker
Peters	Shaheen	Young
Portman	Shelby	
Reed	Sinema	

NAYS—3

Gillibrand	Heinrich	Wyden

NOT VOTING—12

Alexander	Hirono	Klobuchar
Bennet	Inhofe	Sanders
Booker	Isakson	Stabenow
Harris	Johnson	Warren

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 85, the nays are 3.

The motion is agreed to.

The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 5 minutes.

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

PENSIONS

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I just came from a rally—a meeting—with more or less 100 middle-class workers from Wisconsin, West Virginia, my State of Ohio, and all over the country. There were teamsters and mineworkers dressed in camo shirts. There were also bakery and confectionery workers, carpenters, and electricians. They were here because many of them—maybe all of them—are about to lose 50 percent of their pensions. They are about to lose their pensions because 10 years ago, in the end days of the Bush administration, which was when our economy plummeted and people were losing jobs—800,000 jobs a month in the last months of the Bush administration—and when companies were going out of business, a lot of the employers of these workers went out of business. When you put on top of that the Wall Street greed, you can see why these pensions are in jeopardy.

Too often in this town, the White House, frankly, and my Senate colleagues don't understand what collective bargaining is about. Collective bargaining is negotiating at the bargaining table the giving up of wages today so as to put money aside and have pensions and healthcare in the future. That is what these workers did, these teamsters and these confection workers and these ironworkers. That is what they did, but they are paying a price. There is nothing they did to cause this, but they are paying a price.

Now, parenthetically, this body fell all over itself to bail out Wall Street and to help the big auto companies, and look how they are paying back their workers. This body, the President—all of them are fine with bailing out the big guys. Yet the President has been absent, and the Senate Republican leadership has been absent. The exception is that Senator PORTMAN has been working with me, as has Senator HOEVEN and others, but the leadership has been absent with regard to trying to fix this pension issue.

You love your country, and you fight for the people who make it work. You fight for the dignity of work, which means honoring and respecting work. We have to do better.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 2254

Mr. President, as in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be discharged from further consideration of S. 2254, the Butch Lewis Act; that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; that the bill be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, in reserving the right to object, I have some sympathy for the motion that Senator BROWN made because he just came from a meeting with people who are very interested in getting this multiemployer pension issue straightened out.

It was 3 or 4 years ago that I spoke to a big delegation of people who were mostly from the Central States Teamsters, and they were very much lobbying for a solution to this problem. They treated me like a hero because at that time we were probably in the middle of a Government Accountability Office investigation of the mismanagement of these funds. We thought we were going to get a GAO report that would show the mismanagement, reap the benefits of that mismanagement, and recoup a lot of funds. Quite frankly, that Government Accountability Office study of about 2 years didn't prove what I thought and what the Central States Teamsters people thought was wrong. We still think the mismanagement was there, but if you don't have an authority like the Government Accountability Office to justify that, it doesn't give you much of a leg to follow up on.

Now we have the Butch Lewis Act for which Senator BROWN is asking unanimous consent. We also have other proposals that the Senate Committee on Finance, which I chair, has been working on—and not only under my chairmanship. The biggest part of this work was probably done when Senator Hatch was still the chairman of the committee.

I also want to give people the reasons I have asked to reserve the right to object.

The Butch Lewis Act doesn't provide long-term solvency to the Central States' plan or to other critical and declining multiemployer pension plans. It is a costly and incomplete attempt to fix the multiemployer system.

According to the Congressional Budget Office, many plans that would be eligible for loans under this legislation couldn't pay these loans back, and most of the plans taking the loans

would become insolvent even if they were able to pay back the loans. The bill acknowledges this failing by providing for direct Federal assistance for plans that go insolvent even after they receive loans.

Most critically, the Butch Lewis Act makes no reforms to the system in order to secure its long-term solvency. That is not the way we ought to be working to help retirees.

In getting back to the work of the Committee on Finance, since last year, both under Senator Hatch's leadership and mine, the committee has been working on a bipartisan basis to address the issues facing the multiemployer system. I emphasize the necessity of bipartisanship in the U.S. Senate. When you have a division of 53 to 47 and you have to have 60 votes to get something done in this body, bipartisanship is very, very important.

The committee is nearing its completion of a comprehensive proposal that will include financial assistance to the critical and declining multiemployer pension plans and provide long-term solvency to these plans and to the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation. That proposal will include financial relief for plans like Central States' and for the coal miners.

The Butch Lewis Act is so costly and does nothing to fix the flaws in the system that has brought about this bill. In relationship to the Government Accountability Office, I spoke to some of those flaws that I initiated a few years ago. There is really nothing in the proposal on which Senator BROWN is asking for a UC that addresses the mismanagement of the trustees. Our comprehensive plan includes reforms to address trustee requirements and plan operations. In other words, the people in the private sector who are managing this ought to have some responsibility of making sure they are doing it in a fiscally sound way and are carrying out the rights of the trustees.

So I object to this request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I thank Senator GRASSLEY, and we will be working together on this.

I just want to point out that there was, of course, some mismanagement. As does the Senator, I want to fix some of the structural issues, but time is of the essence. I understand this is not happening today, but time is of the essence with regard to these pensions, especially for the mineworkers. Those for the teamsters are next and for the others in the Central States. As Chairman GRASSLEY knows, it will get worse and worse and worse if we don't get this done this year.

I do want to emphasize, while there of course is some mismanagement of funds here, the preponderance of the problem is that a bunch of mining companies, construction companies, and transportation companies went out of business with the Bush recession in 2007, 2008, and 2009, taking away the companies paying into these funds.

The other part of it was Wall Street greed, generally what happened to the stock market.

That is the preponderance of the problem, but I concur with Senator GRASSLEY that we can work on a lot of this together. Senator PORTMAN and I especially have a responsibility to get this done, to make it happen.

I thank the chairman.

I yield the floor.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 1 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. PERDUE).

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

MAIDEN SPEECH

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, my story begins with my mom. My mom had a very difficult life. She grew up with a verbally abusive, alcoholic father. She married a physically abusive, alcoholic husband, whom she divorced when I was born. At that time, divorce was frowned upon. My birth father never gave my mom, my older brother, or me a dime. I never met him.

My mom eventually married the man who became my adoptive father, a busdriver who made all four combat jumps with the 82nd Airborne in World War II. This summer, I had the opportunity to go to the D-Day anniversary in Normandy and to look at the area he parachuted into, where 17 percent of his company died.

He was a loving father, but with only a sixth-grade education and five children, he struggled to support our family. We had no money and lived in public housing, but even with all of those issues, I cannot think of a better childhood.

Even with no money, my mom was optimistic and hopeful. She told us that we were blessed because God and our Founders created the greatest country ever, where anything was possible. I am not sure my mom ever really had a plan for us, but she certainly knew what she was doing. We sat through many sermons, and church was not optional. We were told we had to make straight A's. We memorized the first part of the Declaration of Independence and the 23rd Psalm. We became Eagle Scouts, cleaned the house, and had to have a job. I started working at 7 years old and haven't stopped since.

We weren't allowed to complain. Debt, Big Government, socialism, and communism were bad. College was for a better paying job.

We were constantly lectured about the dangers of drug abuse. Unfortunately, drugs have destroyed the life of one of my family members.

I enlisted in the U.S. Navy at 18, where I swabbed the decks, cleaned the latrines, served the mess decks, and took college courses aboard a destroyer during the last years of Vietnam but never close to Vietnam.

I married my high school sweetheart at 19, and, today, Ann and I have two daughters, six very perfect grandsons, and a seventh very perfect grandchild on the way next year. My wonderful wife, Ann, is here today and has been by my side every step of our journey.

While I didn't always appreciate my tough-love, my-way-or-the-highway mom growing up, I now thank God every day for my mom and for this country. She gave me the opportunity to experience every lesson this country had to offer before I was 20.

Unfortunately, the left has worked hard over the last 50 years to discredit the values of the America I was raised with—the values of the America I want my grandsons to grow up with. We all acknowledge that Americans, our country, and our institutions have flaws, but the left has worked to discredit our Founders, our institutions, our churches, our law enforcement, our morals, and almost everything my mom taught me. It has been happening for a long time.

The left railed against our soldiers during the Vietnam war. They call those still believing in a supreme being or the commitment of marriage uninformed and old fashioned. They are now openly saying that churches that hold traditional values should lose their tax-exempt status.

The left doesn't care about our enormous debt, pushes for socialism, and criticizes the Boy Scouts. The left thinks it is OK that our schools don't teach about the Founding Fathers or free markets. They want you to think America was never great.

To a degree, the pressure from the left is working. Americans under 30 are less interested in joining the military. Church attendance is at an all-time low. Participation in the Boy Scouts, even after allowing girls in, has shrunk. Many are choosing not to have families. And Socialism, the single most discredited idea of the last century—an idea that has led millions into poverty and tyranny around the globe—has gained a foothold in one of our two political parties.

I spent most of my life in business. The values that my tough-love mom instilled in me helped me to achieve the success she expected—not just hoped for but expected—for me. I was able to live the American dream because I worked hard. I lived out the values my mom taught me in my business career—hard work and fiscal responsibility but with a caring spirit to support those around me.

I built a healthcare company that had lower costs and better quality of care than my competitors. We had the highest patient satisfaction surveys in

the industry. I built and bought businesses for most of my life that helped hundreds of thousands of people get good, high-paying jobs. Many of them were failing businesses that we had to turn around to save jobs.

My experience growing up in a family that struggled to get good jobs influenced everything I have done in my life. It is not easy, and it shouldn't be, but everyone—every single American—should have the opportunity to struggle, work hard, and overcome the obstacles.

I took those exact same values to the Governor's office when I was elected in 2010. Florida had been struggling, and 832,000 jobs had been lost in the 4 years before I took office. Home prices were cut in half. Debt was soaring. The State raised taxes on its poorest citizens by more than $2 billion to fill a budget hole.

I always think about my mom. I think about how it impacted her when food prices went up, taxes went up, when my brother got sick without health insurance, and when my dad was laid off. I became a jobs Governor. It wasn't a political talking point. It was about real people.

I have traveled around the State highlighting new businesses that opened in Florida, even small businesses. I remember a local legislator asking me once why I wasted my time going to a small town in Florida to highlight a new business's opening with just 30 new jobs. My response was that my dad struggled to find any job, and that is 30 families who have the opportunity to live the American Dream, and what could be more important?

In 8 years, Florida added 1.7 million new jobs, we paid down almost one-third of State debt, and we invested record funding in education, the environment, and transportation.

I also tried to fight for the values that are being lost in this country. I fight to protect life, to support the institution of the family, to lift up our military members, veterans, and law enforcement, to promote capitalism, and to defend the rule of law and the Constitution.

These values are under attack from the left and have been for quite some time. There is no easy solution to that problem, but one thing is clear: Government is not the solution. Washington is not the solution.

In my short time in the U.S. Senate, I have promoted policies I believe support the idea of an America where anything is possible. We need lower taxes. We need less regulation. We need a secure border and a sane immigration policy. We need to get healthcare costs under control. We need to defend freedom and liberty all over the world. But none of this will matter unless we see hearts and minds change. We need a renewal in America of the values that made this country great. That will not happen on the floor of the U.S. Senate. It will happen in the living rooms, classrooms, churches, synagogues, and boardrooms.

We need to remember that hard work is a feature, not a bug, of this American experiment and that the family unit is at the center of our society, and the breakdown of the family has been hugely detrimental. We need to remember that capitalism is the greatest force for economic good in the history of the world and socialism belongs in the ash-heap of history. We need to remember these things because our freedoms and the country we love can be lost forever. The values that made America great can go away, and there are those among us who want them to go away.

This challenge is much bigger than politics, and the solution is not political. It requires us—every one of us—to stand up and fight and to say without reservation or fear that we will not give up on America or the plans of our Founders. We will not stop fighting for our future.

If we want America to be great in the future, we must reject the politically correct attempts to rewrite our history, and we must reject the leftwing attempt to slander the greatness of our ideals. America is, in fact, the greatest country in the history of the world, and we should not be embarrassed to say so. We should proclaim it proudly. America is the greatest country in the history of the world.

I fear the values that I grew up with—the ones my tough-love mom taught me—are becoming a way of the past, but I believe these values, these virtues can and should be part of our country's future.

I love it when my grandkids pray before eating, recite the Pledge of Allegiance, ask to visit military museums, join the Boy Scouts, thank police officers and soldiers for their service, and place their hand over their heart when they hear the National Anthem. I hope they memorize the Declaration of Independence and the 23rd Psalm, become Eagle Scouts, have crummy-paying teenage jobs with unreasonable bosses, and get benched in sports for not trying hard enough. Also, I pray they consider a life of military service—one already wants to be a paratrooper—and are lucky enough to marry a wonderful person and have enough kids to worry about how to pay for college.

Maybe my grandkids will complain about parents being way too strict. Maybe they will complain about demanding teachers and bosses not caring what they think. Maybe they will complain about screaming drill sergeants, difficult degrees, restrictive banks, and life not being fair. If so, I will smile and say: ''That's great; America is back.'' Then, I will know my grandsons have the opportunity to do something worthwhile with their lives, like build a loving family, successful career, thriving community, better country, and better world.

In the meantime, I will keep fighting. I ran for public office to fight for the country I was raised in because that is the country our children and our grandchildren deserve. They deserve what my mom gave me—a free country with unlimited potential for every citizen. I hope everyone will join me in this fight.

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

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

NOMINATION OF FRANK WILLIAM VOLK

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I rise today in strong support of the nomination of Frank W. Volk to be the U.S. district court judge of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of West Virginia.

I want to thank my colleagues in the Senate for putting partisanship aside and recognizing the importance of confirming qualified judges to our Federal courts.

Frank Volk's cloture vote earlier today cleared this body by a 90-to-0 vote without a single dissenting vote. Let me repeat that—90 to 0. How many times have we seen that happen in this body? That is a testament to Judge Volk's judicial experience, stellar record, and his qualifications to become a U.S. district court judge.

I would also like to acknowledge Frank's work in West Virginia as a tireless public servant to both our State and the Nation. He has conveyed time and again his love and desire to serve our Nation and particularly our great State of West Virginia. He has served with honor throughout his career and is willing to step up to the plate one more time. He shows the country how West Virginians act and serve.

I would also like to thank his family, including his wife, Angie, and his two children, Garrett and Lauren, for their tremendous support of Frank and his continued work as a public servant. He is a proud Italian person, like myself.

He is currently the chief judge of the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of West Virginia, where he has worked since he was appointed in October of 2015.

As a WVU College of Law graduate and editor-in-chief of the West Virginia Law Review, Frank's resume is extremely impressive.

He continues to give back to his education. He has taught part time at WVU College of Law for almost 15 years. He has taught courses in Federal civil rights, advanced torts, bankruptcy, and advanced bankruptcy. It is great to see a fellow Mountaineer succeed in their profession, and I look forward to seeing his career continue.

He has also authored a number of bankruptcy articles and spoken at national and regional conferences on bankruptcy matters, along with being a faculty member for the Federal Judicial Center.

Judge Volk is admitted to practice in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit, the U.S. District Court of the Southern District of West Virginia, the West Virginia bar, and the Pennsylvania bar.

During his career, Frank has worked with a number of esteemed judges: Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals Judge M. Blane Michael, district judges Charles H. Haden II and previously John T. Copenhaver, Jr. Frank is also a permanent member of the Fourth Circuit Judicial Conference.

Frank has contributed volunteer service to the American Bankruptcy Institute for many years. He served most recently as the coordinating editor for the ABI Journal, focusing on the ''Problems in the Code'' column.

Even with all of those accolades, Frank knows and understands the value of hard work because he is a West Virginian through and through, and that is just what we do.

The Federal bench that serves West Virginia needs judges who are thoughtful, hard-working, and have good judgment. Frank fits that role. Frank brings such a great level of experience to the bench. I can safely say I am pleased that President Trump has nominated him to be a U.S. district court judge on the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of West Virginia. I think we all will be served well by Frank's service.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, the most sacred, the most important, and the most profound responsibility that a President of the United States has is to keep Americans safe. Everything else that we care about—the citizens of this great Nation, the best Nation in the planet—matters very little if our physical safety and the physical safety of our families and our loved ones aren't assured. That is job No. 1 for the President of the United States.

I believe the President has likely committed offenses that are worthy of impeachment, and I think it is likely that information is going to emerge from the House's inquiry that would present Republicans with clear evidence that the President's abuse of office has been serious.

Obviously, we need to wait for the articles of impeachment to arrive in the Senate—if they do arrive—before any of us decide our vote on removal, but the publicly stipulated facts already surrounding the President's shadow foreign policy designed not to advance the national interests but his personal political interests are damning.

So far, my Republican friends have rallied to the President's side, despite public opinion moving pretty quickly against the President and in favor of an inquiry in the House. So today I want to use my time on the floor to ask just a simple question of my Republican colleagues. I want to ask what the costs are to the physical safety of the Nation of continuing to protect the President from the consequences of his misdeeds because as we gather in the Senate for our fall session, we are watching American national security policy go completely and fully off the rails. Our global reputation and our credibility have been shattered to pieces, and no one knows whether they can be reassembled. Our Nation's defenses have never been weaker. Our enemies are gathering strength by the day. Fear of American power is waning. Our global system of alliances is falling apart. Our friends are turning away from America because we are a demonstrably unreliable partner, and those friends may never come back.

Right now, before our eyes, American power is in a free fall, and our Nation's safety is at risk. American citizens are looking to this place for leadership, but when they lift up the hood looking for steely-eyed patriots, all they are finding are blind partisans. What is the cost, I ask my colleagues, of letting America continue to slide into global irrelevancy? How many American lives are going to be ultimately lost because we sat on the sidelines and we let American influence fade as our President becomes a toxic commodity, the butt of jokes, and an international pariah? What must it take for this body to put aside party and come together to salvage our shrinking American security?

I want to take a few moments—a few more than I normally take when I come down to the floor—to take my colleagues on a tour of the world right now just so everybody understands how dangerous the situation has gotten, to understand just how broad the scope of our foreign policy dysfunction is right now, because just maybe—maybe—if you see the crisis all in one map, all in one summary, my colleagues might wake up to the magnitude of this emergency.

It is hard to start anywhere but in the Ukraine. The power of the American executive branch has no equal. No individual in the world has more power than Donald Trump has today. That power comes with responsibility and guardrails.

The one firm promise that a President must make to those he governs is to use the powers of the Oval Office for the national interest and not for his personal or financial interest. But it is now clear beyond a reasonable doubt after all this testimony—much of it from Republicans before the House—that President Trump has turned our support for Ukraine into a personal poker chip to be cashed in in order to get Ukraine to help him destroy his political rivals. This just isn't allowed in a democracy.

The damage done by Trump's corruption of the Ukraine relationship is far beyond this broken covenant with the American people. He pulled essential assistance to Ukraine just when their new President needed U.S. support the most. Trump has weakened Ukraine dramatically by pulling them into this mess, and Russia is the beneficiary. Make no mistake—Putin has won for the time being, and those fighting for democracy have lost for the time being, sold out by their fair-weather American friends who are more interested in destroying the President's political opponents than supporting Ukraine.

Now, other nations on Russia's and China's periphery, wondering whether to simply acquiesce to the bullying dominance of their neighbors or put up a fight for independence, now are less likely to do the latter, knowing that the United States is there only to help if their nation fulfills our President's personal requests.

The world's eyes this week are down here in Syria, where the President has engaged in one of the worst, most abominable acts of double-cross in the history of the American Presidency. We convinced the Kurdish military to fight ISIS forces for us. We convinced them to take down their defense against a potential Turkish invasion because we promised to protect them. And then, out of nowhere, a week and a half ago, Trump stabbed the Kurds in the back. He announced the pullback of our forces and invited by press release the Turkish army to march into Syria and destroy our ally, the Kurds, whom today he has denigrated by telling the world that they are not actually as good fighters as everybody says they are.

The damage to our Nation's security done by this one single act is almost too comprehensive to list in one speech. ISIS detainees have escaped their jail cells and are now likely reconstituting and possibly readying new attacks against the United States. They can plot without fear of interruption because the Kurds have ended their fight against ISIS to try to survive this Turkish offensive.

Now, in addition to ISIS, Russia, the Syrian regime, and the Iranians all grew stronger in Syria overnight as we stood down, and they will quickly reap the benefits of Trump's abandonment of the Kurds. It is a nightmare in Syria today, and it is going to get much worse before it gets better.

Let's move down to China, where President-for-life Xi Jinping has been steadily consolidating power, building a model of totalitarian control that denies basic human rights to its population of 1.4 billion. The United States has watched from the sidelines as China not only conducts cultural genocide against its Muslim population in its own country but also grows its global clout and exports its model and technology of repression around the world.

China's military continues to gain in strength and push their unlawful territorial claims further in the Western Pacific. We do virtually nothing. China's Belt and Road Initiative is forging

linkages across the globe, building foundations for long-term technological, economic, and strategic dominance.

The United States stands on the sidelines under the Trump administration. The sum total of our bilateral interactions thus far with China has been a bungled, disastrous, job-killing trade war. It is a trade war that really only made sense in Trump's campaign speeches but never had a chance to succeed without the help of other potential partners that the President never tried to enlist.

Every single day, Trump is losing the trade war badly. Our trade deficit with China isn't going down; it is going up. The tariffs on Chinese imports could cost middle-class American consumers $1,000 a year, and our economy has slowed down and is on its way to potentially losing 300,000 jobs because of the trade war. It is an unmitigated economic disaster for our Nation, and this nightmare, like all the others, seems to be getting worse. All the while, China forges ahead to corner the market on next-generation technologies like 5G, drones, and artificial intelligence, leaving America and American companies potentially shut out of these markets.

Nowhere has China's heavyhanded repression been more apparent than right here in Hong Kong. Yet again, we have been totally absent. In Hong Kong, brave, pro-democracy protesters should be seen as America's best friends—Chinese people who are risking everything to fight for basic freedoms in an increasingly totalitarian state. There is no better way to undermine China's unfair trade model than to promote the rights of its consumers and its citizens. But Trump promised the Chinese regime that he would offer no support to the Hong Kong protesters—an unconscionable promise that he has kept—while China runs circles around him on trade talks.

Staying in Asia, let's run right up the road to the most immediate and terrifying existential threat: a nuclear-armed homicidal dictator with the capacity and willingness to nuke us and our allies in the region—North Korea. A lot of ink has been spilled on the pomp and circumstance of Trump's summits and the ongoing love affair that he claims with Kim Jong Un, but what has actually been the result of nearly 3 years of Trump's North Korean diplomacy besides stroking his ego? The answer is nothing. Kim continues to fire missiles into the Sea of Japan. He continues to quietly build his nuclear stockpile. Even the freeze on nuclear long-range missile tests is temporary, and the North Koreans are warning they might resume that at the end of the year.

Meanwhile, we abandoned the South Koreans, we canceled our joint military exercises, and we nearly withdrew our troops entirely. Kim got international recognition and essentially a free pass to keep building his arsenal and making it more deadly while we weakened all of our regional alliances. America and the world are dramatically less safe right now.

All over the world, in fact, dictators and would-be dictators are racking up stunning records of human rights abuses right now because they know that under President Trump, America will really raise no issue and no protests.

Go down here to the Philippines, for instance, where there have been 20,000 people who have vanished in the extrajudicial massacres by President Duterte. No protests from the United States, and 20,000 have vanished.

Thousands of political dissidents are being locked up in places like Turkey, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia—these are supposed U.S. allies—and have no one to speak for them because America now doesn't do anything about civil rights or human rights. We have vanished from the human rights playing field.

In Saudi Arabia, in fact, their leadership felt so emboldened by Trump's embrace of brutal strongmen that they kidnapped an American resident who was critical of the Saudi regime. They chopped him to pieces, and then they got rid of the body parts. The dots are piling up in the Middle East. The response from the United States to Jamal Khashoggi's murder was a visit to Riyadh by the American Secretary of State for a smiling photo op to make sure that every foreign leader in every corner of the world recognized that human rights abuses would be forgiven pretty immediately by this new American regime.

Elsewhere in the Middle East—I don't know that I can just keep on piling up more and more dots, but elsewhere in the Middle East, things are falling apart fast due mostly to the Trump administration's incompetence. It started with this nonsensical fracture of relations between Saudi Arabia and another key U.S. Gulf ally, Qatar. It was the kind of disruption that, frankly, would normally be papered over and fixed by a competent U.S. administration probably in days, but 3 years later, the two countries—Saudi Arabia and Qatar—still aren't talking, largely because we did nothing to fix it. Making matters worse, Saudi Arabia and their one remaining friend in the region, UAE, aren't getting along now either.

Under Trump, the war in Yemen began to rage out of control. Tens of thousands of innocent Yemenis, many of them little children, died needlessly as Trump piled more weapons and more bombs into the war and did really nothing to try to find a peace agreement between the parties who for a year had been begging the United States to step in and play a traditional role as mediator. The conflict has raged on for so long due to Trump's unwillingness to use America's diplomatic muscle that events on the ground have become so chaotic that the Saudis and the Emiratis have now parted ways. Now, with the Qataris, the Saudis, and the Emiratis all on different wavelengths, the potential for proxy wars between these wealthy nations could get much worse all over the Middle East.

In Iran, right next door, the campaign of blind escalation and provocation has been disastrous. Every one of the President's national security advisors told him to stay in the Iran nuclear agreement and focus his energies on addressing Iran's other malevolent behavior in the region, like their ballistic missile program or their support for terrorist organizations. Trump ignored all his advisors, like he has ignored all the rest of the counsel he has received on major foreign policy matters, and he canceled the agreement and implemented a series of unilateral sanctions against Iran. He coordinated with absolutely no one.

Now, Iran, feeling cornered but also not feeling particularly vulnerable, given the fact that America couldn't recruit any of our friends to our new anti-Iran campaign, hit back against oil tankers, American drones, and Saudi pipelines. We now seem perpetually on the precipice of war with Iran. Meanwhile, they have restarted parts of their shuttered nuclear program. We haven't convinced a single nation to help us build new sanctions, and there is absolutely no chance that Trump is going to secure a better deal than the JCPOA before he leaves office in just over a year.

Iran is a bigger menace than before he took office. They just scored another major victory with Trump's abandonment of the Kurds, and an anti-Iran coalition that the United States methodically built under Barack Obama has vanished, perhaps never again to be resurrected.

In this very red region of the world right now, the only leader who has been happy with Trump's dangerous, bizarre, nonstrategy on Iran has been Benjamin Netanyahu, but he may not be in power much longer, and his alliance with Trump has left his successor a frightening legacy. Under Trump's watch, the two-state solution in Israel—a longtime bipartisan lynchpin of American policy in the Middle East—has effectively fallen apart.

Trump has allowed Israel to take steps that make a future Palestinian state almost impossible. For 3 years, he has put his son-in-law—whose only experience was using his father's money to buy real estate—in charge of brokering peace between Israel and the Palestinians. It was a joke. Everybody knew it, but since Trump was President, everybody had to play along. Now there is no peace plan. There was never going to be a peace plan, and the chances for one are almost nonexistent after 3 years of the Trump administration.

Down in Libya, Trump admittedly inherited a pretty miserable situation, but somehow, like everything else, he managed to make it worse. The country has been fractured for years, as

rival militias with a host of foreign patrons have been fighting a civil war that has created a vacuum that has been filled in by extremists and a migrant crisis that continues to expand. But instead of doing the hard work of diplomacy to try to get the warring parties back to the table, instead, Trump threw his support—his personal support—behind General Haftar, upending years of American diplomacy and endorsing Haftar's plan to try to take Tripoli by force. As a result, the fighting there continues, peace talks are failing, and the humanitarian crisis grows by the day.

One of the consequences of this Trump death spiral in Libya and the Middle East is that the economic and political refugees continue to flow into Europe, which simply isn't politically ready to accept this rate of inflow, and by slashing the number of refugees allowed in the United States from over 100,000 to 18,000, we have communicated to the Europeans that we have no interest in helping. Just like everything else, Trump has made the assimilation of the Muslim immigrants into Europe even harder by serving as a model for racist, xenophobic demagogues, and rightwing nationalist political parties who want to bring Trump's form of political nativism into Europe.

Nationalist political parties are on the rise all across the West, and Trump is absolutely central to their development. He gravitates not toward Angela Merkel, whose courageous leadership has held the EU together through all these crises, but he hews to Viktor Orban, who has stoked the embers of nationalism to take Hungary down a dark path. Trump and his nationalist compatriots weaponize these fears of immigration and cultural change to justify really bad policies—from labeling journalists as enemies of the state to putting kids in cages. And when rightwing groups try to copy Trump's success and deploy his playbook in countries all throughout Europe, he doesn't stand up and object, as the leader of the free world should; he offers a wink and a nod or sometimes a warm embrace.

Trump doesn't stop there in his deliberate attempts to undermine European democracy. He has carried out a systematic, purposeful campaign to weaken the European Union and NATO. By now, we have all grown used to Trump's attacks on globalism, but it is still pretty extraordinary that we have a President who just doesn't attack the specific institutions he loathes, such as the U.N., the EU, or NATO; he levies regular broadsides against the entire concept of global cooperation. He sees multilateralism as a weakness, and his cheerleading of Britain out the door of the EU and his constant attacks on NATO, even to the point of wondering out loud if the United States would defend allies if attacked risks taking down the entire post-World War II order. That would be a disaster for us and a gift to countries like China, Russia, India, and nonstate actors such as al-Qaida and ISIS.

When it comes to our relations with Europe, Trump reserves his greatest multilateral animus for global attempts to address climate change. The Paris Agreement wasn't even a binding commitment on the United States, but Trump felt so strongly that climate change was a Chinese-perpetrated hoax—unwind that riddle for me—that he pulled us out of the agreement in a big, grand, festive ceremony at the White House.

Global climate catastrophe is coming if we don't do anything. In fact, it is already here. The story of Syria's descent into madness can partially be told through the tale of successive global warming-connected droughts that forced farmers into overcrowded cities that weren't ready for those population surges. Trump's hostility to climate action is one of his most unforgiveable global legacies, and the next President may not have enough time or political capital to make up the ground we have lost on climate change, especially with European partners.

Speaking of failure to capitalize on opportunities, let's spin the globe back to our own hemisphere, where, according to the script, things couldn't be going much worse. Here in the Americas everything that Trump has touched thus far has fallen apart, and the United States is weaker regionally than ever before.

Trump's nativism is his political calling card, but his own policies seem to encourage more migration to the United States, not less of it. President Trump's decision to cut off foreign assistance to Central American countries because they weren't doing enough to stop migration is lunacy. President Obama's program of investing in Central American security so that less of their citizens felt the need to flee to America was beginning to work, and Trump gave it all away simply to provide fuel to his domestic political agenda.

Further south, U.S.-Venezuela policy is one of the few times Trump's Presidency stood up to a dictator. Unfortunately, because Trump doesn't know how to do foreign policy, he botched that intervention too. It has been really embarrassing to watch this administration repeatedly and wrongly claim that the Maduro regime is on the verge of collapse. They did it in January, when Juan Guaido swore himself in as interim President. They did it again in February, when they said deploying American aid along the border would trigger the regime's fall, and they did it again in April in a lead-up to a military uprising that went nowhere. The White House has engaged in tough talk only to see Maduro's hold on power endure.

Trump played all his cards on this crisis right in the first few days, like a nervous teenager. Now we are left sanctioning the Venezuelan people and recognizing a leader of the country who isn't really the leader of that country and probably isn't going to be the leader of that country. It is yet another failure that makes us look weak and foolish. We make a play and can't back it up. It is hard to be scared of the United States when everything we try to do goes wrong.

Let's move back over to the African Continent for a moment. Now, as a candidate, Trump repeatedly stoked fears of the Ebola epidemic in West Africa, tweeting that the United States ''must immediately stop all flights from EBOLA infected countries or the plague will start to spread inside our borders!'' Of course, this didn't make any sense, and it doesn't make any sense now. We have known for ages that travel bans aren't actually the best way to deal with an outbreak of disease, but since he has become President, the Trump administration has asked Congress to rescind $252 million that had been put aside to deal with the virus. He ousted the NSC's top biodefense expert and repeatedly sought to slash funding for global health programs. Sadly, Trump's default response to epidemics and barriers of exclusion, defunding preventive measures, and opting to feed panic rather than deploy an orderly response that is driven by science and led by scientists only hurts our ability to control outbreaks that are present today and in the future.

Finally, Denmark. Trump managed to even screw up our relationship with Denmark, which many of us would have thought was impossible. Out of an episode of ''The Simpsons,'' Trump canceled a diplomatic meeting with Denmark's leader because they wouldn't agree to sell us Greenland. It sounds funny, but it is an example of the relatively small things compared to the big world screw-ups that happen every day that only get a few days of media attention.

Denmark is one of our strongest NATO allies. At the height of the war in Afghanistan, they had one of the highest numbers of troops per capita fighting alongside us. They hold the key to blocking a Russian gas pipeline that could avoid Ukraine, damaging their economy, and come into Europe, but now we have managed to even make Denmark an adversary. I know it sounds implausible, but this is just the tip of the iceberg. It is a policy massacre everywhere. The world is on fire, and in most places Trump is one of the arsonists. Meanwhile, who is benefiting? Across the board, America's enemies and our competitors are rubbing their hands with delight as we score own goal after own goal. Putin, Xi, Erdogan, Kim, the hard-liners in Iran, could not have scripted a better opportunity to gain power for themselves at our expense.

I say that Trump's foreign policy is a global joke, but calling what he does policy is probably unfair. He doesn't really care to take the time to learn about the world. He doesn't read his

briefings. He makes it up day by day, with his personal political priorities, his jealousies, and his headline addiction guiding his decisions rather than anything connected to our actual national security interests. Our foreign policy is in complete, utter, total meltdown, and it is time for all of us to face facts.

You can't impeach a President because you disagree with their policies, but this is beyond a policy disagreement. This is a President who has compromised our Nation's integrity and our credibility, who has put in jeopardy the safety of our citizens, especially as ISIS breaks out of detainment and looks to regroup to threaten America again in Syria.

These kinds of things—the perversion of the powers of the Presidency—are not allowed in a democracy. Our refusal to accept this kind of behavior is what separates us from all the tin-pot dictatorships around the world.

I hope, eventually, my Republican colleagues see this, but I also want my Republican colleagues who spend their time thinking of themselves as bulwarks of national security to see the damage, much of it irreparable, that Trump is doing to our position in the world. Why continue to offer him this unconditional protection from an impeachment inquiry if the cost of his staying in office is the shattering of our reputation around the world?

Why continue to defend him if his actions everywhere are causing the world to fall apart—and it is falling apart in every part of the globe. Everything this administration has touched has gotten worse. The scariest part is that this President and this administration still have 14 more months to do even more damage.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). The Senator from Oklahoma.

TURKEY AND SYRIA

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, let me take you back to December 2016. We are all getting ready for Christmas. It is a month after President Trump is elected. He will not take his office for another month after that, but in Turkey they are reeling from a coup attempt that happened in October. Hundreds of people were killed—chaos. Turkish President Erdogan overreacted, locking up hundreds of thousands of people, including one of our pastors, Pastor Andrew Brunson, and implementing martial law, which was kept in place for years after that. Rapidly changing the Constitution, he has transitioned himself from a President duly elected and operating a free democracy that has been Turkey to radically changing the direction of the country in the future. A long-term NATO ally is going through real turmoil.

In October that coup happened, and all the transition was occurring, but by December, as I mentioned before, they were rocked again. On December 17, 2016, a bus was stopped at a red light near a campus in Turkey when a car bomb exploded, killing members of the Turkish military. Thirteen people were killed and 55 were wounded in that blast. Forty-eight of those killed and wounded were off-duty military personnel, most of them privates and corporals.

The same day, at another location in a different part of that community, still in Turkey, there was a soccer stadium attack that happened. In that attack, 44 people died and more than 150 people were wounded. Three days later—actually two days after that, December 19, 2016, the Russian Ambassador to Turkey was assassinated in Ankara while he was giving a public speech.

Most Americans don't know this because we were getting ready for Christmas, and we were watching the transition of President Obama to President Trump. There was a lot of chaos that was happening in that region at that time. I happened to be in Turkey when all of that was going on, meeting with Turkish officials, trying to negotiate for the release of Andrew Brunson, working toward our ongoing relationship and trying to figure out what direction Turkey was going to go because they have been a longstanding ally to the United States and a NATO partner, but they certainly were not acting like it in 2016, and now, in 2019, they are certainly not acting like it.

The car bombs I mentioned and the terrorist actions that happened might surprise some Americans to know weren't led by ISIS fighters fighting in Turkey. The innocents who were killed that day were killed by Kurdish terrorists—Kurdish folks who had been listed in the U.S. listing of official terrorist organizations, a group called the Kurdistan Workers Party, or the PKK—the abbreviation in that language. The PKK has been listed as a terror organization by the United States for decades.

Let me give some context. In the course of the dialogue I have heard in the last couple of weeks about the Kurds and about the Turks, everyone wants to seem to oversimplify this issue. Everyone wants to say who are the good guys and the bad guys, and they are missing the point in the history of what is happening in this region.

The Kurds have 25 million people. It is the fourth largest ethnic group in the Middle East. They live mostly in Turkey, Iraq, Syria, Iran, and Armenia. They have all different political parties, and they have all different backgrounds. For over a century, they have worked to have their own nation.

Interestingly enough, after World War I and all of the changes on the map after World War I, the Kurds were promised their own country, the country of Kurdistan, because they were a minority population for a long time in that region. So they worked for and pressed for their own country during that time period. Yet, when the boundaries were drawn at the end of World War I, after they had been promised that they would have their homeland, instead, a larger Turkey was drawn, and the Kurds were just listed as a minority group inside of Turkey.

They face incredible persecution within Turkey. They are not allowed to call themselves Kurds. Instead, they are called mountain Turks in that area. They are not allowed to wear certain garb, and they are not allowed to practice their customs. They are oppressed in every area. They have worked for a long time and have asked: How can we have a free people's area?

For the Kurds who live in northern Iraq, it is one of the freest areas in all of the Middle East. They have the freedom of religion and a free capitalist economy. It is a thriving economy in northern Iraq. They have democratically led elections, and they worked with us to overthrow Saddam Hussein after Saddam Hussein gassed thousands of Kurds to death in that Kurdish region of Iraq. They were gassed by Saddam Hussein. They have been forced out of their homes and have been isolated, and for decades, they have worked to have a free country.

In 2017, the Kurds who were in northern Iraq had their own referendum to be able to establish their own place. They made a bold move and said: The world will not acknowledge us; so we will acknowledge ourselves. So, in a bold referendum in September of 2017, 90 percent of the Kurds voted to form their own country out of northern Iraq. Quickly, the Iraqi Government moved into that zone and squashed them.

In the middle of the conflict that we have talked about before with ISIS, ISIS moved into areas in Syria and in Iraq and pressed in against the Kurds in order to attack them. When the Kurds were not able to establish their homeland, ISIS was determined to establish its own caliphate and its own land by beheading people and by murdering thousands of people. As they moved into the Kurdish area, the Turks on the other side of the border simply watched the refugees flee across the border, for ISIS was not killing Turks. It was killing Kurds, and they didn't care. The Turks would handle the refugees as long as ISIS was doing their bidding in Syria.

You see, this is a complicated issue for us because there are sections of the Kurds that have fought for democracy for decades. Many of them have been doing it in exactly the right way—in having referendums, in organizing and working with U.N. officials, and in working with the countries around them to demographically establish an area in which they would be free to live and to worship and to function in a capitalist economy. That has been the Kurds' desire. There has also been an offshoot of the Kurds, called the PKK, that has for decades carried out car bombs and attacks, many of them in Turkey, where hundreds of civilians have been killed.

President Erdogan, of Turkey, has determined that all Kurds are the same and has ruthlessly lashed out at them. Now, I think about how we operated in Afghanistan and how differently the United States really thought about military warfare. As the Taliban and al-Qaida rose up in Afghanistan, we engaged in the most Surgical way we possibly could with violent Taliban members and with members of al-Qaida and took the battle specifically to them while we established a friendship and a longstanding partnership with the Afghan people.

We don't look at all Afghans in the same way, in some blanket declaration. We understand that there is a violent faction that has to be addressed for world peace and that there are others who just want their children to grow up and go to school.

We have engaged them in a way that is very different than how Turkey is currently engaging them in the Turkish population. As the battle raged in Syria and finished out with the civil war in Syria and the fight with ISIS off the Kurdish areas, everyone knew, when this calmed down, that at some future date, the Turks would start going after the Kurds. It has been known for years. In fact, in 2016, when I was in Ankara, Turkey, at that point in December, and watched all of this chaos occur, that was the ongoing dialogue among Turkish leaders at that time—that they were going to go after the Kurds. Over and over, this has been the repetitive statement to the administration and, quite frankly, to the previous administration.

In a series of phone calls in which President Erdogan talked to President Trump and said, ''We are crossing the border and going in,'' it left President Trump in a very difficult situation. Does he leave our American men and women—a very small number—in a forward operating base to sit there while tanks roll by and the battle rages between the Kurds and the Turks? Do we use them as some kind of tool to try to stop this? Do we get out of harm's way?

Secretary Esper just made a statement last weekend that was very clear: The Turks didn't ask permission to cross the border. They said, ''We are coming,'' and notified us in advance so that if we wanted to move out of the way, we could, but either way, they were coming.

We have moved our forces into other areas and combined them into bases. Just recently, within the last couple of days, when the Turks started getting closer to our combined forces in northern Syria, we responded by putting up Apache helicopters and F–16s in order to fly by the Turks and say: Don't you dare come near American forces. At the same time, we are trying to do everything that we can and should in order to stop the bloodshed between two allies.

I have been amazed at the number of people who have stepped up and said that President Trump is to blame for all that is happening with the Kurdish people and the Turks. They have ignored the basic history of what has happened in that region for a very long time—for over a century—with regard to the ongoing battle between the Kurds and the Turks. We should do everything we can to push back on this, because, for a large group of the Kurdish population, especially those in northern Iraq, they have been very close allies and friends and tenacious fighters against Saddam Hussein. They left their own place of safety in northern Iraq to help us fight the fight in Syria—to protect other Kurdish people, yes, but also to help protect the entire world from the ruthless nature of ISIS.

We should engage and do what we can to help stop the bloodshed. As I mentioned before, when we moved into Afghanistan, we did it as surgically as we could. When Turkey moved into the Kurdish regions, it unleashed artillery fire against civilians and pummeled homes and businesses in the Kurdish towns of people who meant them no harm as they crossed the border into Syria.

So what do we do? How do we respond in the days ahead? There are a few things I would bring up. One is the ''what I wish.''

I wish the administration had been more clear with Turkey and her leaders and would have said: If you do this, it is not that we will impose sanctions, but here is exactly what the sanctions will be. We need you to know it, and it is going to happen as rapidly as possible.

I wish that we would have moved all of the ISIS fighters out of the region. There are ISIS fighters who are currently imprisoned in northern Syria who are waiting to return back to their home countries, for many of them are foreign fighters from other places. Yet their home countries are not willing to take them back. So they are currently imprisoned in Syria. I wish, before the Turks crossed the border, that we would have done more to help to protect those prisoners and make sure they didn't get freed. Many of them did get freed, and the entire region will suffer the consequences of some very bad actors who will get back to the battlefield again because of that.

I wish there had actually been coordination. Clearly, the administration did not coordinate with the State Department, the Department of Defense, and with other Kurdish leaders with regard to what was happening in the region and did not make sure we were securing those fighters and preparing for that moment. Instead, it was a rapid transition and a hurried process to move Americans out of harm's way in between two allies who were fighting each other and to try to shift them to other places and be able to stabilize them in those locations. There have been a lot of hurried responses that could have been done differently but were not.

The ''now whats'' are pretty clear, though.

President Trump has launched out and stated very clearly that there will be strong sanctions against military leaders within the Turkish Army and the key leaders in the government. He will try to put sanctions down as rapidly as possible on those individuals.

He has also announced a 50-percent steel tariff on Turkey. You may say that it is no big deal, except for the fact that steel is a major export for Turkey, and it is a punishing tariff on it as a country.

He has also started laying down additional sanctions on Turkey and has said all of the trade agreements and conversations are currently at a standstill. Turkey's economy is on the razor's edge because Erdogan has so mismanaged its economy for so many years.

We have no beef with the Turkish people, but, currently, Turkey is being led by a leader who is leading their country into economic ruin and leading their military across foreign borders to haphazardly kill civilians. We should not tolerate that, and we should engage. We should make it very clear that there will be consequences.

We should work with the U.N., as we already have started, and be more aggressive, by which, if there is someone to stand between two warring parties, it will be the U.N. peacekeepers who will do that, not American men and women who are sitting out there in a forward operating base.

We should continue to sanction Turkish banks—those banks that did business with Iran. When Iran was sanctioned, Turkey continued to do business with some of those banks. We should increase our sanctions there.

We should be extremely clear that Turkey will not get access to the F–35s. I cannot imagine how much stronger the response of the American people would be right now if it were American F–35s that were flying across the Syria-Turkey border to bomb our own allies the Kurds. We should make it very clear that there is no foreign military sales to Turkey, and we should continue to cut them off.

We have to be clear in the consequences. We have to be rapid in the response because, right now, people are dying in northern Syria. Those same families and those same individuals put their own lives on the line to stand up against ISIS, and they stood with us in multiple areas. They have a great propensity toward freedom and toward democracy, which desperately need to grow in the Middle East.

The chaos that is ensuing is the chaos of war. It is the pain of over a century of the mismanagement of this entire region. We need to stop the bloodshed first and continue to negotiate with every possible lever that we can to make sure we can bring a sense of calm to the chaos that is starting and do so with the greatest pressure on the Turks and on President Erdogan, who clearly hasn't gotten the message yet as to what the will of the American

people and this Congress really involves.

This is a changing situation. It is not simple, but it is one about which I will come back and try to inform in every way that I can. In order to bring justice to the process, I will encourage this body to smartly and quickly engage, to help impress upon the Turks to back off the bloodshed, and to bring war crimes against any Turk or any individual we can identify who is killing prisoners and attacking civilians.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from the Nebraska.

UNITED STATES-MEXICO-CANADA AGREEMENT

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I rise to voice my strong support for the passage of the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement, or the USMCA.

When I travel the State of Nebraska, I always hear directly from our farmers and our ag producers. Nebraska's farmers have endured some of the most challenging setbacks in recent memory. The severe flooding from last spring devastated thousands of acres of our farm and our ranch land, brought hundreds of livestock deaths, and destroyed barns, countless grain bins, hay, and critical farm equipment. This list of daunting obstacles continues to grow.

Last July, the Gering-Fort Laramie-Goshen irrigation tunnel collapsed and cut off a crucial source of surface irrigation water to the western region of our State for several weeks.

Only a few days earlier, a devastating fire broke out in a Tyson beef processing plant in Holcomb, KS. The plant processed about 6,000 head of cattle every single day. That is roughly 6 percent of the total fed cattle processing capacity in the United States.

The effects of the plant's closure rippled throughout the entire cattle industry and the beef processing chain. This is all in addition to 5 years of low commodity prices, the unfair small refinery exemptions for oil refiners, and the cloud of uncertainty over trade.

While all of these factors have caused anxiety and unpredictability, there is one solution that Nebraska's farmers, ranchers, ag producers, manufacturers, and hard-working men and women have made clear, and that is the passage of the USMCA.

Nebraska's farmers and ranchers have a different lifestyle than most people. Their patience is steadfast. They plan for the long term. They can envision how they want their land to look, not only next year but 100 years into the future. It is in their DNA, and families are fed around the world because of it.

They are optimists, but they are realists. As Secretary Perdue recently said, ''they know you can't plant in August and harvest in September.''

That is exactly right. Our producers have remained patient during these tough and turbulent times because they know that there is an opportunity for a better, long-term trade solution on the horizon.

The USMCA would replace the 25-year-old North American Free Trade Agreement, or NAFTA, and bring the deal into the 21st century, while fortifying our strong trading relationships with Canada and Mexico and growing critical market access for Nebraska.

The heart of Nebraska beats in the same rhythm as agriculture. It is who we are, and as the world knows that it is what we do better than anyone. So it is not hard to understand why our State needs this deal.

America's neighbors to the north and south are the destination of 44 percent of Nebraska's total exports. In 2017, Nebraska shipped $447 million of agricultural products to Canada and a staggering $898 million to Mexico. These exports include hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of Nebraska's high-quality corn, soybeans, ethanol, and beef.

Specifically, the USMCA maintains and strengthens those markets for corn and soybeans. It also allows U.S. beef producers to continue to grow their exports to Mexico, which have risen 800 percent since NAFTA was first ratified.

In 2018 alone, Nebraska exported over $250 million dollars of beef to both countries.

It is important to note that the benefits of the USMCA extend far beyond our farmland. Agricultural trade between Canada and Mexico supports nearly 54,000 jobs in the State of Nebraska. According to the Nebraska Department of Agriculture, Nebraska's $6.4 billion in agricultural exports in 2017 translated into $8.19 billion in additional economic activity. For the good of our State and our Nation, these markets need to be protected.

The USMCA goes even further than NAFTA. It adopts labor and environmental standards that Democrats have long advocated for. It requires that 40 to 45 percent of auto content be made by workers who earn at least $16 an hour by 2023. This will undoubtedly help close the gap in labor standards between our Nation and Mexico.

According to the U.S. Trade Representative, the deal includes new provisions to prohibit the importation of goods produced by forced labor.

The USMCA addresses violence against workers exercising their labor rights, and it ensures that migrant workers are protected under labor laws.

The deal brings labor obligations into the core of the agreement, and most importantly, it makes them fully enforceable.

On top of that, the USMCA deploys the most advanced, comprehensive set of environmental protections of any trade agreement in our Nation's history. The list of environmental protections includes first-ever articles to improve air quality, support forest management, and ensure procedures for studies on its environmental impact.

New provisions protect a variety of marine species, such as whales and sea turtles, and there are prohibitions on shark finning.

Unlike NAFTA, the USMCA provides enforcement mechanisms that will ensure that all countries not only meet but strengthen their environmental responsibilities.

Lastly, I want to point out to my Democrat colleagues the support the USMCA is receiving on both sides of the aisle.

I recently heard Tom Vilsack say this:

> I think under any evaluation, from the U.S. agriculture perspective it clearly is a better deal. So, with that our hope is that it gets done, and gets done soon.

These are not the words of some Trump administration official. These are the words of President Obama's former Secretary of Agriculture.

Here is another quote from Dan Glickman:

> We have a good agreement. We cannot let the perfect be the enemy of the good. This is a good deal for America and particularly a good deal for farmers at this vulnerable time.

Again, this isn't support from some Republican Member of Congress. This is support that is voiced by President Clinton's former Secretary of Agriculture.

What is more, all former Agriculture Secretaries since the Reagan administration have voiced their full support for the USMCA.

We have seen the headlines of endorsements, and one especially caught my attention. The title of a recent oped read: ''Democrats Should Give Trump a Win on His Trade Deal with Mexico and Canada.'' Well, this piece wasn't composed by a conservative publication. It was penned by the editorial board of the Washington Post.

Finally, a group of 14 House Democrats sent a letter to Speaker PELOSI last July urging her to take up the USMCA for a vote.

The letter reads: ''Canada and Mexico are by far our most important trading partners, and we need to restore certainty in these critical relationships that support millions of American jobs.''

Both sides of the aisle agree that the USMCA is a significant win for farmers, ranchers, ag producers, and America's economy as a whole.

Nebraska's farmers and ranchers have maintained patience in these tough times. They deserve to know without a doubt that they will continue to have access to their two largest markets and closest trading partners.

As I said earlier, farmers aren't just thinking about themselves. They are planning for the future generations that will proudly carry on their life's work and continue feeding our world.

Right now, we have an opportunity to come together around a commonsense, bipartisan agreement that will benefit the American people both now and for years to come. Now it is up to Congress to deliver.

I urge Speaker PELOSI to stop needlessly delaying this vote, and I encourage all of my Democrat colleagues not

to allow politics to stand in the way of sound policy. It is time to push the USMCA over the finish line.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. SASSE. Mr. President, first I would like to associate myself with the comments of my senior Senator about the necessity of the passage of the USMCA. The House of Representatives and the Speaker should schedule that vote immediately. There is clearly overwhelming support in both bodies for its passage.

I would also like to underscore my senior Senator's comments about the tragedy of the irrigation tunnel collapse in Nebraska and about the character of Nebraska's farmers and ranchers. They have dealt with yet another catastrophe after 81 of our 93 counties went through a state of emergency earlier this year in a flood.

I would like to just commend my senior Senator for a fine speech on a really important topic.

(The remarks of Mr. SASSE pertaining to the submission of S.J. Res. 58 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

Mr. SASSE. I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The measure will be received and appropriately referred.

The Senator from Maryland.

S.J. RES. 53

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I come to the floor to talk about S.J. Res. 53. We will have a chance to vote on that tomorrow. I am joined by my colleague from Maryland, Senator VAN HOLLEN, and my colleague on the Environment and Public Works Committee, Senator WHITEHOUSE from Rhode Island. I also want to thank Senator CARPER for his leadership as the senior Democrat on the Environment and Public Works Committee in regard to this resolution.

This resolution will be voted on tomorrow. It deals with the CRA—Congressional Review Act—vote in regard to the Trump administration's affordable clean energy rule. That is probably a misnomer. It is what I call the dirty powerplant rule. The CRA would repeal that so that we can go back to the Clean Power Plan that was promulgated under the Obama administration in 2015.

Let me explain what the Trump-era rule would do. First, it would repeal the Clean Power Plan that was issued in 2015. That plan had real results in it. It set limits on a powerplant's production of dangerous carbon. It made meaningful progress. The rule promulgated by President Trump's administration would repeal that and substitute it with a plan that would be a powerplant judgment in each powerplant—coal-burning only—and would not take into consideration the powerplant mix of individual States.

The previous rule allowed the States to figure out how to reach those goals. So a State could do a mix. They could start using natural gas. They could start using renewable energy. They could meet their goals that are set with a reduction of about one-third of these dangerous carbon emissions but with local discretion on how to reach those goals.

The rule that was promulgated that I am seeking to reverse allows only efficiency per coal powerplants, does not allow the mixing of the different technologies, and prohibits the States from pursuing market-based plans.

I am going to tell you, in my region of the country, we have what is known as REGI, which is a compact to reduce carbon emissions. We do it by energizing market forces so that we can get to friendlier sources of energy, which, by the way, has helped our region not only reduce carbon emissions but create green energy jobs, which is in our interest.

Let me point out from the beginning that the powerplants are the largest stationary source of harmful carbon emissions. Why should everybody be concerned about it? We know its impact on climate change. We have seen the harmful impacts of climate change in America, from the wildfires out West to the flooding here in the East. We have seen the problems not only in our own community but throughout the world. In my own State of Maryland, we have had two 100-year floods within 20 months in Ellicott City, MD. The list goes on and on about the impact of climate change. We see the coastal line changing in our lifetime. We are seeing regular flooding. We are seeing habitable land become inhabitable. All of that is affected by our carbon emissions, and the Obama-era Clean Power Plan did something about it. The rule that we will have a chance to vote on tomorrow would do nothing about it.

We see this as a public health risk. I can't tell you how frequently I have heard from my constituents who have someone in their family who has a respiratory illness: What can we do for cleaner air? Children are staying home from school because of bad air days. Parents are missing time from work. Premature deaths. All that is impacted by clean air.

I talk frequently about the Chesapeake Bay. I am honored to represent the Chesapeake Bay region in the U.S. Senate, along with Senator VAN HOLLEN, and we treasure the work that has been done. It has been an international model of all the stakeholders coming together in order to clean up the Chesapeake Bay, and we are making tremendous progress on dealing with the sorts of pollution coming from runoff or from farming activities or development. But, quite frankly, we have not been successful in dealing with airborne pollutants that are going into the Chesapeake Bay.

In Maryland, we are a downwind State. We need a national effort here. Maryland could be doing everything right, but if the surrounding States are not, we suffer the consequences. That is why the Clean Power Plan was so attractive in dealing with this issue, because it dealt with it with national goals. Establish how to attain them by the local governments. That is the way it should be.

Let me give the numbers. The Clean Power Plan that is repealed by the rule under the Trump administration would have reduced dangerous carbon emission by about one-third. We believe the rule that was promulgated by the Trump administration could actually increase dangerous emissions.

Let me use EPA's regulatory impact analysis. Looking at CO_2—carbon dioxide—the Agency says that the Trump rule will reduce it by 0.7 percent. That is less than 1 percent. The Clean Power Plan issued by President Obama—19 percent. SO_2s under Trump are 5.7 percent; under the Obama rule, 24 percent. NO_X emissions under the plan that was promulgated under the Trump administration are 0.9 percent—less than 1 percent. Under the Clean Power Plan, it is 22 percent.

We really are talking about whether we are serious about dealing with dangerous carbon emissions or whether we are going to at best maintain the status quo; at worst, make things even worse.

It saddens me that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are embracing the ACE rule, since it threatens to reverse much of the progress we have made in reducing air pollution—progress their conservationist Republican predecessors helped to spur. The Clean Air Act amendments, which established the sulfur dioxide—SO_2—cap-and-trade program, were adopted in 1990. This was never a partisan issue; cap-and-trade was originally a Republican idea. George Herbert Walker Bush was President. It passed the House of Representatives by a 401-to-21 vote. It passed this body, the U.S. Senate, by an 89-to-11 vote. It has been highly successful. During George W. Bush's Presidency, the EPA determined that the SO_2 cap-and-trade program had a 40–1 benefit-to-cost ratio.

The Supreme Court held in Massachusetts v. EPA that the EPA has a responsibility to regulate these carbon emissions. So that is exactly what was done in 2015, which is now being jeopardized because of the regulation that was issued under the Trump administration.

I had a chance to serve in the State legislature. This is an affront to federalism. Innovation for green energy and jobs is prohibited under the rule that I am seeking to repeal. It is prohibited. That is why 22 States and 7 local governments have filed suit against this regulation. But we can act.

The Congressional Review Act allows us to take action in this body, and that is why I filed that so we can take action. If we allow this rule to go forward, it will delay the implementation of carbon emission reductions—delay it. If we vote for the CRA, we will be back on track.

We have already seen the U.S. leadership challenged in this area with President Trump's decision to withdraw from the Paris accord—the only nation in the world that has done so. Who has filled that void? Quite frankly, it has been China.

Do we want to cede our leadership globally to a country with a controlled government economy like China or do we want to reassert U.S. leadership? We are going to have a chance to do that tomorrow with a vote in the U.S. Senate. I urge my colleagues to support the Congressional Review Act resolution I have filed, S.J. Res. 53.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I would like to start by thanking my friend and colleague from the State of Maryland, Senator CARDIN, for bringing this resolution to the floor of the Senate—as he said, we will be voting on it tomorrow—but also for his longstanding support and efforts in trying to protect our environment, to protect the Chesapeake Bay, and to address the urgent issue of climate change, which anybody with eyes can see is already having a devastating impact on communities throughout our country and, indeed, throughout the world.

I am also very pleased to be here with our colleague, the Senator from Rhode Island, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, who has made this such an important cause and has kept the Senate focused on this pressing issue.

As Senator CARDIN indicated, under the previous administration, under the leadership of President Obama, as a country we adopted something known as the Clean Power Plan rule. This was a historic step forward. It was a blueprint to create more good-paying jobs in the clean energy sector. In fact, we have seen a tremendous growth of those jobs in the area of solar and wind power and other jobs.

That Clean Power Plan rule, under the Obama administration, also really addressed the issue of carbon pollution in the atmosphere, beginning to reduce it significantly, to offset the damage and real costs we are already experiencing in communities from that climate change.

As Senator CARDIN said, this is an area where there are huge communities, if our country moves forward, in the area of clean energy jobs. Right now, with this new Trump administration action, we are ceding the playing field to China, which is happily seizing the initiative and moving forward and creating more and more jobs in the clean energy sector. If we don't wake up, we are going to lose that important global competition in the vital sector to China, which has established a goal of dominating the area of clean energy technologies by 2025.

Instead of building on the progress of the Obama administration, on June 19, the Trump administration decided to repeal and roll back these important rules that have been put in place and substitute them with something that, in the worst case, actually makes the situation much worse than even before these Trump rules and, at the very least, is a huge retreat from the progress we were headed toward under the rules of the previous administration.

Let me just point out the analysis that was done by a very good organization called Resources for the Future. They looked at their analysis of this Trump proposal, which I agree with Senator CARDIN is better termed the ''Trump dirty power plan,'' and they concluded it would do very little, if anything, to address climate change and would have an adverse air quality impact in many of our States.

Some people may recall when the Trump version of this power plan, the ''dirty power plan,'' was released last year, people looked at the EPA's own analysis of that rule, and it showed that 1,630 of our fellow Americans would die prematurely under the Trump provisions compared to the Obama-era provisions.

So when the Trump administration released this most recent version of their amended plan back in June, they made it really difficult to put together all the data so people would not be able to connect the dots in many of these areas, but Senator CARDIN has presented some of the results of this. I want to emphasize those and put them in somewhat different terms, which is, what does the Trump rule accomplish compared to the Obama rule on some of these issues?

So with respect to carbon dioxide emissions, the Trump rule would reduce carbon dioxide emissions, carbon pollution emissions, by 2.7 percent of what the Obama administration would have done—2.7 percent of what the rule they are replacing would have done.

With respect to sulfur dioxide, the Trump plan reduces sulfur dioxide emissions by only 1.9 percent of what the Obama administration's rule would have done.

When it comes to nitrous oxide, the Trump proposal, the Trump plan, reduces nitrous oxide by only 2.5 percent compared to what the Obama provisions would have done.

If you take all of these together, you can see it is a really anemic proposal that takes us way backward compared to where we were. That is why I support Senator CARDIN's efforts on the floor, with the vote tomorrow, to say no, to say no to the Trump administration's efforts to roll back the progress on clean air, to roll back the progress on clean water because a lot of that pollution settles in places like the Chesapeake Bay, and to roll back progress on climate change, which we know is hitting our communities as we speak.

I want to give some additional Maryland examples here. The Baltimore Sun ran a story a little while back about the staggering costs that Maryland and Marylanders would have to pay to build seawalls to protect communities from sea level rise. A study from the Institute for Governance & Sustainable Development found that in the coming decades, seawalls to protect thousands of homes, businesses, and farmlands from Ocean City to Baltimore City will cost more than $27 billion—$27 billion.

We have also seen dramatic flooding in the city of Annapolis that is already hurting the Naval Academy. This past week, we just had a famous national boat show, and in the middle of this boat show, there was huge flooding in the city of Annapolis. The costs to the city and that community are rising rapidly and have been well-documented.

I ask my colleagues to support Senator CARDIN's motion. Let's not go backward. Let's not go backward in terms of protecting our air. Let's not go backward in terms of the battle against climate change because going backward means less good jobs in America, it means more dirty air and more asthma, and it means ceding this important area to China and others in the global economy.

I urge my colleagues to support the motion of Senator CARDIN.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. BLACKBURN). The Senator from Rhode Island.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the vote be extended until 4:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Seeing none, without objection, it is so ordered.

S.J. RES. 53

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I am delighted to join my colleagues from Maryland and Delaware to support this resolution expressing disapproval of the Trump administration rescinding the Clean Power Plan and replacing it with its so-called affordable clean energy rule, which is a name fanciful enough to make George Orwell blush.

The first thing to understand about the so-called affordable clean energy rule is that it is a do-nothing rule, exactly as the polluters wish. EPA admits its own rule would do virtually zero to reduce carbon pollution. It requires zero emissions reductions at natural gas-fired powerplants, and it would allow coal-fired powerplants to make minor efficiency improvements and then run for longer hours. That could actually lead to an increase in carbon pollution.

This rule is designed to fool people into thinking that the Trump administration is obeying the Clean Air Act, but no one should be fooled.

From the get-go, the Trump administration made clear it didn't care about cutting carbon pollution, fighting climate change, or protecting the environment or public health. It cared about obeying the fossil fuel industry, not the law.

Within weeks of taking office, Trump's swampy Cabinet rolled out the red carpet for coal baron Bob Murray, who had an action plan for the administration. Here is Murray with Energy Secretary Perry, and look who is accompanying Murray at the meeting, our EPA Administrator, Andrew Wheeler, then Murray's lobbyist. It looks like a friendly meeting, and why wouldn't it be? Look at that, such a nice big hug. Isn't that sweet?

Murray was the major financial backer of the Trump administration, and this was his payback time. Individuals associated with Murray Energy were the largest source of donations to Donald Trump's Presidential campaign, and Murray himself chipped in a cool 300 grand for Trump's inaugural festivities. Murray was also one of the largest donors to election spending groups associated with disgraced EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt, under whose tenure this botched ACE rule began.

So what was the first item on Bob Murray's action plan? To get rid of the Clean Power Plan. Bob Murray wasn't the only one who wanted to scrap the Clean Power Plan. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers, two of the largest and most powerful trade associations in Washington, also asked the EPA to scrap the Clean Power Plan. That is no surprise. The independent watchdog group InfluenceMap found the chamber and NAM the two worst obstructers of climate action. They will not reveal their donors, but I believe they took lots of money from the fossil fuel industry and became its mouthpiece. They got paid, and this was the play.

The chamber and NAM were also aligned with shadowy fossil fuel industry front groups like the so-called Utility Air Regulatory Group and the American Council for Clean Coal Electricity—more Orwellian names. These groups also asked the EPA to scrap the Clean Power Plan and replace it with this toothless rule.

Is that unsavory enough? It gets worse. Guess who represented UARG, that Utility Air Regulatory Group. It was none other than fossil fuel industry stooge Bill Wehrum, who helped orchestrate a web of front groups, like UARG, which obscured and multiplied the influence of Wehrum's polluter clients—clients responsible for massive carbon pollution.

Naturally, Trump put this guy in as head of EPA's Air Office. Before Wehrum headed for the exits this summer, Murray's man Wheeler praised Wehrum for ''tremendous progress'' in repealing climate regulations. Pruitt to Wheeler to Wehrum—this is rank fossil fuel crookedness in plain view.

Several of us submitted comments laying out the financial and professional connections between the Trump officials who developed this bogus rule and the fossil fuel industry that asked for it. Those comments are posted online and in the Federal Register. I urge you to have a look. Also available online is a report I did with Senator CARPER detailing Wehrum's industry ties and conflicts of interest. Median.com/@senwhitehouse will link you to all of this.

The crony capture of EPA is not the only problem with the rule. The industry is so greedy and its hacks are so clumsy that they don't bother to align the rule with the scientific and economic evidence.

In court, Agency actions will be found to be arbitrary and capricious—and therefore invalid—if they are not the product of reasoned decision making.

In this case, it is clear that the EPA ignored the science, ignored the economics, and produced exactly what the fossil fuel industry told it to do: a do-nothing rule that took good care of the coal and natural gas industries.

What does the science tell us? According to the world's best scientific report, if we reduce carbon pollution by roughly half by around 2030 and reach net zero emissions sometime around the middle of the century, we stand a chance to hold the global average temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

Our own best scientists warn that if we don't limit carbon pollution, we will be hit with economic losses in the hundreds of billions of dollars per year by the end of the century. Legions of economists, investment banks, asset managers, central banks, credit rating agencies, and other experts warn of serious economic risks from climate upheaval. Here is a summary of just some of these warnings, which I have delivered to every colleague in the Senate. That, too, can be found on that Medium page.

Pruitt, Wehrum, and Wheeler ignored all of this for their do-nothing rule. The only voice that mattered was the polluter industry that they came from and will go back to in an oil-greased revolving door. This ACE rule is the exact opposite of reasoned decision making. But that was never the point. The fix was in. Even a bogus rule that courts throw out buys this crooked and corrupting industry time—time to keep polluting, time to burn through reserves, and time to use its political muscle to fend off action here in the Senate. If you are in the fiddling business and fiddle for money, fiddling while Rome burns is a fine economic proposition for you.

The Supreme Court has ruled that greenhouse gases are pollutants under the Clean Air Act. The EPA has found that greenhouse gases from powerplants endanger human health and welfare. Those determinations mean the EPA must limit carbon pollution, consistent with the law. This masquerade of a rule fails to do this, so it must be replaced with something effective, as a matter of law.

I ask colleagues to think carefully about their vote on this resolution. Do you want to endorse this record of obvious industry capture? Do you want to side with this corrupting industry over your own constituents' health and safety? Do you want to go on record ignoring all the warnings from the Bank of England, from Freddie Mac, from Nobel Prize-winning economists, and from hundreds of our own government's most knowledgeable experts?

The fossil fuel industry—its voice full of money, as F. Scott Fitzgerald might say—has drowned out the voices of everyone else for too long here. But you can't shout down the laws of physics. You can't shout down the laws of biology, chemistry, and economics. Those laws will have their way, and we have been well warned. So, please, let's turn the corner to a brighter day where decency rules, not industry political thuggery; a brighter day where facts and science matter more than dark money and paid-for denial; and a brighter day where we don't give our grandchildren daily cause for shame. It is time to wake up, and this vote is a chance to do so.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

HONG KONG

Mr. COTTON. Madam President, as we speak, the brave people of Hong Kong are demonstrating to protect their freedoms from the Chinese Communist Party in Beijing. Chinese state TV has portrayed these millions of demonstrators as violent anarchists and separatists, but these Hongkongers are merely insisting that China live up to the promises it made to Hong Kong and the United Kingdom—promises China made as binding conditions of the transfer of sovereignty from London to Beijing.

The Chinese Government promised that Hong Kong would enjoy a high degree of autonomy, including many of the freedoms that Beijing denies to its more than 1 billion subjects on the mainland, but, as the world has learned through bitter experience, the Chinese Communist Party's promises aren't worth the paper they are written on. Slowly but surely, Beijing has chipped away at the independence it promised Hong Kong—disappearing citizens guilty of wrongthink, undermining Hong Kong's longstanding political and judicial systems, and issuing menacing threats of military intervention to crush the demonstrations.

Most Americans are rightly outraged by China's brutal crackdown in Hong Kong. Daryl Morey is one of them. He is the general manager of the Houston Rockets. Just a few days ago, he tweeted a simple and justified phrase: ''Fight for freedom. Stand with Hong Kong.''

Morey probably knew his words would offend the Chinese Communist Party, but he was also violating a different party line—that of his own league, the NBA. For daring to speak up about Hong Kong, Morey was disavowed by his team, his fellow executives, and some of the most famous

athletes in the NBA. That is because he was threatening not only the powers that be in China but the cash cow that China represents for American business, including professional basketball. China's government may be red, but its money is green, and plenty of people are willing to cash its checks, no matter the cost.

The league's biggest star, LeBron James, said that Morey's support for Hong Kong was ''misinformed'' and ''not educated.'' He reportedly called for Morey to be punished. Perhaps it is no coincidence that LeBron James stands to make billions of dollars from the Chinese market—not only from a higher NBA salary cap, shoe sales, and Nike ads, but also from his own movie company. Often known as King James, perhaps ''Chairman LeBron'' would be a better honorific today.

Joe Tsai, owner of the Brooklyn Nets, called the protest in Hong Kong a separatist movement that was trying to carve up Chinese territories like colonial powers or Imperial Japan. Perhaps it is no coincidence that Mr. Tsai is an executive at Alibaba, a Chinese company that developed a Communist propaganda app that hijacked cell phones of anyone who downloaded it.

At a Wizards game last week, security confiscated a protest sign that said simply ''Google Uighurs,'' referring to the native people of western China whose culture and religion are being exterminated by the Chinese Communist Party. That sign was not confiscated in China by the secret police but right here in America's national capital.

Steve Kerr, the head coach of the Golden State Warriors, drew a moral equivalence between Communist China and the United States. ''None of us are perfect,'' he said, ''and we all have different issues we need to get to.''

Nobody is perfect. That is what he says of an authoritarian regime that starved, shot, or beat to death 50 million of its own people on a forced march to modernity and a regime that runs a network of concentration camps in its western provinces and harvests the organs of political prisoners for its own pampered elite. Nobody is perfect, indeed.

This is craven and greedy behavior, and it stands in stark contrast to how America has historically used sports to promote our interests and our aspirations, from the triumph of Black Olympians in Hitler's Germany to the Miracle on Ice against the Soviet Union. Even our diplomatic opening to China happened in part through sports with ping-pong diplomacy.

Today, the tables have turned. China has used sports to export its authoritarian model to our soil. So far, it has found too many willing enforcers in the NBA. But it doesn't have to be this way. Commissioner Adam Silver, after a slow start, defended Daryl Morey's right to speak his mind about Hong Kong. He said: Free expression is ''what you guys stand for.''

Too many American companies kowtow to China not because they love its government but because of the tremendous pressure that government can exert on their operations. But the NBA is in a unique position. Beijing can ban an airline, or it can ban a hotel that lists Taiwan as a country in its online drop-down menu, and the Chinese people can use a different airline, or they can use a different hotel, but there is only one NBA. Beijing can't create another one.

And here is the rub: There are more than 500 million basketball fans in China. More people in China follow the NBA than there are people in the United States. No doubt Beijing has some leverage over the NBA, as it does over all businesses, but the NBA has a lot of leverage over Beijing. Is Beijing really going to ban the entire league, as they have done with the Houston Rockets, at the risk of alienating more than 500 million people who follow the league and the resultant public backlash that could create? So instead of acting as a bullhorn for Communist propaganda in America, the NBA could be a beacon of freedom in China. They could dare China to shut them out.

Let me urge all of these NBA executives and players who say they care about social justice, don't just speak out when the stakes are low for you personally or when the cause is popular among your friends; speak out now when the stakes are deadly high for millions of Hongkongers and more than a billion Chinese, including so many of your fans.

LeBron James tweeted not long ago: ''Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.'' Live out that principle consistently. There are a million Uighurs in concentration camps yearning to hear a champion who speaks out on their behalf, particularly since the NBA runs an elite training academy in proximity to those camps.

Steve Kerr never held back on expressing his opinion about our President. That is fine. That is his right as an American. But how about some outrage for the authoritarian regime in Beijing?

Joe Tsai was born in Taiwan. His fellow Taiwanese live in constant fear of meddling, attack, and subjugation by the Chinese Communist party. Are they separatists for wanting to maintain their way of life? Speak out proudly on behalf of your homeland about the true nature of the government in Beijing.

I realize it is a hard thing to ask any person. No doubt this is a harder path than the path many in the NBA are traveling at present. It would require sacrifice, and it would certainly invite the wrath of the Chinese Communist Party. But if the league used its unique leverage for freedom, millions of ordinary Chinese would surely notice, despite an army of Chinese Communist censors arrayed against them.

The NBA didn't pick this fight. It probably prefers to avoid this fight. The Chinese Communist Party wants this fight. So the choice isn't to fight or not; it is to win or lose. And perhaps alone among American businesses, the NBA has a shot to win against Beijing. And in any fight against Communists, there can only be one strategy and one policy: victory.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 5 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

S.J. RES. 53

Mr. CARPER. Madam President, I rise in support of the Congressional Review Act resolution of disapproval of the Trump administration's so-called affordable clean energy rule, which really should be called President Trump's dirty power plan or unclean energy rule.

To be clear, I believe that the Environmental Protection Agency has an urgent moral responsibility and economic imperative to reduce the global warming pollution from powerplants, which are by far the largest stationary source of carbon pollution on our planet. I also believe that those of us in Congress must act now to protect the American people from the dangers posed by poor environmental quality and the worsening impact of climate change. That is why we are holding this vote tomorrow—to send a clear message to this administration and to take a strong stand for the American people.

Truth be told, I am not typically a staunch supporter of the Congressional Review Act. It is a blunt procedural tool, and I prefer to embrace a better way to express our disapproval of the administration's failure to address one of our Nation's major sources of carbon pollution.

For Senate Democrats, this vote is about holding supporters of this shortsighted, irresponsible policy accountable for surrendering America's global leadership and for jeopardizing the health of our planet and the promise of our children's future.

Nearly 4 years ago, the Clean Power Plan set the first Federal targets to reduce carbon emissions from our Nation's powerplants. The Clean Power Plan set meaningful but achievable carbon limits for fossil fuel powerplants and gave flexibility and time for States to meet those standards. It was not a one-size-fits-all deal. It provided quite a bit of time and flexibility for States to try to figure out how they would go about meeting those standards in their own way. This administration's alternative to the Clean Power Plan—President Trump's unclean power plan—allows States to decide whether to regulate harmful emissions. At the same time, this rule will, at best, have essentially no impact on powerplant carbon emissions—no impact.

Let me say that again. At best, this rule will have essentially no impact on powerplant carbon emissions. At worst, it will increase emissions by extending these plants' lifespans and allow them to burn more coal each year.

Today our Nation's utilities are already on track to meet and surpass the emission reduction goals set by the Clean Power Plan way ahead of schedule. All the while, the vast majority of Americans are now enjoying lower utility bills, not higher utility bills, and more than 3 million Americans went to work today in the clean energy sector, which includes jobs in renewable energy generation and energy efficiency. Yes, you heard that right. There are more than 3 million jobs in the clean energy sector today.

The President's dirty power plan does not build on this progress. It does not promote affordable or clean energy. What it actually does is attempt to scam or fool the American people into believing that the EPA is doing something to stem the tide of climate change while taking us backward—backward, not forward.

By repealing and replacing the Clean Power Plan, the Trump administration is ensuring that our country forgoes a vast number of economic opportunities of the clean energy future. Instead of building on the Obama-Biden administration's forward-looking environmental standards, the Trump administration, with its dirty power plan, is refusing to see or accept that the global economy's transition to clean energy sources is already underway. Instead of mustering the political courage to lead on the issue of climate change, yet again, the Trump administration is walking away from the bold action we need to address this climate crisis.

This failure of leadership will make it all the more likely that the worsening storms and flooding, record-setting rainfall, and volatile temperatures we are already seeing all over the world will continue to be our reality.

So where do our Republican colleagues stand? Tomorrow we will find out.

Sadly, for too many of them, President Trump's dirty power plan is a sufficient plan to address carbon pollution. In truth, it is not. It is a failure of vision and a retreat from global leadership, and it is time for Congress—Democrats, Republicans, and maybe an Independent or two—to hold this administration accountable.

That is why Senate Democrats are calling for a vote on this issue. Our government needs to provide the right market signals today if we are going to create a clean energy tomorrow, and we need to take a stand for a stronger economy. We need to lead the world to act on climate change, and we need to take a stand for clean air and environmental quality.

We can do that tomorrow by standing together against President Trump's dirty power plan, and I hope a number of colleagues will join us by doing just that.

It is a false statement to say we can't have cleaner air, less threat to our planet, and create jobs. We can do both, and we need to.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to complete my remarks prior to the vote for Ambassador Barrett.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH). Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION OF BARBARA MCCONNELL BARRETT

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, a few weeks ago, I had an opportunity to come to the floor and talk about the outstanding public service of some senior U.S. marines: Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis, Secretary of Homeland Security General Kelly, and the outgoing Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Gen. Joseph Dunford. The service these gentlemen have given to their Nation includes almost 140 years of combined Active-Duty military service in the Marine Corps but also at the highest levels of government at a critical time in our Nation's history.

Men and women who are committed to the service of our Nation are continuing to follow in the footsteps of these three very impressive U.S. Marine generals who brought the Marine Corps ethos of honor, courage, and commitment to our Nation's military and to their work in government. We should all be thankful for that.

At the end of September, I had the privilege of attending the swearing-in of a member of the new team that President Trump is putting together in terms of national security, GEN Mark Milley, as the next Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, now in the position succeeding General Dunford. At the Department of Defense, we have Secretary Esper, Secretary McCarthy, the Secretary of the Army, and General Milley who have all served their country with honor and will continue to do so.

Now we are considering the nomination of Ambassador Barbara Barrett to be the next Secretary of the Air Force. In fact, we are going to be voting on her nomination in a few moments.

I want to talk about her experience and her qualifications, which are diverse and very impressive. I think she is extremely well qualified to be the next Secretary of the U.S. Air Force.

Let me provide just a bit about her background and exceptional experience. She is a private pilot, astronaut, Deputy Federal Aviation Administrator, past CEO of the Aerospace Corporation, past member of the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services and Defense Business Board. Importantly, she is a former U.S. Ambassador to Finland. That is a very impressive resume, a very impressive background.

I first met Ambassador Barrett in 2015 when I had the opportunity to share dinner with her and the late Senator John McCain. Prior to that dinner, I was talking to Senator John McCain, and he told me how highly he thought of Ambassador Barrett. I can state—and I think many of my Senate colleagues will agree—that there can be no better an endorsement than that from Senator McCain.

Ambassador Barrett will be taking over from Dr. Heather Wilson, who did an outstanding job as Secretary of the Air Force. Secretary Wilson's leadership was critical in rebuilding the U.S. Air Force, which had shrunk to its smallest level ever just a few years ago since the Air Force was created in the late 1940s. We had to start bringing it back. She did a great job on that, and I know Ambassador Barrett is committed to continuing that rebuilding of this critically important branch of our military.

Another important element of Ambassador Barrett's experience is that as a former U.S. Ambassador to Finland, she understands the strategic importance of the Arctic and what is happening in terms of great power competition in the Arctic.

I want to spend a few minutes talking about that critically important part of the world and the role of my State, the great State of Alaska. Dating back to Gen. Billy Mitchell, who is the father of the U.S. Air Force, Alaska has been recognized as what General Mitchell said in an Armed Services Committee hearing; that it is ''the most strategic place in the world.'' Former Secretary Wilson and our current Chief of the Staff of the Air Force, General Goldfein, have been leaders at the Department of Defense, raising awareness of the critical importance of the Arctic in defending America's national security interests. Additionally, Congress has been playing a role in highlighting this in our national security priorities in the National Defense Authorization Act over the last 3 years and so, too, has the Trump administration.

Secretary Pompeo, our Secretary of State, was recently in Finland for the Arctic Council, all the nations of the Arctic, and he had this to say:

> We are entering a new age of strategic engagement in the Arctic, complete with new threats to the Arctic and its real estate. . . . This is America's moment to stand up as an Arctic nation and for the Arctic's future.

That was our Secretary of State a few months ago in Finland.

America is an Arctic nation because of Alaska. I like to say that my State constitutes three pillars of America's military might. We are the cornerstone of missile defense for the entire Nation—the missile fields and the radar sites that protect Washington, DC, New York, Miami, Rhode Island, L.A. They are all based in the great State of Alaska. We are the hub of air combat power for the Arctic in the Asia-Pacific.

In the next 2 years, we are going to have over 100 fifth-generation fighters, F–35s and F–22s, stationed in Alaska.

No place on Earth will have that kind of combat power with those critical fifth-generation supersonic stealth fighters. We have a platform for expeditionary forces—some of our best trained military units—to be able to deploy on a moment's notice because we are so strategically located to other countries.

Because of Alaska's strategic role in defending America's interests in the Arctic and the Indo-Pacific, the Congress and this administration, together in a bipartisan way, have been building up each of these three critical pillars of our Nation's military might and defenses.

Let me give just one example. The Senate has been pushing lately to ensure that the air combat capability we have in Alaska is matched by air refueling capacity. The last three National Defense Authorization Acts passed by this body and signed by the President have established criteria that the Air Force needs to use when deciding where to base the next modern aerial refueling tanker platform, the KC–46.

Ambassador Barrett and I have discussed this issue and what the Air Force is going to do with regard to stationing of the KC–46 outside of the continental United States, and I look forward to working with her on the advice already provided to the administration from the Congress on where those military assets need to be based.

As the current Secretary of Defense, Mark Esper, said in his confirmation hearing, having KC–46s colocated with 100 fifth-generation fighters would give America ''extreme strategic reach'' anywhere in the world. I believe Ambassador Barrett also understands this, and she clearly understands the importance of the Arctic as a former ambassador to Finland.

So, as I mentioned at the outset, we need good people and highly qualified people to serve at the highest levels of our military, civilian and uniformed, and I believe Ambassador Barrett is certainly one of those individuals.

I was heartened to see that my colleagues in the Senate gave a very strong bipartisan cloture vote, 84 to 7, which shows very strong support for her nomination. I know we are going to vote in a couple of minutes. I encourage my colleagues to vote yes for her nomination to be the next U.S. Secretary of the Air Force.

I yield the floor.

VOTE ON BARRETT NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. BLACKBURN). Under the previous order, all postcloture time has expired.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Barrett nomination?

Mr. SULLIVAN. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON).

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

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 85, nays 7, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 319 Ex.]

YEAS—85

Baldwin	Graham	Reed
Barrasso	Grassley	Risch
Blackburn	Hassan	Roberts
Blunt	Hawley	Romney
Boozman	Heinrich	Rosen
Braun	Hirono	Rounds
Brown	Hoeven	Rubio
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Cantwell	Inhofe	Schatz
Capito	Johnson	Schumer
Cardin	Jones	Scott (FL)
Carper	Kaine	Scott (SC)
Casey	Kennedy	Shaheen
Cassidy	King	Shelby
Collins	Lankford	Sinema
Coons	Leahy	Stabenow
Cornyn	Lee	Sullivan
Cortez Masto	Manchin	Tester
Cotton	McConnell	Thune
Cramer	McSally	Tillis
Crapo	Menendez	Toomey
Cruz	Moran	Udall
Daines	Murkowski	Van Hollen
Durbin	Murphy	Warner
Enzi	Murray	Whitehouse
Ernst	Paul	Wicker
Feinstein	Perdue	Young
Fischer	Peters	
Gardner	Portman	

NAYS—7

Blumenthal	Markey	Wyden
Duckworth	Merkley	
Gillibrand	Smith	

NOT VOTING—8

Alexander	Harris	Sanders
Bennet	Isakson	Warren
Booker	Klobuchar	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. PAUL. I ask unanimous consent that the subsequent votes be 10 minutes.

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

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the next nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Frank William Volk, of West Virginia, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of West Virginia.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Volk nomination?

Mr. ROUNDS. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON).

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

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 92, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 320 Ex.]

YEAS—92

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Portman
Barrasso	Graham	Reed
Blackburn	Grassley	Risch
Blumenthal	Hassan	Roberts
Blunt	Hawley	Romney
Boozman	Heinrich	Rosen
Braun	Hirono	Rounds
Brown	Hoeven	Rubio
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Cantwell	Inhofe	Schatz
Capito	Johnson	Schumer
Cardin	Jones	Scott (FL)
Carper	Kaine	Scott (SC)
Casey	Kennedy	Shaheen
Cassidy	King	Shelby
Collins	Lankford	Sinema
Coons	Leahy	Smith
Cornyn	Lee	Stabenow
Cortez Masto	Manchin	Sullivan
Cotton	Markey	Tester
Cramer	McConnell	Thune
Crapo	McSally	Tillis
Cruz	Menendez	Toomey
Daines	Merkley	Udall
Duckworth	Moran	Van Hollen
Durbin	Murkowski	Warner
Enzi	Murphy	Whitehouse
Ernst	Murray	Wicker
Feinstein	Paul	Wyden
Fischer	Perdue	Young
Gardner	Peters	

NOT VOTING—8

Alexander	Harris	Sanders
Bennet	Isakson	Warren
Booker	Klobuchar	

The nomination was confirmed.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the next nomination.

The legislative clerk read nomination of Charles R. Eskridge III, of Texas, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Texas.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Eskridge nomination?

Mr. JOHNSON. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON).

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

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 61, nays 31, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 321 Ex.]

YEAS—61

Barrasso	Fischer	Risch
Blackburn	Gardner	Roberts
Blunt	Graham	Romney
Boozman	Grassley	Rounds
Braun	Hawley	Rubio
Burr	Hoeven	Sasse
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Scott (FL)
Cardin	Inhofe	Scott (SC)
Carper	Johnson	Shaheen
Cassidy	Kaine	Shelby
Collins	Kennedy	Sinema
Coons	Lankford	Sullivan
Cornyn	Lee	Thune
Cotton	McConnell	Tillis
Cramer	McSally	Toomey
Crapo	Moran	Warner
Cruz	Murkowski	Whitehouse
Daines	Murphy	Wicker
Enzi	Paul	Young
Ernst	Perdue	
Feinstein	Portman	

NAYS—31

Baldwin	Hirono	Rosen
Blumenthal	Jones	Schatz
Brown	King	Schumer
Cantwell	Leahy	Smith
Casey	Manchin	Stabenow
Cortez Masto	Markey	Tester
Duckworth	Menendez	Udall
Durbin	Merkley	Van Hollen
Gillibrand	Murray	Wyden
Hassan	Peters	
Heinrich	Reed	

NOT VOTING—8

Alexander	Harris	Sanders
Bennet	Isakson	Warren
Booker	Klobuchar	

The nomination was confirmed.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the next nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of David John Novak, of Virginia, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Virginia.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Novak nomination?

Mr. PAUL. Madam President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk called the roll.

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

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON).

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

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 89, nays 3, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 322 Ex.]

YEAS—89

Baldwin	Gardner	Portman
Barrasso	Graham	Reed
Blackburn	Grassley	Risch
Blumenthal	Hassan	Roberts
Blunt	Hawley	Romney
Boozman	Heinrich	Rosen
Braun	Hirono	Rounds
Brown	Hoeven	Rubio
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Cantwell	Inhofe	Schatz
Capito	Johnson	Schumer
Cardin	Jones	Scott (FL)
Carper	Kaine	Scott (SC)
Casey	Kennedy	Shaheen
Cassidy	King	Shelby
Collins	Lankford	Sinema
Coons	Leahy	Smith
Cornyn	Lee	Stabenow
Cortez Masto	Manchin	Sullivan
Cotton	McConnell	Tester
Cramer	McSally	Thune
Crapo	Menendez	Tillis
Cruz	Merkley	Toomey
Daines	Moran	Udall
Duckworth	Murkowski	Van Hollen
Durbin	Murphy	Warner
Enzi	Murray	Whitehouse
Ernst	Paul	Wicker
Feinstein	Perdue	Young
Fischer	Peters	

NAYS—3

Gillibrand	Markey	Wyden

NOT VOTING—8

Alexander	Harris	Sanders
Bennet	Isakson	Warren
Booker	Klobuchar	

The nomination was confirmed.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the next nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Rachel P. Kovner, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of New York.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Kovner nomination?

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), and the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL).

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

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 88, nays 3, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 323 Ex.]

YEAS—88

Baldwin	Gardner	Risch
Barrasso	Graham	Roberts
Blackburn	Grassley	Romney
Blumenthal	Hassan	Rosen
Blunt	Hawley	Rounds
Boozman	Hirono	Rubio
Braun	Hoeven	Sasse
Brown	Hyde-Smith	Schatz
Burr	Inhofe	Schumer
Cantwell	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Capito	Jones	Scott (SC)
Cardin	Kaine	Shaheen
Carper	Kennedy	Shelby
Casey	King	Sinema
Cassidy	Lankford	Smith
Collins	Leahy	Stabenow
Coons	Lee	Sullivan
Cornyn	Manchin	Tester
Cortez Masto	McConnell	Thune
Cotton	McSally	Tillis
Cramer	Menendez	Toomey
Crapo	Merkley	Udall
Cruz	Moran	Van Hollen
Daines	Murkowski	Warner
Duckworth	Murphy	Whitehouse
Durbin	Murray	Wicker
Enzi	Perdue	Wyden
Ernst	Peters	Young
Feinstein	Portman	
Fischer	Reed	

NAYS—3

Gillibrand	Heinrich	Markey

NOT VOTING—9

Alexander	Harris	Paul
Bennet	Isakson	Sanders
Booker	Klobuchar	Warren

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motions to reconsider are considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's actions.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

S.J. RES. 53

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, with the election of President Trump in 2016, it was reasonable to believe that the war on coal was settled, or at least we had a lasting cease-fire. This administration's policies, supported by the Congressional Review Act resolutions, undid many of the excesses of the Obama administration's regulatory

assault on coal country. Congress and the President overturned the so-called stream protection rule, which would have made it nearly impossible to mine coal in Appalachia.

The Trump administration has returned sanity to the clean water permitting process in section 404 and is in the process of restoring the Waters of the United States rule to align with congressional intent of protecting Federal waters and not every stream, ditch, and gully across this country, but the jewel of the War on Coal's crown was always the Clean Power Plan.

A sweeping rule to limit the use of coal in our power generation mix, the Clean Power Plan ran roughshod over utility investments and States' rights to protect their taxpayers and ratepayers. In a moment of clarity, then-Candidate Obama acknowledged that under his vision for our power system ''electricity rates would necessarily skyrocket.''

The Clean Power Plan, if implemented, would have made that vision a reality. Energy is a topline item in many of our families' budgets and very expensive, and this policy would have grown these costs significantly. This plan was so disastrous and so clearly beyond the scope of EPA's authority that 24 States—with West Virginia in the lead—sued to stop it. The Supreme Court—our Supreme Court—heard the call and placed a stay on the rule while a lower court weighed the merits.

This June, the Trump EPA finalized its replacement for this unlawful CPP with the Affordable Clean Energy rule. This commonsense alternative acknowledges the need to reduce carbon emissions from our power sector but ensures that EPA targets are actually achievable and will not kill jobs in the utility and energy sectors, nor crush American families with higher electric bills.

Fully implemented, the ACE rule will reduce the CO_2 emissions by as much as 35 percent from 2005 levels. This administration understands that protecting our environment need not come at the expense of a growing economy. The result has been a growth in our national GDP that the Obama administration's economic projections predicted would be unachievable.

The unemployment rate of my own State of West Virginia is now 4.6 percent, after it had peaked in 2010 at 8.8 percent. This week, many Democrats in this body want to put all this progress in jeopardy and reopen the War on Coal with a Congressional Review Act resolution to block the ACE rule.

Senate Democrats and their Presidential candidates have doubled down on policies that would destroy our jobs, hammer consumers, and burden future generations with staggering amounts of debt.

Refusing to learn the lessons of Hillary Clinton's 2016 failed campaign promise, which was to put a lot of coal miners and coal companies out of business, the former Vice President has taken it a step further: pledging on a Detroit debate stage in July to ''make sure'' that coal and natural gas that comes from fracking are ''eliminated.''

There is much support on the other side for the Green New Deal's energy and environmental components, which would cost between $8 trillion and $12 trillion, and that is before adding other extreme visions for the government takeover of healthcare, education, and agriculture.

The Democrats' energy agenda will lead to fewer jobs, more expensive utility bills, and less reliable electricity. We already see the lack of reliability of our electricity grid in California right now. I hope the Senate will refuse to go down this path toward impoverishing the very people who power the country and make our quality of life possible.

Passage of this resolution would serve as the starting point for a resumption of the War on Coal and a march to the extremist excesses of the Green New Deal. I urge my colleagues to heed the voice of the American people and vote no on the resolution disapproving the ACE rule.

COAL MINERS' PENSIONS

Mr. President, it is critical that Congress act soon to protect the pensions of our Nation's coal miners. The pension benefits of nearly 100,000 hard-working people are at risk if Congress fails to take action to stabilize the United Mine Workers pension fund.

Over 25,000 current UMWA pension beneficiaries reside in West Virginia, making this a critical issue for communities and families across our State. I have worked in a bipartisan way with Senator MANCHIN, Senator PORTMAN, Senator BROWN, and others over the past several years to support legislation that stabilizes the mine workers' pension fund and protects these men and women and their families.

We are not talking about lavish pensions here. The average beneficiary receives about $590 per month. Retired miners from across West Virginia routinely visit me in my office in DC, write letters, and talk with me as I travel the State. I really appreciate their efforts. We are working hard to make sure that when they tell me how critical their pension check is in allowing them to pay for food, medication, housing, and other essentials, that we don't let this critical issue lapse.

These hard-working men and women deserve the pensions they were promised, and we should make sure they receive the benefits they earned by passing legislation to protect their pensions this year.

CONFIRMATION OF FRANK WILLIAM VOLK

Mr. President, one last issue. The Senate voted earlier today to confirm Frank Volk as our U.S. district judge for the Southern District of West Virginia. It was unanimous, 92 to 0. Judge Volk has been serving as the chief bankruptcy judge in the Southern District since 2015.

Prior to that appointment, he worked as a career law clerk for some of our State's most distinguished jurists, including Judges Charles Haden, John Copenhaver, Blaine Michael, and Margaret Workman. Judge Volk is a graduate of the West Virginia University College of Law, where he served as editor-in-chief of the Law Review. For more than a decade, he has taught courses at the law school on topics ranging from bankruptcy to Federal Civil Rights.

I was very pleased that, at my suggestion, President Trump nominated Judge Volk to continue his service on the district court, and I am very pleased about that.

I know he will be a judge who will root his decisions firmly in the text and original meaning of our Constitution and our statutes. I know he will be fair to all parties who appear before him. I know he will bring honor to our Federal judiciary.

Besides all of his legal acumen, which is tremendous, he is a really decent man. He is a great family man who loves his family and has remained very humble through all of his successes.

With our actions today, and I thank my colleagues, the Senate has now confirmed 156 judges nominated by President Trump. That number now includes Judge Volk, as well as Judge Thomas Kleeh, who is now serving as a district judge in the Northern District of West Virginia. It includes 43 judges who now serve on our courts of appeals, and of course it includes two Supreme Court Justices.

It is important that the Senate continue confirming well-qualified men and women who will faithfully apply the law to serve on our Federal courts. I thank my colleagues again for confirming Judge Volk today and hope we will continue to make judicial confirmations a priority as we move forward.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I was necessarily absent, but had I been present, I would have voted yes on rollcall vote No. 239, the confirmation of James Wesley Hendrix, to be U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of Texas.

I was necessarily absent but had I been present, would have voted no on

rollcall vote No. 240, the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination of Sean D. Jordan to be U.S. District Judge for the Eastern District of Texas.

I was necessarily absent but had I been present, would have voted no on rollcall vote No. 241, the confirmation of Sean D. Jordan to be U.S. District Judge for the Eastern District of Texas.

I was necessarily absent but had I been present, would have voted no on rollcall vote No. 242, the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination of Mark T. Pittman to be U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of Texas.

I was necessarily absent but had I been present, would have voted no on rollcall vote No. 243, the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination of Jeffery Vincent Brown, to be U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of Texas.

I was necessarily absent but had I been present, would have voted no on rollcall vote No. 244, the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination of Brantley Starr, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Texas.

I was necessarily absent but had I been present, would have voted yes on rollcall vote No. 245, the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination of Stephanie L. Haines, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Pennsylvania.

I was necessarily absent but had I been present, would have voted no on rollcall vote No. 246, the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination of Ada E. Brown to be U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of Texas.

I was necessarily absent but had I been present, would have voted no on rollcall vote No. 247, the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination of Steven D. Grimberg to be U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of Georgia.

I was necessarily absent but had I been present, would have voted no on rollcall vote No. 248, the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination of Jason K. Pulliam to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Texas.

I was necessarily absent but had I been present, would have voted no on rollcall vote No. 249, the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination of Martha Maria Pacold to be U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of Illinois.

I was necessarily absent but had I been present, would have voted yes on rollcall vote No. 250, the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination of Steven C. Seeger to be U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of Illinois.

I was necessarily absent but had I been present, would have voted no on rollcall vote No. 251, the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination of William Shaw Stickman IV to be U.S. District Judge for the Western District of Pennsylvania.

I was necessarily absent but had I been present, would have voted no on rollcall vote No. 252, the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination of Kelly Craft to be Ambassador of the United States of America to the United Nations and Representative to the Security Council.

BUDGET SCOREKEEPING REPORT

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I wish to submit to the Senate the budget scorekeeping report for October 2019. This is my first scorekeeping report since I filed the deemed budget resolution for fiscal year 2020 on September 9, 2019, as required by the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2019, BBA19. The report compares current-law levels of spending and revenues with the amounts agreed to in BBA19. In the Senate, this information is used to determine whether budgetary points of order lie against pending legislation. The Republican staff of the Budget Committee and the Congressional Budget Office, CBO, prepared this report pursuant to section 308(b) of the Congressional Budget Act, CBA. The information included in this report is current through October 11, 2019.

Since I filed the deemed budget resolution, only one measure with significant budgetary effects has been enacted. That measure, the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2020, and Health Extenders Act of 2019, PL 116–59, provided continuing appropriations for discretionary programs through November 21, 2019, Division A, and extended several expiring health programs, Division B. Division A was charged to the Senate Appropriations Committee, while Division B was charged to the Senate Finance Committee. As the direct spending and revenue components of the measure were offset over the 2020 to 2024 and 2020 to 2029 periods, a deficit neutral reserve fund was used to accommodate the budgetary effects of this measure pursuant to section 3005 of H. Con. Res. 71—115th Congress—the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2018, as updated by BBA19.

Budget Committee Republican staff prepared tables A–D.

Table A gives the amount by which each Senate authorizing committee exceeds or is below its allocation for budget authority and outlays under the fiscal year 2020 deemed budget resolution. This information is used for enforcing committee allocations pursuant to section 302 of the CBA. I am pleased to report that for this reporting period, all authorizing committees have complied with their allowable spending limits for each enforceable period.

Table B provides the amount by which the Senate Committee on Appropriations is below or exceeds the statutory spending limits. This information is used to determine points of order related to the spending caps found in sections 312 and 314 of the CBA. The table shows that the Appropriations Committee is also compliant with spending limits for current the fiscal year. Those limits for regular discretionary spending are $666.5 billion for accounts in the defense category and $621.5 billion for accounts in the nondefense category of spending. As no full-year appropriations measures have been enacted for fiscal year 2020, the amounts shown on the table reflect the budgetary authority effects of advanced or permanent appropriations made available in prior law.

The 2018 budget resolution contained points of order limiting the use of changes in mandatory programs, CHIMPs, in appropriations bills. Table C, which tracks the CHIMP limit of $15 billion for 2020, shows the Appropriations Committee has not yet enacted full-year CHIMPs for this fiscal year.

Table D provides the amount of budget authority enacted for 2020 that has been designated as either for an emergency or for overseas contingency operations pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, as amended. Funding that receives either of these designations results in cap adjustments to enforceable discretionary spending limits. There is no limit on either emergency or overseas contingency operations spending; however, any Senator may challenge the designation with a point of order to strike the designation on the floor pursuant to current budgetary statute.

In addition to the tables provided by Budget Committee Republican staff, I am submitting CBO tables, which I will use to enforce budget totals approved by Congress.

CBO provided a spending and revenue report for 2020, which helps enforce aggregate spending levels in budget resolutions under CBA section 311. In its report, CBO annualizes the temporary effects of the latest continuing resolution, which provides funding through November 21, 2019. For the enforcement of budgetary aggregates, the Budget Committee excludes this temporary funding. As such, the committee views current-law levels as being $1,181.3 billion and $668.8 billion below budget resolution levels for budget authority and outlays, respectively. Details on 2020 levels can be found in CBO's second table.

Current-law revenues are consistent with the levels assumed by the budget resolution.

Social Security levels are consistent with the budget resolution's figures for all enforceable periods.

CBO's report also provides information needed to enforce the Senate pay-as-you-go—pay-go rule. This rule was established under section 4106 of the 2018 budget resolution. The Senate pay-go scorecard shows that there is currently a zero balance.

This submission also includes a table tracking the Senate's budget enforcement activity on the floor since the enforcement filing on September 9, 2019.

No budgetary points of order have been raised since that filing.

All years in the accompanying tables are fiscal years.

I ask unanimous consent that the tables be printed in the RECORD.

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

TABLE A.—SENATE AUTHORIZING COMMITTEES—ENACTED DIRECT SPENDING ABOVE (+) OR BELOW (−) BUDGET RESOLUTIONS

[In millions of dollars]

	2020	2020–2024	2020–2029
Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Armed Services			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Commerce, Science, and Transportation			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Energy and Natural Resources			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Environment and Public Works			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Finance			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Foreign Relations			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Judiciary			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Rules and Administration			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Intelligence			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Veterans' Affairs			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Indian Affairs			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Small Business			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Total			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0

This table is current through October 11, 2019 This table tracks the spending effects of legislation enacted compared to allowable levels. Each authorizing committee's initial allocation can be found in the Senate Budget Committee Chairman's Congressional Record filing on September 9, 2019.

TABLE B.—SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE—ENACTED REGULAR DISCRETIONARY APPROPRIATIONS [1]

[Budget authority, in millions of dollars]

	2020	
	Security [2]	Nonsecurity [2]
Statutory Discretionary Limits	666,500	621,500
Amount Provided by Senate Appropriations Subcommittee		
Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies	0	9
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies	0	0
Defense	42	0
Energy and Water Development	0	0
Financial Services and General Government	0	0
Homeland Security	0	9
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies	0	0
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies	0	24,682
Legislative Branch	0	1
Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies	0	71,821
State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs	0	0
Transportation and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies	0	4,400
Current Level Total	42	100,922
Total Enacted Above (+) or Below (−) Statutory Limits	−666,458	−520,578

This table is current through October 11, 2019. As no full-year appropriations bills have been enacted this cycle, the budget authority displayed here represents funding made available through either advance or permanent appropriations.

[1] This table excludes spending pursuant to adjustments to the discretionary spending limits. These adjustments are allowed for certain purposes in section 251(b)(2) of BBEDCA.

[2] Security spending is defined as spending in the National Defense budget function (050) and nonsecurity spending is defined as all other spending.

TABLE C.—SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE—ENACTED CHANGES IN MANDATORY SPENDING PROGRAMS (CHIMPS)

[Budget authority, millions of dollars]

	2020
CHIMPS Limit for Fiscal Year 2020	15,000
Senate Appropriations Subcommittees	
Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies	0
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies	0
Defense	0
Energy and Water Development	0
Financial Services and General Government	0
Homeland Security	0
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies	0
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies	0
Legislative Branch	0
Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies	0
State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs	0
Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies	0
Current Level Total	0
Total CHIMPS Above (+) or Below (−) Budget Resolution	−15.000

This table is current through October 11, 2019.

TABLE D.—SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE—ENACTED EMERGENCY AND OVERSEAS CONTINGENCE OPERATIONS SPENDING

[Budget authority, millions of dollars]

Emergency and Overseas Contingency Operations Designated Spending	2020			
	Emergency		Overseas Contingency Operations	
	Security [1]	Nonsecurity [1]	Security [1]	Nonsecurity [1]
Additional Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act 2019 (P.L. 116–20) [2]	8	0	0	0
Current Level Total	0	0	0	0

This table is current through October 11, 2019.

[1] Security spending is defined as spending in the National Defense budget function (050) and nonsecurity spending is defined as all other spending

[2] The Additional Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act, 2019 was enacted after the publication of CBO's May 2019 baseline but before the Senate Budget Committee Chairman published the deemed budget resolution for 2020 in the Congressional Record. Pursuant to the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2019, the budgetary effects of this legislation have been incorporated into the current level as previously enacted funds.

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, October 16, 2019.

Hon. MIKE ENZI,
Chairman, Committee on the Budget, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The enclosed report shows the effects of Congressional action on the fiscal year 2020 budget and is current through October 11, 2019. This report is submitted under section 308(b) and in aid of section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act, as amended.

The estimates of budget authority, outlays, and revenues are consistent with the allocations, aggregates, and other budgetary levels printed in the Congressional Record on September 9, 2019, pursuant to section 204 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2019 (Public Law 116–37).

This is CBO's first current level report for fiscal year 2020.

Sincerely,

PHILLIP L. SWAGEL,
Director.

Enclosure.

TABLE 1.—SENATE CURRENT LEVEL REPORT FOR SPENDING AND REVENUES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020, AS OF OCTOBER 11, 2019

[In billions of dollars]

	Budget Resolution	Current Level	Current Level Over/Under (−) Resolution
ON-BUDGET			
Budget Authority	3,704.2	3,761.5	57.2
Outlays	3,681.5	3,697.3	15.8
Revenues	2,740.5	2,740.5	0.0
OFF-BUDGET			
Social Security Outlays [a]	961.2	961.2	0.0
Social Security Revenues	940.4	940.4	0.0

Source: Congressional Budget Office.

[a] Excludes administrative expenses paid from the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund of the Social Security Administration, which are off-budget, but are appropriated annually.

TABLE 2.—SUPPORTING DETAIL FOR THE SENATE CURRENT LEVEL REPORT FOR ON-BUDGET SPENDING AND REVENUES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020, AS OF OCTOBER 11, 2019

[In millions of dollars]

	Budget Authority	Outlays	Revenues
Previously Enacted [a] [b]			
Revenues	n.a.	n.a.	2,740,538
Permanents and other spending legislation	2,397,769	2,309,887	n.a.
Authorizing and Appropriation legislation	0	595,528	0
Offsetting receipts	−954,573	−954,573	n.a.
Total, Previously Enacted	1,443,196	1,950,842	2,740,538
Enacted Legislation			
Continuing Appropriations Act, 2020, and Health Extenders Act of 2019 (P.L. 116–59)	693	795	0
Continuing Resolution [a] [b]			
Continuing Appropriations Act, 2020, and Health Extenders Act of 2019 (P.L. 116–59)	1,238,519	684,615	0
Total, Enacted Legislation	1,239,212	685,410	0
Entitlements and Mandatories	1,079,063	1,061,080	0
Total Current Level [b]	3,761,471	3,697,332	2,740,538
Total Senate Resolution [c]	3,704,246	3,681,491	2,740,538
Current Level Over Senate Resolution	57,225	15,841	n.a.
Current Level Under Senate Resolution	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Memorandum			
Revenues, 2020–2029			
Senate Current Level	n.a.	n.a.	34,847,317
Senate Resolution [c]	n.a.	n.a.	34,847,317
Current Level Over Senate Resolution	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Current Level Under Senate Resolution	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

Source: Congressional Budget Office.
n.a. = not applicable; P.L. = public law.
[a] Sections 1001–1004 of the 21st Century Cures Act (P.L. 114–255) require that certain funding provided for 2017 through 2026 to the Department of Health and Human Services—in particular the Food and Drug Administration and the National Institutes of Health—be excluded from estimates for the purposes of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (Deficit Control Act) and the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 (Congressional Budget Act). Therefore, the amounts shown in this report do not include $562 million in budget authority and $854 million in estimated outlays.
[b] For purposes of enforcing section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act in the Senate, the resolution, as unmoved by the Senate, does not include budget authority, outlays, or revenues for off-budget amounts. As a result, amounts in this current level report do not include those items.
[c] Section 204 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2019 requires the Chair of the Senate Committee on the Budget to publish the aggregate spending and revenue levels for fiscal year 2020; those aggregate levels were first published in the Congressional Record on September 9, 2019. The Chair of the Senate Committee on the Budget has the authority to revise the budgetary aggregates for the budgetary effects of certain revenue and spending measures pursuant to the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and H. Con. Res. 71 (115th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2018, as updated by the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2019:

	Budget Authority	Outlays	Revenues
Original Aggregates Printed on September 9, 2019:	3,703,553	3,680,696	2,740,538
Revisions:			
Adjustment for P.L. 116–59, Continuing Appropriations Act, 2020, and Health Extenders Act of 2019 (pursuant to sections 311 and 314 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and section 3005 of H. Con. Res. 71)	693	795	0
Revised Senate Resolution	3,704,246	3,681,491	2,740,538

TABLE 3.—SUMMARY OF THE SENATE PAY-AS-YOU-GO SCORECARD AS OF OCTOBER 11, 2019

[In millions of dollars]

	2019	2020	2019–2024	2019–2029
Beginning Balance [a]	0	0	0	0
Enacted Legislation [b,c]				
Continuing Appropriations Act, 2020, and Health Extenders Act of 2019 (H.R. 4378, P.L. 116–59) [d]	0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Impact on Deficit	0	0	0	0
Total Change in Outlays	0	0	0	0
Total Change in Revenues	0	0	0	0

Source: Congressional Budget Office.
n.a. = not applicable; P.L. = public law.
[a] On September 9, 2019, the Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget reset the Senate's Pay-As-You-Go Scorecard to zero for all fiscal years.
[b] The amounts shown represent the estimated effect of the public laws on the deficit.
[c] Excludes off-budget amounts.
[d] The budgetary effects of division B of this act are excluded from the Senate's PAYGO scorecard, pursuant to sec. 1701(b) of the act. The budgetary effects of division A were fully incorporated into the PAYGO ledger pursuant to the authority provided to the Chairman of the Senate Budget Committee in section 3005 of H. Con. Res. 71 (115th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2018. The Chairman exercised that authority through filing an adjustment in the Congressional Record on September 26, 2019.

ENFORCEMENT REPORT OF POINTS OF ORDER RAISED SINCE THE FY 2020 ENFORCEMENT FILING

Vote	Date	Measure	Violation	Motion to Waive	Result
No points of order have been raised as of September 9, 2019					

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD–423.

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

DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon. JAMES E. RISCH,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(5)(C) of the Arms Export Control Act (AECA), as amended, we are forwarding Transmittal No. 19–0J. This report relates to enhancements or upgrades from the level of sensitivity of technology or capability described in the Section 36(b)(1) AECA certification 18–43 of November 27, 2018.

Sincerely,

GREGORY M. KAUSNER,
(for Charles W. Hooper, Lieutenant General, USA, Director).

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 19–0J

Report of Enhancement or Upgrade of Sensitivity of Technology or Capability (Sec. 36(b)(5)(C), AECA)

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Qatar.

(ii) Sec. 36(b)(1), AECA Transmittal No.: 18–43; Date: 27 November 2018; Military Department: Air Force.

(iii) Description: On November 27, 2018, Congress was notified by Congressional certification transmittal number 18–43 of the possible sale, under Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, of forty (40) AIM–120C–7 Advanced Medium Range Air-to-Air Missiles (AMRAAM) and one (1) spare AIM–

120C–7 AMRAAM Guidance Section. Also included were one (1) spare AIM–120C–7 control section, eight (8) AMRAAM Captive Air Training Missile (CATM–120C), missile containers, classified software for the AN/MPQ–64F1 Sentinel Radar, spare and repair parts, cryptographic and communication security devices, precision navigation equipment, other software, site surveys, weapons system equipment and computer software support, publications and technical documentation, common munitions and test equipment, repair and return services and equipment, personnel training and training equipment, integration support and test equipment, and U.S. Government and contractor, engineering, technical and logistics support services, and other related elements of logistical and program support. The estimated total cost was $215 million. Major Defense Equipment* (MDE) constituted $95 million of this total. This proposed sale was in support of Qatar's procurement of the National Advanced Surface to Air Missile System (NASAMS) via Direct Commercial Sale (DCS).

This transmittal reports the inclusion of up to eighty additional (80) AIM–120C–7 missiles, one hundred twenty (120) AIM–120C–7 ER missiles, thirteen (13) Multifunction Information Distribution System Low Volume Terminal (MIDS–LVT) Block Upgrade 2, and associated materiel, support, and services. These additional MDE items will result in an increase in MDE cost of $461 million, for a total MDE value of $556 million. Non-MDE cost will increase by $16 million. Total case value will increase to $692 million.

(iv) Significance: This notification is being provided as these additional missiles represent an increase in capability over what was previously notified. This equipment meets Qatar's requirements for a NASAMS capability providing a full range of protection from imminent hostile cruise missile, unmanned aerial vehicle, rotary wing, and fixed wing threats. The MIDS–LVT BU2 will contribute to the crypto capability of the NASAMS to enable Qatar's self-defense capabilities, and enhance its interoperability with the United States and regional partners.

(v) Justification: This proposed sale supports the foreign policy and national security objectives of the United States by helping improve the security of a key partner that has been, and continues to be, a significant host and member of coalition forces in the Middle East.

(vi) Sensitivity of Technology: The Sensitivity of Technology Statement contained in the original notification applies to the AIM–120C–7 missiles. The AIM–120C–7 ER missiles have the same capability and sensitivity of technology as the AIM–120C–7 but with a larger rocket motor to allow it to travel further. The MIDS LVT BU2 is classified CONFIDENTIAL and is a secure data and voice communication network using the Link-16 architecture. The system provides enhanced situational awareness, positive identification of participants within the network, and secure voice capability. The system provides the critical ground link for simultaneous coordination of air, land, and maritime forces.

(vi) Date Report Delivered to Congress: October 1, 2019.

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD–423.

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

DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon. JAMES E. RISCH,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 19–54 concerning the Navy's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Japan for defense articles and services estimated to cost $140 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

CHARLES W. HOOPER,
Lieutenant General, USA, Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 19–54

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Japan.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:
Major Defense Equipment* $0 million.
Other $140 million.
Total $140 million.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:
Major Defense Equipment (MDE): None.
Non-MDE:
Follow-On Technical Support (FOTS) sustainment and services in support of eight (8) Japan AEGIS Destroyers consisting of four (4) KONGO Class Destroyers, two (2) ATAGO Class Destroyers, two (2) MAYA Class Destroyers and one (1) Japanese Computer Test Site (JCPTS). The sustainment efforts will include AEGIS software updates, system integration and testing, U.S. Government and contractor technical assistance, and other related elements of logistics and program support.

(iv) Military Department: Navy (JA–P–QFA).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: JA–P–LYJ, JA–P–LZU, and JA–P–LZW.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: None.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: October 1, 2019.

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Japan—Follow-On Technical Support (FOTS) for AEGIS Destroyers

The Government of Japan has requested to buy Follow-On Technical Support (FOTS) sustainment and services in support of eight (8) Japan AEGIS Destroyers consisting of four (4) KONGO Class Destroyers, two (2) ATAGO Class Destroyers, two (2) MAYA Class Destroyers and one (1) Japanese Computer Test Site (JCPTS). The sustainment efforts will include AEGIS software updates, system integration and testing, U.S. Government and contractor technical assistance, and other related elements of logistics and program support. The estimated cost is $140 million.

This proposed sale will support the foreign policy and national security of the United States by improving the security of a major ally that is a force for political stability and economic progress in the Asia-Pacific region. It is vital to U.S. national interests to assist Japan in developing and maintaining a strong and effective self-defense capability.

The proposed follow-on technical support is critical to ensure Japan Maritime Self Defense Force's (JMSDF) Aegis Destroyer fleet and JCPTS remain ready to provide critical capabilities in the defense of Japan. Japan's AEGIS Destroyers provide ship-based ballistic missile defense capabilities and build upon a longstanding cooperative effort with the United States to provide enhanced capability with a valued partner in a geographic region of critical importance to Japan and the United States. Japan will have no difficulty absorbing this support into its armed forces.

The proposed sale of this equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The prime contractor will be Lockheed Martin, Moorestown, NJ. There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will require the assignment of two contractor representatives to Japan to support the program.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD–423.

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

DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon. JAMES E. RISCH,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of

the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 19–56 concerning the Air Force's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Tunisia for defense articles and services estimated to cost $234 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

CHARLES W. HOOPER,
Lieutenant General, USA, Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 19–56

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Tunisia.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:

Major Defense Equipment* $115 million.

Other $119 million.

Total $234 million.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE):

Twelve (12) T–6C Texan Trainer Aircraft.

Non-Major Defense Equipment (MDE): Also included in this sale are spare engines, cartridge actuated devices/propellant actuated devices operational flight trainer, spare parts, ground handling equipment, support equipment, software delivery and support, publications and technical documentation, clothing, textiles and individual equipment, aircraft ferry support, technical and logistical support services, site surveys, minor modifications/class IV support, personnel training and training equipment, U.S. Government and contractor engineering, technical and logistics support services, and other related elements of logistical and program support.

(iv) Military Department: Air Force (TU–D–SAB).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: None.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Attached annex.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: October 10, 2019.

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Tunisia—T–6C Texan Trainer Aircraft

The Government of Tunisia has requested a possible sale of twelve (12) T–6C Texan trainer aircraft, spare engines, cartridge actuated devices/propellant actuated devices operational flight trainer, spare parts, ground handling equipment, support equipment, software delivery and support, publications and technical documentation, clothing, textiles and individual equipment, aircraft ferry support, technical and logistical support services, site surveys, minor modifications/class IV support, personnel training and training equipment, U.S. Government and contractor engineering, technical and logistics support services, and other related elements of logistical and program support. The estimated value is $234 million.

This proposed sale will support the foreign policy and national security of the United States by helping to improve the defense capabilities and capacity of a major non-NATO ally, which is an important force for political stability and economic progress in North Africa. This potential sale will provide additional opportunities for bilateral engagements and further strengthen the bilateral relationship between the United States and Tunisia.

The proposed sale will replace Tunisia's aging trainer fleet and allow Tunisia to continue training pilots to support Tunisia's counter-terrorism and border security missions. Tunisia will have no difficulty absorbing this aircraft into its armed forces.

The proposed sale of this equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The prime contractor will be Textron Aviation Defense LLC of Wichita, Kansas. There are no known offset agreement proposed with this potential sale. However, the purchaser typically requests offsets. Any offset agreement will be defined in negotiations between the purchaser and the contractor.

Implementation of this proposed sale will require the assignment of nine U.S. Government and one contractor representative to Tunisia.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 19–56

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. The T–6C is a single engine turboprop trainer aircraft that includes a virtual no-drop scoring capability. Its primary purpose is to teach air to ground operations. No hard points or weapons can be carried on the T–6C.

2. A determination has been made that the recipient country can provide substantially the same degree of protection for the technology being released as the U.S. Government. This sale is necessary in furtherance of the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives outlined in the Policy Justification.

3. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal have been authorized for release and export to the Government of Tunisia.

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD–423.

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

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon. JAMES E. RISCH,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 19–70 concerning the Army's proposed Letters(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Ukraine for defense articles and services estimated to cost $39.2 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

CHARLES W. HOOPER,
Lieutenant General, USA, Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 19–70

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Ukraine.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:

Major Defense Equipment* $31.0 million.

Other $8.2 million,

Total $39.2 million.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE):

One hundred fifty (150) Javelin Missiles.

Ten (10) Javelin Command Launch Units (CLU).

Non-MDE: Also included are training devices, transportation, support equipment, technical data and publications, personnel training and training equipment, U.S. government, engineering, technical, and logistics support services, and other related elements of logistics support tools and test equipment; support equipment; publications and technical documentation; spare and repair parts; equipment training and training devices; U.S. Government and contractor technical, engineering and logistics support services; and other related elements of logistical, sustainment, and program support.

(iv) Military Department: Army (UP–8–UCJ).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: UP–8–UBT.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Attached Annex.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: October 3, 2019.

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Ukraine—Javelin Missiles and Command Launch Units

The Government of Ukraine has requested to buy one hundred fifty (150) Javelin missiles and ten (10) Javelin Command Launch Units (CLUs). Also included are training devices, transportation, support equipment, technical data and publications, personnel training and training equipment, U.S. government, engineering, technical, and logistics support services, and other related elements of logistics support tools and test equipment; support equipment; publications and technical documentation; spare and repair parts; equipment training and training devices; U.S. Government and contractor technical, engineering and logistics support services; and other related elements of logistical, sustainment, and program support. The total estimated cost is not to exceed $39.2 million.

This proposed sale will contribute to the foreign policy and national security of the United States by improving the security of Ukraine. The Javelin system will help Ukraine build its long-term defense capacity to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity in order to meet its national defense

requirements. Ukraine will have no difficulty absorbing this system into its armed forces.

The proposed sale of this equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The prime contractor for the Javelin Missile System is Raytheon Company, Waltham, MA. There are no known offset agreements proposed in conjunction with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed program will require additional contractor representatives to travel to Ukraine. It is not expected additional U.S. Government personnel will be required in country for an extended period of time.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 19–70

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. The Javelin Weapon System is a medium-range, man portable, shoulder-launched, fire and forget, anti-tank system for infantry, scouts, and combat engineers. The system weighs 49.5 pounds and has a maximum range in excess of 2,500 meters. The system is highly lethal against tanks and other systems with conventional and reactive armors. The system possesses a secondary capability against bunkers.

2. Javelin's key technical feature is the use of fire-and-forget technology which allows the gunner to fire and immediately relocate or take cover. Additional special features are the top attack and/or direct fire modes, an advanced tandem warhead and imaging infrared seeker, target lock-on before launch, and soft launch from enclosures or covered fighting positions. The Javelin missile also has a minimum smoke motor thus decreasing its detection on the battlefield.

3. The Javelin Weapon System is comprised of two major tactical components, which are a reusable Command Launch Unit (CLU) and a round contained in a disposable launch tube assembly. The CLU incorporates an integrated day-night sight that provides a target engagement capability in adverse weather and countermeasure environments. The CLU may also be used in a stand-alone mode for battlefield surveillance and target detection. The CLU's thermal sight is a second generation Forward Looking Infrared (FLIR) sensor operating in the 8–10 micron wavelength and has a 240 x 240 pixel scanning array with a Dewar-coolant unit.

4. The missile is autonomously guided to the target using an imaging infrared seeker and adaptive correlation tracking algorithms. This allows the gunner to take cover or reload and engage another target after firing a missile. The missile contains an infrared seeker with a 64 x 64 pixel element Mercury-Cadmium-Telluride (HgCdTE) Focal Plane Array (FPA) operating in the 8–10 micron wavelength. The missile has an advanced tandem warhead and can be used in either the top attack or direct fire modes (for target undercover). An onboard flight computer guides the missile to the selected target.

5. The Javelin Missile System hardware and the documentation are UNCLASSIFIED. The missile software which resides in the CLU is considered SENSITIVE. The sensitivity is primarily in the software programs which instruct the system how to operate in the presence of countermeasures. The overall hardware is also considered SENSITIVE in that the infrared wavelengths could be useful in attempted countermeasure development.

6. If a technologically advanced adversary obtains knowledge of the specific hardware and software elements, the information could be used to develop countermeasures or equivalent systems that might reduce weapon system effectiveness or be used in the development of a system with similar or advanced capabilities.

7. A determination has been made that Ukraine can provide substantially the same degree of protection for the sensitive technology being released as the U.S. Government. This proposed sale is necessary to further the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives outlined in the Policy Justification.

8. All defense articles and services listed on this transmittal are authorized for release and export to the Government of Ukraine.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO RONNI K. COHEN

● Mr. COONS. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the service and dedication of a distinguished Delawarean with a track record of putting service before herself. She is a thoughtful friend, not just to me, but to hundreds of Delawareans up and down the State.

Ronni K. Cohen of Claymont, DE, is a well-known educator and civic leader in Delaware and recently retired after 50 years of public service. She taught thousands of students—children and adults—financial planning, problem-solving, entrepreneurship, and so much more. A Delaware school official once described Ronni as ''one of the most dedicated teachers that I have ever met.''

In total, Ronni spent 33 years in the classrooms of Delaware's Brandywine School District and in 2000 was recognized as Teacher of the Year by the Delaware Department of Education. She was an economics and entrepreneurship teacher at elementary schools like P.S. duPont, Marguerite H. Burnett, and Claymont. During her time with her third, fourth, and fifth graders, Ronni instilled in them an industrial spirit and deployed hands-on lessons about the crucial role that finances play in our everyday lives.

Ronni earned many accolades during her career, including the Delaware Chamber of Commerce Superstars in Education Award, the Small Business Administration Women in Business Champion Award, the Consortium of Entrepreneurship Education Leadership and Advocacy Award, the Delaware Library Partnership Award, and a Freedoms Foundation Leavey Award for private enterprise education.

In 1992, Ronni and her principal opened the first bank within a Delaware public school. This innovative program, in partnership with Wilmington Trust, expanded to 20 other schools across Delaware.

In 2001, when the Delaware Financial Literacy Institute—DFLI—was born, Ronni was the obvious choice to lead it. This not-for-profit organization set out to promote financial education through its Delaware Money School and help individuals gain a better understanding of the consumer marketplace while providing them with the necessary instruments to improve their financial health.

For the next 17 years, Ronni served as DFLI's executive director. She taught classes while recruiting a battalion of volunteer instructors to multiply the efforts of the Delaware Money School. Under her leadership, thousands of adult students completed DFLI coursework and gained the knowledge they needed to take control of their financial futures.

Ronni also served on the Governor's Task Force for Financial Independence and the Delaware General Assembly's Joint Committee on Financial Literacy. In 2016, when the State was developing its financial literacy standards for K–12, she was hand-picked as cochairperson of that committee.

From ''EconoM&Mics'' to ''Purses to Portfolios'' and ''Investing for Your Future,'' Ronni's unique classes have impacted many Delawareans over the years and made our state stronger and more prosperous.

''Ronni Cohen is a remarkably effective educator. She took her prodigious skills to a different platform by helping tens of thousands of Delawareans take control of their personal finances,'' said former Governor Jack Markell. ''Ronni is beloved in the Delaware Money School community—and for a good reason. She gave fully of herself to improve other peoples' lives. Ronni leaves a remarkable legacy of achievement and contribution. I love Ronni Cohen!''

Mr. President, Ronni sees all Delawareans as lifelong students, and she always ensured that her students and mentees had the proper tools to build strong and stable financial futures. Her legacy is one of a teacher who consistently went to extraordinary lengths to make sure herlessons made ''cents.''

Ronni Cohen, from all of your schoolchildren, your adult learners, your neighbors, and your state, please accept our sincere thanks and gratitude. Thank you for dedicating 50 years to public service—and on behalf of our entire state, I wish you a happy, fulfilling retirement. Thank you.●

TRIBUTE TO JOEL GRAVES

● Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, this week I have the honor of recognizing Joel Graves, principal at Lincoln County High School, for his tremendous impact on the students in Eureka and the local community.

Joel was selected as the recipient of the 2019 Montana Association of Secondary School Principals' Principal of the Year award in late January.

This prestigious award recognizes outstanding school leaders who have succeeded in providing high-quality learning opportunities for students, as well as demonstrating exemplary contributions to the profession.

Joel's commitment to the young people of North Lincoln County has earned

him the recognition and admiration of his colleagues, students, and teachers across the State. His leadership as an administrator has fostered an environment where the teachers at Lincoln County High School can excel in providing their students a quality education. He is a strong supporter of encouraging young Montanans to explore all educational opportunities, including career technical training and the trades.

It is my honor to recognize Joel Graves for his excellence as principal of Lincoln County High School. I look forward to following the wonderful successes that will come out of Lincoln County High School because of Joel's leadership.●

HIGH PLAINS HONOR FLIGHT

● Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I stand here today to recognize the veterans of High Plains Honor Flight who have made their inaugural trip to Washington, DC. Distinguished veterans from World War II, the Korean war, and the Vietnam war have made the journey to visit the national memorials dedicated to their service.

Military service is an exceptional duty to the country. Few words can describe the gratitude we all share for sacrifice that these men and women have made to preserve our rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. When the United States has been threatened, our veterans have bravely answered our countries call without reservation. Twice a year, the Honor Flight welcomes veterans from across the country to fly to Washington, DC, free of charge, so that they can visit the national memorials dedicated to their service.

Please join me in honoring Charles Assmus, Clarence Carlson, John Dutton, Gordon Norton, Willis Sibley, Michael Abramovich, George Edinger, James Forrest, Alan Gates, Charles Hall, Jason Laguna, Richard Lindemann, Richard McCown, James McWilliams, Gerald Mitchell, Erlis Morse, John Oliver, Bernard Pisciola, Donald Price, Earle Ridgway, Richard Stoltzfus, Wayne Tobey, Johnny West, Benjamin Zimmerman, Robert Davison, Gerald McDuffee, Jed Pancoast, Ronald Adam, Ronald Albers, Leon Bartholomay, Richard Belt, Hal Bennett, Kenneth Blum, Clyde Bullard Jr., Kenneth Butcher, Jan Carlson, Allan Cazer, Terry Chandler, Spencer Chapin, Daniel Crego, James Crowell, James Davies, Robert Delva, William Dowling, Gerald Ecker, Carl England, Thomas Evans, Ricky Farrier, Markton Gadbury, Roy George, Don Gooding, Jack Hall, Calvin Hamilton, Robert Jacobson, Charles Jett, Larry Johnson, Daniel Katze, James Keeler, Gene Keys, Daniel King, Raymond Kirchner Jr., Damian Kisner, Richard Knight, Terrence Kullbom, Dale Langholf, Noel LaRose II, Harvey Lawson, Richard Lawson, Robert Loner, Jerald Lucas Antonio Luna, Thomas Mason, Tony Mathias, Bobby Matthews, Charles McConnell, Timothy McGinnis, Allen Meyer, Blythe Miley, Richard Miller, Thomas Mitchell, Robert Montgomery, James Morgan, Richard Morris, Paul Niebel, Larry Odegard, Carol Jean Padilla, Theron Parlin, David Patterson, Mark Patterson, Robert Pennington, Randall Peonio, Arturo Perez, Floyd Peterson, Christopher Petroff, Linda Pickett, Gary Pitt, Donald Posselt, Richard Ranabargar, John Rasmussen, Robert Righi, Gary Schuler, Curtis Shaffer, John Shaffner, Lee Sherbenou, Donald Simmons, Jerry Skelton, Richard Smith, Richard Smith Jr., Jimmy Spence, Donald Spotanski, Roger Stocker, Thomas Tedesco, Virgil Treadway, Ted Turner, Thomas Wartella, Arthur Weidner, Mark Williamson, Garry Wilson, William Woolman, Darell Zimbelman.●

REMEMBERING HOWARD LUKE

● Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I want to take a few minutes to recognize the life of a highly respected Athabascan elder Howard Luke, who died September, 21, 2019 in Fairbanks, AK, at age 95.

With the passing of Native elder Howard Luke, Alaska has lost a highly respected Athabascan leader who dedicated his life to empowering the Alaska Native community and ensuring that cultural and traditional knowledge will be passed down to younger generations.

Howard Luke was born in 1923 in Nenana, later moving to Fairbanks with his mother at age 13. A man with a true gentle spirit, Howard made a unique contribution to our State, and he shared his passion of the Athabascan language and traditional ways.

He always stressed the importance of school for young people while also learning their traditions. At his mother's side, he learned the stories and values and subsistence way of life of his people. He sometimes talked about wishing he had received more formal schooling and that he felt hindered by stopping school after the fourth grade; yet he was constantly pursuing learning. He travelled to New Zealand, Australia, Russia, and visited other Tribes throughout the United States. In honor of his efforts, the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District named an alternative school after him. In 1991, he received an honorary high school diploma from that school. Howard later received an honorary doctorate from the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

In discussing his efforts with schools, he said that he wanted teachers to help the kids more than anything else. He knew that you can't just tell them, ''This is the way to do it,'' and leave them alone. You have got to help them. His approach was based on the idea that you have got to make the kids proud of themselves for what they were able to do.

Howard made sure to focus on educating young indigenous people, ''the grandkids,'' about the rich culture and values that are their inheritance.

Howard dedicated his later life to culture camps and cultural education in the schools. He started a camp on the banks of the Chena River, the Gaaleeya Spirit Camp, to teach skills to Native youth, such as art, language, and how to live off the land.

He was a common and welcoming elder in Canada and the Chilkoot Culture Camp in Haines. He shared traditional practices of hunting, teaching deep respect for those resources that are so much a part of Alaska Natives lifestyles.

The knowledge that he had and shared with others is something you cannot learn in a university. This knowledge is passed down from elders to youth, and he recognized the importance of sustaining places for younger generations to learn the ways of their ancestors.

Howard Luke always said, if you love the kids, they will know that they are loved. He also always told the kids to be proud of themselves. Howard was loved in return, and Alaskans are immensely proud of all that he contributed to the State. My deepest condolences to his friends, family, and loved ones during this time as we reflect on the life a legendary Alaskan.●

TRIBUTE TO DR. ANDREW REHFELD

● Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Dr. Andrew Rehfeld, who will be inaugurated as the 10th President of Hebrew Union College Jewish Institute of Religion on Sunday, October 27, 2019.

Founded in Cincinnati, OH in 1875, Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion, or HUC–JIR, is today a premier institution of higher Jewish learning and the center of academic, spiritual, and professional leadership development for Reform Judaism. Over the past 144 years, HUC-JIR has grown into one of this Nation's most distinguished Jewish seminaries, and literally thousands of its rabbinical and cantorial alumni have been leading a Jewish renaissance in North America, Israel, and around the globe. HUC–JIR is also internationally recognized for teaching and mentoring students to serve as Jewish educators and communal leaders in synagogues, schools, Hillel's, hospitals, camps, the U.S. military, and Jewish organizations worldwide. For more than 70 years, HUC–JIR's Pines School of Graduate Studies has been conferring Ph.D. degrees on scholars of all religious traditions who have gone on to teach in colleges, universities, and seminaries around the world. Today, HUC–JIR has campuses in Cincinnati, Jerusalem, Los Angeles, and New York, all of which are vital centers for educational and cultural outreach to those of all faiths and backgrounds.

Dr. Andrew Rehfeld, the new president of HUC–JIR, is a leading political scientist and distinguished Jewish communal leader. Dr. Rehfeld's career has bridged both the academic and professional worlds as associate professor of political science at Washington University and as president and CEO of the Jewish Federation of St. Louis. Elected on December 18, 2018 by the HUC–JIR Board of Governors after a national search, he began his tenure on April 1, 2019, succeeding the late Rabbi Aaron Panken.

Dr. Rehfeld is married to Dr. Miggie Greenberg, a board-certified psychiatrist and director of outpatient psychiatry at St. Louis University. They have two children: Emma, who is the music and T'filah coordinator at Larchmont Temple in Larchmont, NY, and Hoben, who is an artist currently working in St. Louis.

I salute HUC–JIR on this milestone occasion, and I congratulate Dr. Rehfeld and wish him all the best.●

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message from the President of the United States was communicated to the Senate by Ms. Roberts, one of his secretaries.

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

REPORT OF THE VETO OF S.J. RES. 54, A JOINT RESOLUTION THAT WOULD TERMINATE THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES DECLARED IN PROCLAMATION 9844 OF FEBRUARY 15, 2019, PURSUANT TO THE NATIONAL EMERGENCIES ACT REGARDING THE ONGOING CRISIS ON THE SOUTHERN BORDER—PM 32

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States which was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, spread in full upon the Journal, and held at the desk:

To the Senate of the United States:

I am returning herewith without my approval S.J. Res. 54, a joint resolution that would terminate the national emergency I declared in Proclamation 9844 of February 15, 2019, pursuant to the National Emergencies Act, regarding the ongoing crisis on our southern border. I am doing so for the same reasons I returned an identical resolution, H.J. Res. 46, to the House of Representatives without my approval on March 15, 2019.

Proclamation 9844 has helped the Federal Government address the national emergency on our southern border. It has empowered my Administration's Government-wide strategy to counter large-scale unlawful migration and to respond to corresponding humanitarian challenges through focused application of every Constitutional and statutory authority at our disposal. It has also facilitated the military's ongoing construction of virtually insurmountable physical barriers along hundreds of miles of our southern border.

The southern border, however, continues to be a major entry point for criminals, gang members, and illicit narcotics to come into our country. As explained in Proclamation 9844, in my veto message regarding H.J. Res. 46, and in congressional testimony from multiple Administration officials, the ongoing crisis at the southern border threatens core national security interests. In addition, security challenges at the southern border exacerbate an ongoing humanitarian crisis that threatens the well-being of vulnerable populations, including women and children.

In short, the situation on our southern border remains a national emergency, and our Armed Forces are still needed to help confront it.

Like H.J. Res. 46, S.J. Res. 54 would undermine the Government's ability to address this continuing national emergency. It would, among other things, impair the Government's capacity to secure the Nation's southern borders against unlawful entry and to curb the trafficking and smuggling that fuels the present humanitarian crisis.

S.J. Res. 54 is also inconsistent with other recent congressional actions. For example, the Congress, in an overwhelmingly bipartisan manner, has provided emergency resources to address the crisis at the southern border. Additionally, the Congress has approved a budget framework that expressly preserves the emergency authorities my Administration is using to address the crisis.

Proclamation 9844 was neither a new nor novel application of executive authority. Rather, it is the sixtieth Presidential invocation of the National Emergencies Act of 1976. It relies upon the same statutory authority used by both of the previous two Presidents to undertake more than 18 different military construction projects from 2001 through 2013. And it has withstood judicial challenge in the Supreme Court.

Earlier this year, I vetoed H.J. Res. 46 because it was a dangerous resolution that would undermine United States sovereignty and threaten the lives and safety of countless Americans. It was, therefore, my duty to return it to the House of Representatives without my approval. It is similarly my duty, in order to protect the safety and security of our Nation, to return S.J. Res. 54 to the Senate without my approval.

DONALD J. TRUMP.
THE WHITE HOUSE, *October 15, 2019.*

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:45 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 95. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to ensure that children of homeless veterans are included in the calculation of the amounts of certain per diem grants.

H.R. 1199. An act to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct a study regarding the accessibility of websites of the Department of Veterans Affairs to individuals with disabilities.

H.R. 2334. An act to designate the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Odessa, Texas, as the ''Wilson and Young Medal of Honor VA Clinic''.

H.R. 2385. An act to permit the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish a grant program to conduct cemetery research and produce educational materials for the Veterans Legacy Program.

H.R. 3289. An act to amend the Hong Kong Policy Act of 1992 and for other purposes.

H.R. 4270. An act to prohibit commercial exports of certain nonlethal crowd control items and defense articles and services to the Hong Kong Police, and for other purposes.

At 3:24 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following joint resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.J. Res. 77. Joint resolution opposing the decision to end certain United States efforts to prevent Turkish military operations against Syrian Kurdish forces in Northeast Syria.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 95. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to ensure that children of homeless veterans are included in the calculation of the amounts of certain per diem grants; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 1199. An act to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct a study regarding the accessibility of websites of the Department of Veterans Affairs to individuals with disabilities; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 2334. An act to designate the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Odessa, Texas, as the ''Wilson and Young Medal of Honor VA Clinic''; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 2385. An act to permit the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish a grant program to conduct cemetery research and produce educational materials for the Veterans Legacy Program; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 4270. An act to prohibit commercial exports of certain nonlethal crowd control items and defense articles and services to the Hong Kong Police, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 3289. An act to amend the Hong Kong Policy Act of 1992, and for other purposes.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following joint resolutions were read the first time:

H.J. Res. 77. Joint resolution opposing the decision to end certain United States efforts to prevent Turkish military operations against Syrian Kurdish forces in Northeast Syria.

S.J. Res. 58. Joint resolution expressing support for freedom of conscience.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC–2724. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Air Plan Approval; Missouri; Revocation of Kansas City Area Transportation Conformity Requirements Plans'' (FRL No. 10000–76–Region 7) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 4, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2725. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Air Plan Approval; SC; 2010 1-Hour SO2 NAAQS Transport Infrastructure'' (FRL No. 10000–84–Region 4) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 4, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2726. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; District of Columbia; Reasonably Available Control Technology State Implementation Plan for Volatile Organic Compounds under 2008 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard'' (FRL No. 10000–90–Region 3) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 4, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2727. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval of Air Quality Implementation Plans; New York; Infrastructure Requirements for the 2008 Ozone, 2010 Sulfur Dioxide, and 2012 Fine Particulate Matter National Ambient Air Quality Standards'' (FRL No. 10000–78–Region 2) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 4, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2728. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval of Source-Specific Air Quality Implementation Plans; New Jersey'' (FRL No. 10000–91–Region 2) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 4, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2729. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Significant New Use Rules on Certain Chemical Substances; Technical Correction'' (FRL No. 9999–12) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 4, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2730. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revocation of Significant New Uses of Fatty Acid Amide'' (FRL No. 9999–88) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 4, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2731. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''State of Vermont: Discontinuance of Certain Commission Regulatory Authority Within the State; Notice of Agreement Between the NRC and the State of Vermont'' ((10 CFR Part 150) (NRC–2019–0114)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 3, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2732. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Applicability of Existing Regulatory Guides to the Design, Construction, and Operation of an Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation'' (NRC–2019–0157) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 3, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2733. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Office of New Reactors, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Piping Systems and Components - Inspections, Tests, Analyses, and Acceptance Criteria'' (NUREG–0800, Chapter 14.3.3) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 3, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2734. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Consolidated Guidance About Material Licenses: Program-Specific Guidance About Medical Use Licenses'' (NUREG–1556, Volume 9, Revision 3) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 4, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2735. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Report to Congress on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Childhood Obesity Research Demonstration Project'' ; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2736. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel, General Law, Ethics, and Regulation, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Under Secretary (International Affairs), Department of Treasury received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 1, 2019; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2737. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Medicaid Program; State Disproportionate Share Hospital Allotment Reductions'' (RIN0938–AS63) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2019; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2738. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Section 199A Trade or Business Safe Harbor - Rental Real Estate'' (Rev. Proc. 2019–38) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2019; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2739. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Hardship Distributions of Elective Contributions, Qualified Matching Contributions, Qualified Nonelective Contributions, and Earnings'' (RIN1545–BO82) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2019; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2740. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Additional First Year Depreciation Deduction'' (RIN1545–BO74) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2019; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2741. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fringe Benefits Aircraft Valuation Formula'' (Rev. Proc. 2019–22) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 1, 2019; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2742. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Notice Regarding the Special Per Diem Rates for 2019–2020'' (Notice 2019–55) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 1, 2019; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2743. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Guidance Related to Section 958(b)(4) Repeal Relief'' (Rev. Proc. 2019–40) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 1, 2019; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2744. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Remedial Amendment Periods, Pre-approved Plan Cycles, and Plan Amendment Deadlines for 403(b) Plans'' (Rev. Proc. 2019–39) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 1, 2019; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2745. A communication from the Director, Office of Regulations and Reports Clearance, Social Security Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Extension of Expiration Dates for Two Body System Listings'' (RIN0960–AI44) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 27, 2019; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2746. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Medicare and Medicaid Programs; Revisions to Requirements for Discharge Planning for Hospitals, Critical Access Hospitals, and Home Health Agencies, and Hospital and Critical Access Hospital Changes to Promote Innovation, Flexibility, and Improvement in Patient Care'' (RIN0938–AS59) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 1, 2019; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2747. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Medicare and Medicaid Programs; Regulatory Provisions to Promote Program Efficiency, Transparency, and Burden Reduction; Fire Safety Requirements for Certain Dialysis Facilities; Hospital and Critical Access Hospital (CAH) Changes to Promote Innovation, Flexibility, and Improvement in Patient Care'' (RIN0938–AT23) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 1, 2019; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2748. A communication from the Division Director for Policy, Legislation, and Regulation, Employment and Training Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Federal-State Unemployment Compensation Program; Establishing Appropriate Occupations for Drug Testing of Unemployment Compensation Applicants Under the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012'' (RIN1205–AB81) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 4, 2019; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2749. A communication from the Director, Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office of the President, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report and the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) for the report on Other U.S. Contributions to the United Nations and its affiliated agencies during fiscal year 2017; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2750. A communication from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to the Case-Zablocki Act, 1 U.S.C. 112b, as amended, the report of the texts and background statements of international agreements, other than treaties (List 2019–0078 - 2019–0093); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2751. A communication from the Executive Secretary, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Assistant Administrator for the Bureau for Asia, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 26, 2019; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2752. A communication from the Rulemaking Coordinator, Office for Management, Policy, Budget, and Performance, U.S. Agency for International Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Streamlining the Registration Process for Private Voluntary Organizations'' (RIN0412–AA91) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 1, 2019; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2753. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Report to Congress Regarding National HIV Testing Goals''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–2754. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Report to Congress: Pediatric Research in Fiscal Year 2018''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–2755. A communication from the Deputy General Counsel, Office of the General Counsel, Department of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Informational Draft: Requirements for State and Local Report Cards'' received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 26, 2019; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–2756. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Additional Ambient Aerosol CNC Quantitative Fit Testing Protocols: Respiratory Protection Standard'' (RIN1218–AC94) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 30, 2019; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–2757. A communication from the Deputy Director of the Directorate of Standards and Guidance, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Occupational Exposure to Beryllium and Beryllium Compounds in Construction and Shipyard Sectors'' (RIN1218–AD21) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 3, 2019; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–2758. A communication from the Chairman, National Transportation Safety Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Board's annual submission regarding agency compliance with the Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act and revised Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A–123; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2759. A communication from the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled, ''ANC 8C Misappropriated Funds''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2760. A communication from the Associate General Counsel for General Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of General Counsel, Department of Homeland Security, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 25, 2019; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2761. A communication from the Associate General Counsel for General Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Federal Emergency Management Agency Administrator, Department of Homeland Security, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 1, 2019; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2762. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Federal Employee's Retirement System; Present Value Conversion Factors for Spouses of Deceased Separated Employees'' (RIN3206–AN87) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 30, 2019; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2763. A communication from the Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, an annual report relative to the activities and operations of the Public Integrity Section, Criminal Division for 2018, and the nationwide federal law enforcement effort against public corruption; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–2764. A communication from the Federal Liaison Officer, Patent and Trademark Office, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Eliminating Unnecessary Regulations'' (RIN0651–AD25) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 26, 2019; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–2765. A communication from the Division Director for Policy, Legislation, and Regulation, Employment and Training Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Modernizing Recruitment Requirements for the Temporary Employment of H–2A Foreign Workers in the United States'' (RIN1205–AB90) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 27, 2019; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–2766. A communication from the Chief of the Regulatory Coordination Division, Citizenship and Immigration Services, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Inadmissibility on Public Charge Grounds; Correction'' (RIN1615–AA22) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 2, 2019; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. HOEVEN, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, without amendment:

S. 2159. A bill to repeal the Act entitled ''An Act to confer jurisdiction on the State of North Dakota over offenses committed by or against Indians on the Devils Lake Indian Reservation'' (Rept. No. 116–130).

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. BURR (for himself, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. RISCH, Mrs. CAPITO, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. TESTER, Mr. JONES, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. MORAN, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. CRAMER, Ms. BALDWIN, and Mr. ROUNDS):

S. 2602. A bill to exclude vehicles to be used solely for competition from certain provisions of the Clean Air Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, and Ms. HIRONO):

S. 2603. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to end the immigrant visa backlog, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. UDALL (for himself and Mr. SCOTT of Florida):

S. 2604. A bill to require the Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to work with vehicle manufacturers, suppliers, and other interested parties to advance the technology developed by the Driver Alcohol Detection System for Safety Research Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. 2605. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to require the Secretary of Transportation to award grants to States that have enacted and are enforcing certain laws with respect to stretch limousines, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. 2606. A bill to establish safety standards for certain limousines, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. LEE:

S. 2607. A bill to prescribe zoning authority with respect to commercial unmanned aircraft systems and to preserve State, local, and Tribal authorities and private property with respect to unmanned aircraft systems, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. HASSAN:

S. 2608. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to authorize competency-based education demonstration projects; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for Mr. SANDERS):

S. 2609. A bill to amend the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 and the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to make breakfasts and lunches free for all children, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Ms. SMITH):

S. 2610. A bill to reauthorize certain programs under the Office of Indian Energy Policy and Programs of the Department of Energy, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mr. SCHUMER):

S. 2611. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to modify the definition of commercial motor vehicle, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Mr. GRAHAM):

S. 2612. A bill for the relief of Maria Isabel Bueso Barrera, Alberto Bueso Mendoza, and Karla Maria Barrera De Bueso; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for Ms. HARRIS (for herself, Ms. HIRONO, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR)):

S. 2613. A bill to provide a path to end homelessness in the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. YOUNG (for himself and Mr. MURPHY):

S. 2614. A bill to prohibit certain noncompete agreements, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. CASSIDY (for himself, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. COLLINS, and Ms. CANTWELL):

S. 2615. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to improve the historic rehabilitation tax credit, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI:

S. 2616. A bill to provide civil and criminal jurisdiction over Alaska Natives and non-Alaska Natives for certain Indian tribes in the State of Alaska; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. SASSE:

S.J. Res. 58. A joint resolution expressing support for freedom of conscience; read the first time.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. ENZI, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. LANKFORD, and Ms. WARREN):

S. Res. 358. A resolution designating the week beginning October 20, 2019, as ''National Character Counts Week''; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. BLUNT)):

S. Res. 359. A resolution authorizing the use of the atrium in the Philip A. Hart Senate Office Building for the National Prescription Drug Take Back Day, a semiannual event for the Drug Enforcement Administration; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 117

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 117, a bill to prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities who need long-term services and supports, and for other purposes.

S. 175

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 175, a bill to improve agricultural job opportunities, benefits, and security for aliens in the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 433

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 433, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve home health payment reforms under the Medicare program.

S. 477

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 477, a bill to authorize the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to establish a Climate Change Education Program, and for other purposes.

S. 518

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) were added as cosponsors of S. 518, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for Medicare coverage of certain lymphedema compression treatment items as items of durable medical equipment.

S. 595

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the names of the Senator from Iowa (Ms. ERNST) and the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) were added as cosponsors of S. 595, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the coordination of programs to prevent and treat obesity, and for other purposes.

S. 655

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) were added as cosponsors of S. 655, a bill to impose additional restrictions on tobacco flavors for use in e-cigarettes.

S. 727

At the request of Mr. COONS, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 727, a bill to combat international extremism by addressing global fragility and violence and stabilizing conflict-affected areas, and for other purposes.

S. 753

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) was added as a cosponsor of S. 753, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to count a period of receipt of outpatient observation services in a hospital toward satisfying the 3-day inpatient hospital requirement for coverage of skilled nursing facility services under Medicare.

S. 803

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 803, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to restore incentives for investments in qualified improvement property.

S. 879

At the request of Mr. VAN HOLLEN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 879, a bill to provide a process for granting lawful permanent resident status to aliens from certain countries who meet specified eligibility requirements, and for other purposes.

S. 983

At the request of Mr. COONS, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 983, a bill to amend the Energy Conservation and Production Act to reauthorize the weatherization assistance program, and for other purposes.

S. 1012

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1012, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to protect the confidentiality of substance use disorder patient records.

S. 1015

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr.

WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1015, a bill to require the Director of the Office of Management and Budget to review and make certain revisions to the Standard Occupational Classification System, and for other purposes.

S. 1032

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the names of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN), the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) were added as cosponsors of S. 1032, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the definition of income for purposes of determining the tax-exempt status of certain corporations.

S. 1045

At the request of Mr. YOUNG, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1045, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to expand the authority of the Secretary of Health and Human Services to permit nurses to practice in health care facilities with critical shortages of nurses through programs for loan repayment and scholarships for nurses.

S. 1048

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1048, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for a Reducing Youth Use of E–Cigarettes Initiative.

S. 1168

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1168, a bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to ensure campus access at public institutions of higher education for religious groups.

S. 1203

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1203, a bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 in order to improve the public service loan forgiveness program, and for other purposes.

S. 1235

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1235, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of ratification of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, giving women in the United States the right to vote.

S. 1253

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN), the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1253, a bill to apply requirements relating to delivery sales of cigarettes to delivery sales of electronic nicotine delivery systems, and for other purposes.

S. 1267

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND), the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN), the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER), the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) and the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) were added as cosponsors of S. 1267, a bill to establish within the Smithsonian Institution the National Museum of the American Latino, and for other purposes.

S. 1564

At the request of Mr. TILLIS, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1564, a bill to require the Securities and Exchange Commission and certain Federal agencies to carry out a study relating to accounting standards, and for other purposes.

S. 1725

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1725, a bill to permit occupational therapists to conduct the initial assessment visit and complete the comprehensive assessment under a Medicare home health plan of care for certain rehabilitation cases.

S. 1822

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the names of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) were added as cosponsors of S. 1822, a bill to require the Federal Communications Commission to issue rules relating to the collection of data with respect to the availability of broadband services, and for other purposes.

S. 1838

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the names of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN), the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT) were added as cosponsors of S. 1838, a bill to amend the Hong Kong Policy Act of 1992, and for other purposes.

S. 1908

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1908, a bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to improve the efficiency of summer meals.

S. 2059

At the request of Mr. TILLIS, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2059, a bill to provide a civil remedy for individuals harmed by sanctuary jurisdiction policies, and for other purposes.

S. 2074

At the request of Ms. HASSAN, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2074, a bill to amend section 303(g) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 823(g)) to eliminate the separate registration requirement for dispensing narcotic drugs in schedule III, IV, or V, such as buprenorphine, for maintenance or detoxification treatment, and for other purposes.

S. 2158

At the request of Ms. HASSAN, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2158, a bill to improve certain programs of the Department of Health and Human Services with respect to heritable disorders.

S. 2160

At the request of Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2160, a bill to require carbon monoxide alarms in certain federally assisted housing, and for other purposes.

S. 2179

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) were added as cosponsors of S. 2179, a bill to amend the Older Americans Act of 1965 to provide social service agencies with the resources to provide services to meet the urgent needs of Holocaust survivors to age in place with dignity, comfort, security, and quality of life.

S. 2216

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2216, a bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to formally recognize caregivers of veterans, notify veterans and caregivers of clinical determinations relating to eligibility for caregiver programs, and temporarily extend benefits for veterans who are determined ineligible for the family caregiver program, and for other purposes.

S. 2254

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2254, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to create a Pension Rehabilitation Trust Fund, to establish a Pension Rehabilitation Administration within the Department of the Treasury to make loans to multiemployer defined benefit plans, and for other purposes.

S. 2289

At the request of Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2289, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for an extension of the energy credit and the credit for residential energy efficient property.

S. 2295

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2295, a bill to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to reauthorize the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, and for other purposes.

S. 2417

At the request of Mr. KENNEDY, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2417, a bill to provide for

payment of proceeds from savings bonds to a State with title to such bonds pursuant to the judgment of a court.

S. 2434

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2434, a bill to establish the National Criminal Justice Commission.

S. 2439

At the request of Mr. KING, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2439, a bill to amend the Trademark Act of 1946 to provide that the licensing of a mark for use by a related company may not be construed as establishing an employment relationship between the owner of the mark, or an authorizing person, and either that related company or the employees of that related company, and for other purposes.

S. 2461

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2461, a bill to designate a portion of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge as wilderness.

S. 2546

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2546, a bill to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to require a group health plan or health insurance coverage offered in connection with such a plan to provide an exceptions process for any medication step therapy protocol, and for other purposes.

S. 2550

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2550, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to deny the deduction for advertising and promotional expenses for tobacco products and electronic nicotine delivery systems.

S. 2574

At the request of Mr. GARDNER, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2574, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to increase the ability of Medicare and Medicaid providers to access the National Practitioner Data Bank for the purpose of conducting employee background checks.

S.J. RES. 53

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the names of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW), the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND), the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED), the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ), the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 53, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Environmental Protection Agency relating to ''Repeal of the Clean Power Plan; Emission Guidelines for Greenhouse Gas Emissions From Existing Electric Utility Generating Units; Revisions to Emission Guidelines Implementing Regulations''.

S.J. RES. 57

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 57, a joint resolution opposing the decision to end certain United States efforts to prevent Turkish military operations against Syrian Kurdish forces in Northeast Syria.

S. CON. RES. 21

At the request of Mr. COTTON, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 21, a concurrent resolution strongly condemning human rights violations, violence against civilians, and cooperation with Iran by the Houthi movement and its allies in Yemen.

S. RES. 303

At the request of Mr. HAWLEY, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 303, a resolution calling upon the leadership of the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to dismantle its kwan-li-so political prison labor camp system, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 318

At the request of Mr. RISCH, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 318, a resolution to support the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and the Sixth Replenishment.

S. RES. 339

At the request of Mr. ENZI, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 339, a resolution supporting the goals and ideals of National Retirement Security Week, including raising public awareness of the various tax-preferred retirement vehicles, increasing personal financial literacy, and engaging the people of the United States on the keys to success in achieving and maintaining retirement security throughout their lifetimes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, and Ms. HIRONO):

S. 2603. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to end the immigrant visa backlog, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 2603

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Resolving Extended Limbo for Immigrant Employees and Families Act'' or the ''RELIEF Act''.

SEC. 2. NUMERICAL LIMITATION TO ANY SINGLE FOREIGN STATE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 202(a)(2) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1152(a)(2)) is amended—

(1) in the paragraph heading, by striking ''AND EMPLOYMENT-BASED'';

(2) by striking ''(3), (4), and (5),'' and inserting ''(3) and (4),'';

(3) by striking ''subsections (a) and (b) of section 203'' and inserting ''section 203(a)'';

(4) by striking ''7'' and inserting ''15''; and

(5) by striking ''such subsections'' and inserting ''such section''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 202 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1152) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(3), by striking ''both subsections (a) and (b) of section 203'' and inserting ''section 203(a)'';

(2) by striking subsection (a)(5); and

(3) by amending subsection (e) to read as follows:

''(e) SPECIAL RULES FOR COUNTRIES AT CEILING.—If it is determined that the total number of immigrant visas made available under section 203(a) to natives of any single foreign state or dependent area will exceed the numerical limitation specified in subsection (a)(2) in any fiscal year, in determining the allotment of immigrant visa numbers to natives under section 203(a), visa numbers with respect to natives of that state or area shall be allocated (to the extent practicable and otherwise consistent with this section and section 203) in a manner so that, except as provided in subsection (a)(4), the proportion of the visa numbers made available under each of paragraphs (1) through (4) of section 203(a) is equal to the ratio of the total number of visas made available under the respective paragraph to the total number of visas made available under section 203(a).''.

(c) COUNTRY-SPECIFIC OFFSET.—Section 2 of the Chinese Student Protection Act of 1992 (8 U.S.C. 1255 note) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking ''subsection (e))'' and inserting ''subsection (d))''; and

(2) by striking subsection (d) and redesignating subsection (e) as subsection (d).

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect as if enacted on September 30, 2019, and shall apply to fiscal years beginning with fiscal year 2020.

(e) TRANSITION RULES FOR EMPLOYMENT-BASED IMMIGRANTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the succeeding paragraphs of this subsection and notwithstanding title II of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1151 et seq.), the following rules shall apply:

(A) For fiscal year 2020, 15 percent of the immigrant visas made available under each of paragraphs (2), (3), and (5) of section 203(b) of such Act (8 U.S.C. 1153(b)) shall be allotted to immigrants who are natives of a foreign state or dependent area that is not one of the two states with the largest aggregate numbers of natives who are beneficiaries of approved petitions for immigrant status under such paragraphs.

(B) For fiscal year 2021, 10 percent of the immigrant visas made available under each of such paragraphs shall be allotted to immigrants who are natives of a foreign state or dependent area that is not one of the two states with the largest aggregate numbers of natives who are beneficiaries of approved petitions for immigrant status under such paragraphs.

(C) For fiscal year 2022, 10 percent of the immigrant visas made available under each of such paragraphs shall be allotted to immigrants who are natives of a foreign state or dependent area that is not one of the two states with the largest aggregate numbers of natives who are beneficiaries of approved petitions for immigrant status under such paragraphs.

(2) PER-COUNTRY LEVELS.—

(A) RESERVED VISAS.—With respect to the visas reserved under each of subparagraphs (A) through (C) of paragraph (1), the number of such visas made available to natives of any single foreign state or dependent area in the appropriate fiscal year may not exceed 25 percent (in the case of a single foreign state) or 2 percent (in the case of a dependent area) of the total number of such visas.

(B) UNRESERVED VISAS.—With respect to the immigrant visas made available under each of paragraphs (2), (3), and (5) of section 203(b) of such Act (8 U.S.C. 1153(b)) and not reserved under paragraph (1), for each of fiscal years 2020, 2021, and 2022, not more than 85 percent shall be allotted to immigrants who are natives of any single foreign state.

(3) SPECIAL RULE TO PREVENT UNUSED VISAS.—If, with respect to fiscal year 2020, 2021, or 2022, the operation of paragraphs (1) and (2) of this subsection would prevent the total number of immigrant visas made available under paragraph (2) or (3) of section 203(b) of such Act (8 U.S.C. 1153(b)) from being issued, such visas may be issued during the remainder of such fiscal year without regard to paragraphs (1) and (2) of this subsection.

(4) TRANSITION RULE FOR CURRENTLY APPROVED BENEFICIARIES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding section 202 of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended by this Act, immigrant visas under section 203(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1153(b)) shall be allocated such that no alien described in subparagraph (B) receives a visa later than the alien otherwise would have received said visa had this Act not been enacted.

(B) ALIEN DESCRIBED.—An alien is described in this subparagraph if the alien is the beneficiary of a petition for an immigrant visa under section 203(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1153(b)) that was approved prior to the date of enactment of this Act.

(5) RULES FOR CHARGEABILITY.—Section 202(b) of such Act (8 U.S.C. 1152(b)) shall apply in determining the foreign state to which an alien is chargeable for purposes of this subsection.

(6) ENSURING AVAILABILITY OF IMMIGRANT VISAS.—For each of fiscal years 2020 through 2024, notwithstanding sections 201 and 202 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1151, 1152), as amended by this Act, additional immigrant visas under section 203 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1153) shall be made available and allocated—

(A) such that no alien who is a beneficiary of a petition for an immigrant visa under such section 203 receives a visa later than the alien otherwise would have received such visa had this Act not been enacted; and

(B) to permit all visas to be distributed in accordance with this section.

SEC. 3. ENDING IMMIGRANT VISA BACKLOG.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In addition to any immigrant visa made available under the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101 et seq.), as amended by this Act, subject to paragraphs (1) and (2), the Secretary of State shall make immigrant visas available to—

(1) aliens who are beneficiaries of petitions filed under subsection (b) of section 203 of such Act (8 U.S.C. 1153) before the date of the enactment of this Act; and

(2) aliens who are beneficiaries of petitions filed under subsection (a) of such section before the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) ALLOCATION OF VISAS.—The visas made available under this section shall be allocated as follows:

(1) EMPLOYMENT-SPONSORED IMMIGRANT VISAS.—In each of fiscal years 2020 through 2024, the Secretary of State shall allocate to aliens described in subsection (a)(1) a number of immigrant visas equal to 1/5 of the number of aliens described in such subsection the visas of whom have not been issued as of the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) FAMILY-SPONSORED IMMIGRANT VISAS.—In each of fiscal years 2020 through 2024, the Secretary of State shall allocate to aliens described in subsection (a)(2) a number of immigrant visas equal to 1/5 of the difference between—

(A) the number of aliens described in such subsection the visas of whom have not been issued as of the date of the enactment of this Act; and

(B) the number of aliens described in subsection (a)(1).

(c) ORDER OF ISSUANCE FOR PREVIOUSLY FILED APPLICATIONS.—The visas made available under this section shall be issued in accordance with section 202 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1152), as amended by this Act, in the order in which the petitions under section 203 of such Act (8 U.S.C. 1153) were filed.

SEC. 4. KEEPING AMERICAN FAMILIES TOGETHER.

(a) RECLASSIFICATION OF SPOUSES AND MINOR CHILDREN OF LAWFUL PERMANENT RESIDENTS AS IMMEDIATE RELATIVES AND EXEMPTION OF DERIVATIVES.—The Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 201(b) (8 U.S.C. 1151(b))—

(A) in paragraph (1), by adding at the end the following:

''(F) Aliens who derive status under section 203(d).''; and

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

''(2)(A) IMMEDIATE RELATIVES.—Aliens who are immediate relatives.

''(B) DEFINITION OF IMMEDIATE RELATIVE.—In this paragraph, the term 'immediate relative' means—

''(i) a child, spouse, or parent of a citizen of the United States, except that in the case of such a parent such citizen shall be at least 21 years of age;

''(ii) a child or spouse of an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence;

''(iii) a child or spouse of an alien described in clause (i), who is accompanying or following to join the alien;

''(iv) a child or spouse of an alien described in clause (ii), who is accompanying or following to join the alien;

''(v) an alien admitted under section 211(a) on the basis of a prior issuance of a visa to the alien's accompanying parent who is an immediate relative; and

''(vi) an alien born to an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence during a temporary visit abroad.

''(C) TREATMENT OF SPOUSE AND CHILDREN OF DECEASED CITIZEN OR LAWFUL PERMANENT RESIDENT.—If an alien who was the spouse or child of a citizen of the United States or of an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence and was not legally separated from the citizen or lawful permanent resident at the time of the citizen's or lawful permanent resident's death files a petition under section 204(a)(1)(B), the alien spouse (and each child of the alien) shall remain, for purposes of this paragraph, an immediate relative during the period beginning on the date of the citizen's or permanent resident's death and ending on the date on which the alien spouse remarries.

''(D) PROTECTION OF VICTIMS OF ABUSE.—An alien who has filed a petition under clause (iii) or (iv) of section 204(a)(1)(A) shall remain, for purposes of this paragraph, an immediate relative if the United States citizen or lawful permanent resident spouse or parent loses United States citizenship on account of the abuse.''; and

(2) in section 203(a) (8 U.S.C. 1153(a))—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking ''23,400'' and inserting ''111,334''; and

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

''(2) UNMARRIED SONS AND UNMARRIED DAUGHTERS OF LAWFUL PERMANENT RESIDENTS.—Qualified immigrants who are the unmarried sons or unmarried daughters (but are not the children) of aliens lawfully admitted for permanent residence shall be allocated visas in a number not to exceed 26,266, plus—

''(A) the number of visas by which the worldwide level exceeds 226,000; and

''(B) the number of visas not required for the class specified in paragraph (1).''.

(b) PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM AGING OUT.—Section 203(h) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1153(h)) is amended—

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

''(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of subsection (d), a determination of whether an alien satisfies the age requirement in the matter preceding subparagraph (A) of section 101(b)(1) shall be made using the age of the alien on the date on which the petition is filed with the Secretary of Homeland Security under section 204.'';

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

''(2) PETITIONS DESCRIBED.—A petition described in this paragraph is a petition filed under section 204 for classification of—

''(A) the alien's parent under subsection (a), (b), or (c); or

''(B) the alien as an immediate relative based on classification as a child of—

''(i) a citizen of the United States; or

''(ii) a lawful permanent resident.'';

(3) in paragraph (3), by striking ''subsections (a)(2)(A) and'' and inserting ''subsection''; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

''(5) TREATMENT FOR NONIMMIGRANT CATEGORIES PURPOSES.—An alien dependent treated as a child for immigrant visa purposes under this subsection shall be treated as a dependent child for nonimmigrant categories.''.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) DEFINITIONS.—Section 101(a)(15)(K)(ii) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(15)(K)(ii)) is amended by striking ''section 201(b)(2)(A)(i)'' and inserting ''section 201(b)(2) (other than clause (v) or (vi) of subparagraph (B))''.

(2) RULES FOR DETERMINING WHETHER CERTAIN ALIENS ARE IMMEDIATE RELATIVES.—Section 201(f) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1151(f)) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking ''paragraphs (2) and (3),'' and inserting ''paragraph (2),'';

(B) by striking paragraph (2);

(C) by redesignating paragraphs (3) and (4) as paragraphs (2) and (3), respectively; and

(D) in paragraph (3), as so redesignated, by striking ''through (3)'' and inserting ''and (2)''.

(3) PER COUNTRY LEVEL.—Section 202(a)(1)(A) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1152(a)(1)(A)) is amended by striking ''section 201(b)(2)(A)(i)'' and inserting ''section 201(b)(2) (other than clause (v) or (vi) of subparagraph (B))''.

(4) NUMERICAL LIMITATION TO ANY SINGLE FOREIGN STATE.—Section 202(a)(4) (8 U.S.C. 1152(a)(4)) is amended—

(A) by striking subparagraphs (A) and (B);

(B) by redesignating subparagraphs (C) and (D) as subparagraphs (A) and (B), respectively; and

(C) in subparagraph (A), as so redesignated—

(i) by striking the undesignated matter following clause (ii);

(ii) by striking clause (ii);

(iii) in clause (i), by striking '', or'' and inserting a period; and

(iv) in the matter preceding clause (i), by striking ''section 203(a)(2)(B) may not exceed'' and all that follows through ''23 percent'' in clause (i) and inserting ''section 203(a)(2) may not exceed 23 percent''.

(5) PROCEDURES FOR GRANTING IMMIGRANT STATUS.—Section 204 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1154) is amended—

(A) in subsection (a)—

(i) in paragraph (1)—

(I) in subparagraph (A)—

(aa) in clause (i), by striking ''section 201(b)(2)(A)(i)'' and inserting ''clause (i) or (ii) of section 201(b)(2)(B)'';

(bb) in clause (ii), by striking ''the second sentence of section 201(b)(2)(A)(i)'' and inserting ''section 201(b)(2)(C)'';

(cc) by amending clause (iii) to read as follows:

''(iii)(I) An alien who is described in clause (ii) may file a petition with the Secretary of Homeland Security under this subparagraph for classification of the alien (and any child of the alien) if the alien demonstrates to the Secretary that—

''(aa) the marriage or the intent to marry the citizen of the United States or lawful permanent resident was entered into in good faith by the alien; and

''(bb) during the marriage or relationship intended by the alien to be legally a marriage, the alien or a child of the alien has been battered or has been the subject of extreme cruelty perpetrated by the alien's spouse or intended spouse.

''(II) For purposes of subclause (I), an alien described in this subclause is an alien—

''(aa)(AA) who is the spouse of a citizen of the United States or lawful permanent resident;

''(BB) who believed that he or she had married a citizen of the United States or lawful permanent resident and with whom a marriage ceremony was actually performed and who otherwise meets any applicable requirements under this Act to establish the existence of and bona fides of a marriage, but whose marriage is not legitimate solely because of the bigamy of such citizen of the United States or lawful permanent resident; or

''(CC) who was a bona fide spouse of a citizen of the United States or a lawful permanent resident within the past 2 years and whose spouse died within the past 2 years, whose spouse renounced citizenship status or renounced or lost status as a lawful permanent resident within the past 2 years related to an incident of domestic violence, or who demonstrates a connection between the legal termination of the marriage within the past 2 years and battering or extreme cruelty by a spouse who is a citizen of the United States or a lawful permanent resident spouse;

''(bb) who is a person of good moral character;

''(cc) who is eligible to be classified as an immediate relative under section 201(b)(2)(B) or who would have been so classified but for the bigamy of the citizen of the United States or lawful permanent resident that the alien intended to marry; and

''(dd) who has resided with the alien's spouse or intended spouse.'';

(dd) by amending clause (iv) to read as follows:

''(iv) An alien who is the child of a citizen or lawful permanent resident of the United States, or who was a child of a United States citizen or lawful permanent resident parent who within the past 2 years lost or renounced citizenship status related to an incident of domestic violence, and who is a person of good moral character, who is eligible to be classified as an immediate relative under section 201(b)(2)(B), and who resides, or has resided in the past, with the citizen or lawful permanent resident parent may file a petition with the Secretary of Homeland Security under this subparagraph for classification of the alien (and any child of the alien) under such section if the alien demonstrates to the Secretary that the alien has been battered by or has been the subject of extreme cruelty perpetrated by the alien's citizen or lawful permanent resident parent. For purposes of this clause, residence includes any period of visitation.''; and

(ee) in clause (v)(I), in the matter preceding item (aa), by inserting ''or lawful permanent resident'' after ''citizen'';

(ff) in clause (vi), by striking ''renunciation of citizenship'' and all that follows through ''citizenship status'' and inserting ''renunciation of citizenship or lawful permanent resident status, death of the abuser, divorce, or changes to the abuser's citizenship or lawful permanent resident status''; and

(gg) in clause (vii), by striking ''section 201(b)(2)(A)(i)'' each place it appears and inserting ''section 201(b)(2)(B)'';

(II) by amending subparagraph (B) to read as follows:

''(B)(i)(I) Except as provided in subclause (II), any alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence claiming that an alien is entitled to a classification by reason of the relationship described in section 203(a)(2) may file a petition with the Attorney General for such classification.

''(II) Subclause (I) shall not apply in the case of an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence who has been convicted of a specified offense against a minor (as defined in subparagraph (A)(viii)(II)), unless the Secretary of Homeland Security, in the Secretary's sole and unreviewable discretion, determines that such person poses no risk to the alien with respect to whom a petition described in subclause (I) is filed.

''(ii) An alien who was the child of a lawful permanent resident who within the past 2 years lost lawful permanent resident status due to an incident of domestic violence, and who is a person of good moral character, who is eligible for classification under section 203(a)(2), and who resides, or has resided in the past, with the alien's permanent resident alien parent may file a petition with the Secretary of Homeland Security under this subparagraph for classification of the alien (and any child of the alien) under such section if the alien demonstrates to the Secretary that the alien has been battered by or has been the subject of extreme cruelty perpetrated by the alien's permanent resident parent.

''(iii)(I) For purposes of a petition filed or approved under clause (ii), the loss of lawful permanent resident status by a parent after the filing of a petition under that clause shall not adversely affect approval of the petition, and for an approved petition, shall not affect the alien's ability to adjust status under subsections (a) and (c) of section 245 or obtain status as a lawful permanent resident based on an approved self-petition under clause (ii).

''(II) Upon the lawful permanent resident parent becoming or establishing the existence of United States citizenship through naturalization, acquisition of citizenship, or other means, any petition filed with the Secretary of Homeland Security and pending or approved under clause (ii) on behalf of an alien who has been battered or subjected to extreme cruelty shall be deemed reclassified as a petition filed under subparagraph (A) even if the acquisition of citizenship occurs the termination of parental rights.''; and

(III) in subparagraph (D)(i)(I), by striking ''paragraph (1), (2), or (3)'' and inserting ''paragraph (1) or (3)''; and

(ii) in paragraph (2)—

(I) by striking ''spousal second preference petition'' each place it appears and inserting ''petition for the spouse of an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence''; and

(II) in the undesignated matter following subparagraph (A)(ii), by striking ''preference status under section 203(a)(2)'' and inserting ''classification as an immediate relative under section 201(b)(2)(B)(ii)'';

(B) in subsection (c)(1), by striking ''or preference status''; and

(C) in subsection (k)(1), by striking ''203(a)(2)(B)'' and inserting ''203(a)(2)''.

(6) EXCLUDABLE ALIENS.—Section 212(d)(12)(B) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1182(d)(12)(B)) is amended by striking ''section 201(b)(2)(A)'' and inserting ''section 201(b)(2) (other than subparagraph (B)(vi))''.

(7) ADMISSION OF NONIMMIGRANTS.—Section 214(r)(3)(A) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1184(r)(3)(A)) is amended by striking ''section 201(b)(2)(A)(i)'' and inserting ''section 201(b)(2) (other than clause (v) or (vi) of subparagraph (B)).''

(8) DEFINITION OF ALIEN SPOUSE.—Section 216(h)(1)(A) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1186a(h)(1)(A)) is amended by inserting ''or an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence'' after ''United States''.

(9) REFUGEE CRISIS IN IRAQ ACT OF 2007.—Section 1243(a)(4) of the Refugee Crisis in Iraq Act of 2007 (Public Law 110–118; 8 U.S.C. 1157 note) is amended by striking ''section 201(b)(2)(A)(i)'' and inserting ''section 201(b)(2) (other than clause (v) or (vi) of subparagraph (B))''.

(10) PROCESSING OF VISA APPLICATIONS.—Section 233(b)(1) of the Department of State Authorization Act, Fiscal Year 2003 (Public Law 107–228; 8 U.S.C. 1201 note) is amended by striking ''section 201(b)(2)(A)(i)'' and inserting ''section 201(b)(2) (other than clause (v) or (vi) of subparagraph (B))''.

By Mr. UDALL (for himself and Mr. SCOTT of Florida):

S. 2604. A bill to require the Administrator of the National Highway Traffic

Safety Administration to work with vehicle manufacturers, suppliers, and other interested parties to advance the technology developed by the Driver Alcohol Detection System for Safety Research Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the Reduce Impaired Driving for Everyone Act of 2019 or RIDE Act of 2019. I would like to thank my co-sponsor, Senator RICK SCOTT of Florida, who joins me on this important bill—a bill that will help end drunk driving and prevent thousands of fatalities and injuries across the nation.

While we have made progress over the last several decades to reduce drunk driving on our roads, it is still a national tragedy. In 2017, the latest year for which we have statistics, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration found that 10,874 person were killed on American roads by a drunk driver. That's one death every 48 minutes. And most tragically: every single one of those 10,874 deaths could have been prevented.

Traffic fatalities due to drunk driving account for one-third of all such fatalities. Yet, drunk drivers have only a two percent chance of being caught. And one study found that the average drunk driver has driven drunk 87 times before being arrested. The RIDE Act aims to make sure these drivers do not hit the road in the first place.

I'm not new to this fight. When I was Attorney General of New Mexico in the 1990's, our State had one of the highest DWI rates in the Nation. Then, on Christmas Eve in 1992, a drunk driver killed a mother and her three young daughters as he sped down the highway the wrong way going 90 miles per hour. That tragedy galvanized me and many others in our State. I worked to impose stronger penalties for repeat offenders, impose a lower legal limit for intoxication, and close drive-up liquor windows. Those efforts and the efforts of many others across New Mexico helped bring down the number of alcohol-related fatalities from 460 in 1992 to 131 in 2017. But that's 131 too many. And so we have more work to do in New Mexico and across the Nation.

I've worked many years to fund development of the Driver Alcohol Detection System for Safety or DADSS technology—technology that prevents drivers impaired above the legal limit from ever taking the wheel. When I first started advocating for this technology, it seemed far-fetched to some, out of reach. But, now—it's being road-tested and within our grasp.

The RIDE Act builds on the $50 million dollars Congress has appropriated since 2008 by appropriating $5 million per year toward drunk driver detection technology during fiscal years 2021 and 2022. The bill will fund the technology transfer of this software to ready it for installation and testing in vehicles.

At the same time the Federal government has moved to introduce this technology, some private automobile manufacturers are also developing technology of their own for installation in their vehicles. They are to be applauded.

NHTSA and the Automotive Coalition for Traffic Safety, of which every major automobile manufacturer is a member, have engaged in a decade-long public-private partnership to research, manufacture, and test equipment to make vehicles inoperable if alcohol is present in a person's breath. They are engaged now in calibration to ensure that a vehicle will be inoperable only if a driver is above the legal limit. NHTSA and ACTS are working with the states of Maryland and Virginia to test this technology. Real world testing is essential—which is why the RIDE Act will empower the Federal General Services Administration to incorporate anti-drunk driving software into its fleet on a pilot basis.

Finally, the RIDE Act requires the NHTSA to promulgate rules to require installation of advanced drunk driving prevention technology in all new vehicles not later than two years after enactment of the bill. Automobile manufacturers will have two model years to comply with the rule. This means the RIDE Act sets out about a four year window to prevent drunk driving in all new vehicles. This tremendous goal is within reach.

Again, I appreciate the support of my colleague, Senator SCOTT. The RIDE Act should have strong bipartisan support. Drunk drivers don't discriminate on the basis of political party. I urge all our colleagues to join us in this important fight against drunk driving and the devastation that it causes.

S. 2604

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Reduce Impaired Driving for Everyone Act of 2019'' or the ''RIDE Act of 2019''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that—

(1) alcohol-impaired driving fatalities represent approximately ⅓ of all highway fatalities in the United States each year;

(2) in 2017, there were 10,874 alcohol-impaired driving fatalities in the United States involving drivers with a blood alcohol concentration level of .08 or higher, and 68 percent of the crashes that resulted in those fatalities involved a driver with a blood alcohol concentration level of .15 or higher;

(3) the estimated economic cost for alcohol-impaired driving in 2010 was $44,000,000,000;

(4) the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has partnered with automobile manufacturers to develop alcohol detection technologies that could be installed in vehicles to prevent drunk driving; and

(5) the Federal Government has invested nearly $50,000,000 in advanced alcohol detection software, and companies are actively pursuing solutions to the significant problem of drunk driving.

SEC. 3. ADVANCED DRUNK DRIVING PREVENTION TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ''Administrator'' means the Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

(2) DADSS.—The term ''DADSS'' means the Driver Alcohol Detection System for Safety Research Program carried out through a public-private partnership between the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the Automotive Coalition for Traffic Safety.

(3) NEW VEHICLE.—The term ''new vehicle'' has the meaning given the term in section 37.3 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor regulation).

(b) TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AND VEHICLE INTEGRATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—During fiscal years 2021 and 2022, the Administrator shall work directly with vehicle manufacturers, suppliers, and other interested parties, including institutions of higher education with expertise in automotive engineering, to advance the technology developed by DADSS, and other suitable advanced drunk driving prevention technology, as determined by the Administrator, with the goal of integrating the technology, at the earliest practicable date, into new vehicles.

(2) FUNDING.—Any amounts made available to carry out this subsection under subsection (h)(1) shall be made available for the purposes described in paragraph (1) pursuant to the existing cooperative agreement entered into by the Administrator and the Automotive Coalition for Traffic Safety to carry out DADSS.

(c) DEMONSTRATION OF TECHNOLOGY IN FEDERAL FLEETS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Beginning in fiscal year 2021, the Administrator shall work with the Administrator of General Services to demonstrate advanced drunk driving prevention technology in not fewer than 2,500 vehicles in Federal fleets.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out paragraph (1), the Administrator shall ensure that the fleet vehicles in which advanced drunk driving prevention technology is demonstrated—

(A) are driven not less than 3 days per week;

(B) are located in various regions in the United States; and

(C) collectively include not more than 3 make, model, and model year combinations.

(d) PILOT DEPLOYMENT OF PROTOTYPE ADVANCED DRUNK DRIVING PREVENTION TECHNOLOGY IN NON-FEDERAL FLEETS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—To assist in the development of, and to aid the creation of market demand for, advanced drunk driving prevention technology, the Administrator shall carry out a program to encourage the use of advanced drunk driving prevention technology in—

(A) State and local government fleets; and

(B) private sector fleets.

(2) FUNDING.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Out of any amounts made available to the Administrator and not otherwise obligated, the Administrator shall use such sums as are necessary to carry out paragraph (1).

(B) EXISTING PROGRAM FUNDING.—The Administrator may continue to use, in accordance with existing guidelines for the relevant fund, any Federal fund used by the Administrator on the date of enactment of this Act to carry out an existing program that satisfies the requirements of paragraph (1).

(e) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, and every 180 days thereafter, the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives a report describing the progress of the Administrator in carrying out subsections (c) and (d).

(f) STAKEHOLDER TEAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall establish and maintain a team, to be known as the ''Stakeholder Team'', to provide input for the Administrator to consider on issues of public policy, deployment, and State law relating to the deployment of advanced drunk driving prevention technology in motor vehicles.

(2) MEMBERSHIP.—The Stakeholder Team shall be composed of—

(A) vehicle manufacturers;

(B) suppliers;

(C) safety advocates;

(D) fleet administrators or managers; and

(E) other interested parties with expertise in public policy, marketing, or product release.

(g) RULEMAKING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (3), not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall issue a final rule prescribing a Federal motor vehicle safety standard that requires advanced drunk driving prevention technology in all new vehicles.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—

(A) LEAD TIME.—The compliance date of the rule issued under paragraph (1) shall be not more than 2 model years after the effective date of that rule.

(B) TECHNICAL CAPABILITY.—Any advanced drunk driving prevention technology required for new vehicles under paragraph (1) that measures blood alcohol concentration shall automatically use the legal limit for blood alcohol concentration of the jurisdiction in which the vehicle is located.

(3) TIMING.—If the Administrator determines that it is not practicable to issue the rule described in paragraph (1) by the applicable date, the Administrator—

(A) may extend the time period for such time as the Administrator determines to be necessary; and

(B) shall, not later than the date described in paragraph (1), and not less frequently than annually thereafter until the date on which the rule under that paragraph is issued, submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives a report describing, as of the date of submission of the report—

(i) the reasons for not prescribing a Federal motor vehicle safety standard that requires advanced drunk driving prevention technology in all new vehicles;

(ii) the deployment of advanced drunk driving prevention technology in vehicles;

(iii) any information regarding the ability of vehicle manufacturers to include advanced drunk driving prevention technology in new vehicles; and

(iv) an anticipated timeline for prescribing the Federal motor vehicle safety standard described in paragraph (1).

(h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated—

(1) to carry out subsection (b), $5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2021 and 2022; and

(2) to carry out subsection (c), $25,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2021 through 2022, to remain available until expended.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. 2605. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to require the Secretary of Transportation to award grants to States that have enacted and are enforcing certain laws with respect to stretch limousines, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 2605

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Take Unsafe Limos Off the Road Act''.

SEC. 2. GRANT PROGRAM FOR SAFETY OF STRETCH LIMOUSINES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter IV of chapter 311 of title 49, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 31162. Grant program for safety of stretch limousines

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) ELIGIBLE DEFECT.—The term 'eligible defect' means a defect that would cause a motor vehicle to fail a commercial motor vehicle safety inspection.

''(2) PASSENGER MOTOR VEHICLE.—The term 'passenger motor vehicle' has the meaning given the term in section 32101.

''(3) SECRETARY.—The term 'Secretary' means the Secretary of Transportation.

''(4) STRETCH LIMOUSINE.—The term 'stretch limousine' means a new or used passenger motor vehicle that—

''(A) has been modified, altered, or extended in a manner that increases the overall wheelbase of the vehicle—

''(i) beyond the wheelbase dimension of the original equipment manufacturer for the base model and year of the vehicle; and

''(ii) to a length sufficient to accommodate additional passengers; and

''(B) after being altered as described in subparagraph (A), has a seating capacity of not fewer than 9 passengers, including the driver.

''(b) GRANT PROGRAM.—Each fiscal year, the Secretary shall make a grant, in accordance with this section, to each State that is eligible for a grant under subsection (c).

''(c) ELIGIBILITY.—A State is eligible for a grant under this section for a fiscal year if, on October 1 of that fiscal year, the State—

''(1) has enacted a law that requires the impoundment or immobilization of a stretch limousine that is found to have an eligible defect on inspection; and

''(2) is enforcing the law described in paragraph (1), as determined by the Secretary.

''(d) GRANT AMOUNTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Beginning on October 1 of the first fiscal year beginning after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary shall apportion the amounts appropriated to carry out this section to each State that is eligible to receive a grant under subsection (c) in an amount that is equal to the quotient obtained by dividing—

''(A) the difference between—

''(i) $5,000,000; and

''(ii) the total amount provided to States under paragraph (2); and

''(B) the number of States eligible for a grant under subsection (c) for the fiscal year.

''(2) INCREASE OF GRANT AMOUNTS.—Beginning on October 1 of the first fiscal year beginning after the date of enactment of this section, a State that is eligible for a grant under subsection (c) may receive an additional $50,000 in grant funds if, on October 1 of that fiscal year, the State has enacted and is enforcing a law or regulation that requires—

''(A) any safety inspection of a stretch limousine to be conducted at a designated site controlled by the State; and

''(B) the inspection described in subparagraph (A) to be conducted by employees trained in the inspection of stretch limousines.

''(e) USE OF FUNDS.—A State receiving a grant under this section may use grant amounts—

''(1) for the impoundment or immobilization of a stretch limousine;

''(2) for the establishment and operating expenses of designated stretch limousine safety inspection sites; or

''(3) to train employees in the inspection of stretch limousines.

''(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry out this section $5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2021 through 2024.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for subchapter IV of chapter 311 of title 49 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 31161 the following:

''31162. Grant program for safety of stretch limousines.''.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. 2606. A bill to establish safety standards for certain limousines, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 2606

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Safety, Accountability, and Federal Enforcement of Limos Act of 2019'' or the ''SAFE Limos Act''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) CERTIFIED VEHICLE.—The term ''certified vehicle'' means a motor vehicle that has been certified in accordance with section 567.4 or 567.5 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, to meet all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards.

(2) INCOMPLETE VEHICLE.—The term ''incomplete vehicle'' has the meaning given such term in section 567.3 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations.

(3) STRETCH LIMOUSINE.—The term ''stretch limousine'' means a new or used passenger motor vehicle that has been altered in a manner that increases the overall wheelbase of the vehicle, exceeding the original equipment manufacturer's wheelbase dimension for the base model and year of the vehicle, in any amount sufficient to accommodate additional passengers with a seating capacity of not fewer than 9 passengers including the driver.

(4) STRETCH LIMOUSINE ALTERER.—The term ''stretch limousine alterer'' means a person who alters by addition, substitution, or removal of components (other than readily attachable components) a certified passenger motor vehicle before or after the first purchase of the vehicle to produce a stretch limousine.

(5) STRETCH LIMOUSINE OPERATOR.—The term ''stretch limousine operator'' means a person who owns or leases and operates a stretch limousine in interstate commerce.

(6) PASSENGER MOTOR VEHICLE.—The term ''passenger motor vehicle'' has the meaning given that term in section 32101 of title 49, United States Code.

(7) SAFETY BELT.—The term ''safety belt'' means an occupant restraint system consisting of integrated lap shoulder belts.

(8) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Transportation.

SEC. 3. STRETCH LIMOUSINE STANDARDS.

(a) SAFETY BELT STANDARDS FOR STRETCH LIMOUSINES.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall prescribe a final rule amending Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard Numbers 208 to require safety belts to be installed in stretch limousines with a gross vehicle weight rating greater than 8,500 pounds at each designated seating position, including on side-facing seats.

(b) SEATING SYSTEM STANDARDS FOR STRETCH LIMOUSINES.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall prescribe a final rule amending Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard Number 207 to require stretch limousines to meet standards for seats (including side-facing seats), attachment assemblies, and installation to minimize the possibility of their failure by forces acting on them as a result of vehicle impact.

(c) REPORT ON RETROFIT ASSESSMENT FOR STRETCH LIMOUSINES.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report that assesses the feasibility, benefits, and costs with respect to the application of any requirement established under subsection (a) or (b) to a stretch limousine altered before the date on which the requirement applies to a new stretch limousine.

(d) SAFETY STANDARDS FOR ALTERING USED VEHICLES INTO STRETCH LIMOUSINES.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall prescribe a final rule revising the regulations under section 567.7 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, to require a stretch limousine alterer to comply with the requirements for persons who alter certified vehicles.

SEC. 4. STRETCH LIMOUSINE COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL SAFETY STANDARDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 301 of subtitle VI of title 49, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 30128 the following new section:

''§ 30129. Stretch Limousine compliance with Federal safety standards

''(a) GUIDELINES, BEST PRACTICES, AND RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this section, and not less than every 4 years thereafter, the Secretary shall develop and issue guidelines, best practices, and recommendations to assist a stretch limousine alterer to develop and administer the vehicle modifier plan required under subsection (c).

''(b) PROCESS AND ANALYSIS.—

''(1) NOTICE REQUIRED.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this section, and as necessary thereafter, the Secretary shall publish a notice in the Federal Register that describes the process and analysis used for approving or denying a vehicle modifier plan submitted by a stretch limousine alterer.

''(2) ELEMENTS.—The notice required under paragraph (1) shall include—

''(A) a description of the safety elements described in subsection (c) in a vehicle modifier plan; and

''(B) a description of the process and criterion that the Secretary will use for determining whether a vehicle modifier plan ensures that a stretch limousine meets applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards.

''(c) REQUIREMENT.—Not later than 2 years after the Secretary has released the notice required by subsection (b), a new stretch limousine may not be offered for sale, lease, or rent, introduced or delivered for introduction in interstate commerce, or imported into the United States unless the stretch limousine alterer has developed, and the Secretary has approved, a vehicle modifier plan. A vehicle modifier plan includes the following safety elements:

''(1) Design, quality control, manufacturing, and training practices adopted by a stretch limousine alterer to ensure that a stretch limousine complies with Federal motor vehicle safety standards.

''(2) Customer support guidelines, including instructions for stretch limousine occupants to wear seatbelts and stretch limousine operators to notify occupants of the date and results of the most recent inspection of the stretch limousine.

''(3) Any other safety elements that the Secretary determines to be necessary.

''(d) VEHICLE MODIFIER PLAN.—

''(1) APPLICATION.—A stretch limousine alterer shall submit to the Secretary an application for approval of a vehicle modifier plan in such a form, at such a time, and containing the information required to be included in the notice published pursuant to subsection (b). A vehicle modifier plan required under subsection (a) may be approved for not more than 4 years after the date on which the plan is approved.

''(2) REVIEW.—The Secretary may approve a vehicle modifier plan submitted under paragraph (1) on a finding that the plan ensures that a stretch limousine will meet Federal motor vehicle safety standards.

''(3) TIMELY CONSIDERATION OF APPLICATIONS.—The Secretary shall approve or reject a vehicle modifier plan not later than 1 year after receiving an application from a stretch limousine alterer.

''(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) INCOMPLETE VEHICLE.—The term 'incomplete vehicle' has the meaning given such term in section 567.3 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations.

''(2) STRETCH LIMOUSINE.—The term 'stretch limousine' means a new or used passenger motor vehicle that has been altered in a manner that increases the overall wheelbase of the vehicle, exceeding the original equipment manufacturer's wheelbase dimension for the base model and year of the vehicle, in any amount sufficient to accommodate additional passengers with a seating capacity of not fewer than 9 passengers including the driver.

''(3) STRETCH LIMOUSINE ALTERER.—The term 'stretch limousine alterer' means a person who alters by addition, substitution, or removal of components (other than readily attachable components) an incomplete vehicle or a certified passenger motor vehicle before or after the first purchase of the vehicle to produce a stretch limousine.

''(4) PASSENGER MOTOR VEHICLE.—The term 'passenger motor vehicle' has the meaning given that term in section 32101.''.

(b) ENFORCEMENT.—Section 30165(a)(1) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by inserting ''30129,'' after ''30127,''.

SEC. 5. STRETCH LIMOUSINE CRASHWORTHINESS.

(a) RESEARCH.—Not later than 4 years after the date of enactment, the Secretary shall complete research into side impact protection, roof crush resistance, and air bag systems for the protection of occupants in stretch limousines given alternative seating positions or interior configurations, including perimeter seating arrangements.

(b) RESEARCH REQUIREMENTS.—In conducting the research required under subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

(1) develop one or more tests to evaluate side impact protection, roof crush resistance, and air bag systems of stretch limousines;

(2) determine metrics that would be most effective at evaluating the side impact protection, roof crush resistance, and air bag systems of stretch limousines; and

(3) determine criteria to assure the stretch limousines are protecting occupants in any alternative seating positions or interior configurations.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 5 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit a report describing the findings of the research required under this section to the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate.

(d) VEHICLE MODIFIER PLANS.—The Secretary shall incorporate the findings of the research conducted under this section into the guidelines required under section 30129(a) of title 49 and the process and analysis required under section 30129(b) of title 49, United States Code, as added by section 4(a).

(e) CRASHWORTHINESS STANDARDS.—The Secretary shall issue final motor vehicle safety standards for side impact protection, roof crush resistance, and air bag systems for stretch limousines if the Secretary determines that such standards meet the requirements and considerations set forth in subsections (a) and (b) of section 30111 of title 49, United States Code.

SEC. 6. STRETCH LIMOUSINE EVACUATION.

(a) RESEARCH.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall complete research into safety features and standards that aid egress and regress in the event that one exit in the passenger compartment of a stretch limousine is blocked.

(b) STANDARDS.—Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall issue stretch limousine evacuation standards based on the results of the Secretary's research.

SEC. 7. STRETCH LIMOUSINE INSPECTION DISCLOSURE.

(a) STRETCH LIMOUSINE INSPECTION DISCLOSURE.—A stretch limousine operator introducing a stretch limousine into interstate commerce may not deploy for commercial use a stretch limousine unless the stretch limousine operator has prominently disclosed in a clear and conspicuous notice, including on its website to the extent the stretch limousine operator uses a website, that includes—

(1) the date of the most recent inspection of the stretch limousine required under State or Federal law;

(2) the results of the inspection; and

(3) any corrective action taken by the stretch limousine operator to ensure the stretch limousine passed inspection.

(b) FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION ENFORCEMENT.—A violation of subsection (a) shall be treated as a an unfair or deceptive act or practice within the meaning of section 5(a)(1) of the Federal Trade Commission Act (15 U.S.C. 45(a)(1)). The Federal Trade Commission shall enforce this section in the same manner, by the same means, and with the same jurisdiction, powers, and duties as though all applicable terms and provisions of the Federal Trade Commission Act were incorporated into and made a part of this Act.

(c) SAVINGS PROVISION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit the authority of the Federal Trade commission under any other provision of law.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 8. EVENT DATA RECORDERS FOR STRETCH LIMOUSINES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary, acting through the Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, shall issue a final rule requiring the use of event data recorders for stretch limousines.

(b) PRIVACY PROTECTIONS.—Any standard promulgated under subsection (a) pertaining to event data recorder information shall comply with the collection and sharing requirements under the FAST Act (Public Law 114–94).

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Mr. GRAHAM):

S. 2612. A bill for the relief of Maria Isabel Bueso Barrera, Alberto Bueso Mendoza, and Karla Maria Barrera De Bueso; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, today I am introducing a bill with Senate Judiciary Chairman LINDSAY GRAHAM for the private relief of Maria Isabel Bueso Barrera and her parents. Ms. Bueso is a Guatemalan national living in Concord, California. She has a rare medical condition and her removal from the United States would deprive her of lifesaving medical care.

Ms. Bueso suffers from a rare, life-threatening disorder called Mucopolysaccharidosis Type VI (MPS–VI)—a rare genetic condition caused by the absence of an enzyme that is needed for the growth of healthy bones and connective tissues. Ms. Bueso uses a wheelchair for mobility, has a shunt in her brain, and requires a tracheotomy to help her breathe.

In 2003, Ms. Bueso and her family came to the United States at the invitation of doctors who were conducting a clinical trial to treat her condition. That trial led to Food and Drug Administration approved treatment for MPS–VI. Ms. Bueso now receives this life-saving treatment every week at UCSF Children's Hospital in Oakland, CA, where she undergoes a 6-hour infusion of a prescription drug that replaces the enzyme that people with MPS–VI lack. Ms. Bueso has participated in six other medical trials.

For the past 10 years, Isabel and her family received deferred action from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services so that she could continue receiving the treatments that keep her alive. This treatment is not available in Guatemala.

On August 13, 2019, USCIS notified Ms. Bueso and her family that their extensions of deferred action were denied, and that they would be deported if they did not leave the United States within 33 days. This decision was effectively a death sentence for Ms. Bueso. On September 3, 2019, USCIS announced that they would reconsider her case, but a final decision has not been made.

Ms. Bueso has beaten the odds because of the life-saving treatment that she has received in the United States. She is now 24 years old, and a 2018 graduate of California State University, East Bay. She has become an outspoken advocate on behalf of people with rare diseases. Her family pays taxes, owns a home, and is active in their community.

The Bueso family should be allowed to remain in California, where they will continue to enrich their community, and where Isabel will be able to receive the care that allows her to survive and thrive.

The legislation that Chairman GRAHAM and I are introducing today would provide a permanent solution for Isabel and her parents. I ask my colleagues to support this private bill, which makes the Bueso family eligible for issuance of an immigrant visa or for adjustment of status.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 2612

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

SECTION 1. PERMANENT RESIDENT STATUS FOR MARIA ISABEL BUESO BARRERA, ALBERTO BUESO MENDOZA, AND KARLA MARIA BARRERA DE BUESO.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding subsections (a) and (b) of section 201 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1151), Maria Isabel Bueso Barrera, Alberto Bueso Mendoza, and Karla Maria Barrera De Bueso shall each be eligible for issuance of an immigrant visa or for adjustment of status to that of an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence upon filing an application for issuance of an immigrant visa under section 204 of such Act (8 U.S.C. 1154) or for adjustment of status to lawful permanent resident.

(b) ADJUSTMENT OF STATUS.—If Maria Isabel Bueso Barrera, Alberto Bueso Mendoza, or Karla Maria Barrera De Bueso enters the United States before the filing deadline specified in subsection (c), Maria Isabel Bueso Barrera, Alberto Bueso Mendoza, or Karla Maria Barrera De Bueso shall be considered to have entered and remained lawfully in the United States and shall be eligible for adjustment of status under section 245 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1255) as of the date of the enactment of this Act.

(c) APPLICATION AND PAYMENT OF FEES.—Subsections (a) and (b) shall apply only if the applications for issuance of immigrant visas or the applications for adjustment of status are filed with appropriate fees not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(d) REDUCTION OF IMMIGRANT VISA NUMBERS.—Upon the granting of immigrant visas or permanent resident status to Maria Isabel Bueso Barrera, Alberto Bueso Mendoza, and Karla Maria Barrera De Bueso, the Secretary of State shall instruct the proper officer to reduce by three, during the current or next following fiscal year—

(1) the total number of immigrant visas that are made available to natives of the country of birth of Maria Isabel Bueso Barrera, Alberto Bueso Mendoza, and Karla Maria Barrera De Bueso under section 203(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1153(a)); or

(2) if applicable, the total number of immigrant visas that are made available to natives of the country of birth of Maria Isabel Bueso Barrera, Alberto Bueso Mendoza, and Karla Maria Barrera De Bueso under section 202(e) of such Act (8 U.S.C. 1152(e)).

(e) PAYGO.—The budgetary effects of this Act, for the purpose of complying with the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010, shall be determined by reference to the latest statement titled ''Budgetary Effects of PAYGO Legislation'' for this Act, submitted for printing in the Congressional Record by the Chairman of the Senate Budget Committee, provided that such statement has been submitted prior to the vote on passage.

By Mr. SASSE:

S.J. Res. 58. A joint resolution expressing support for freedom of conscience; read the first time.

Mr. SASSE. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to ask each and every Member of Congress to answer this simple question: Is it right for the U.S. Federal Government to get into the business of policing Muslims', Jews', and Christians' religious beliefs, about whether or not they are acceptable? Is it the business of the Federal Government of the United States to determine true and false religion?

Last week, a former Member of Congress now running for President, didn't blink an eye when he announced that he would strip religious institutions, colleges, churches, and other not-for-profit service organizations of their tax-exempt status if they don't agree with his political positions.

That is a pretty major departure from what America is and what we usually talk about in this body. So we should pause, and we should call that what it is. That is extreme intolerance, it is extreme bigotry, and it is profoundly un-American.

The whole point of America is the First Amendment, and the whole point of the First Amendment is that, no matter who you love and no matter how you worship, we believe in America that everyone—everyone—is created with dignity. This is a fundamental American tenet. It is why this country was founded.

Because we are all created with dignity, none of us has the right to dictate the conscience commitments of other people. The freedom of conscience is a fundamental American belief, and, thankfully, politicians have no business policing that.

At the end of the day, there are really just two kinds of societies. There are societies that are about force and power, and there are societies that are about persuasion, about assembly, and about love.

For more than 230 years, we have decided in this country that we are the latter. We are a community of persuasion, not primarily a community of power and force.

In America, we don't think the center of life is defined by government. We think the frame of life is defined by government.

Abraham Lincoln often, sort of apocryphally summarizing George Washington, used to talk about the silver frame and the golden apple. In America, the government is just the silver

frame. It is the structure that defines the framework for the order of liberty so that the golden apple—the good, the true, and the beautiful, the things that you love and that you want to build—you go do by persuading people to join with you in a cause. Government doesn't define the center.

Washington, DC, is not the center of American life. Washington, DC, is supposed to be a servant community that exists to maintain a framework for the order of liberty and guards us against enemies, foreign and domestic, so that your household and your neighborhood and your place of worship can be the center of life.

We are not Chinese Communists who take Uighurs and throw them into camps. We are not Russian oligarchs who tell journalists what they can and can't write. We are not Venezuelan strongmen who beat the hell out of protesters. We are Americans. And in America, we disagree about many things. We disagree profoundly and vigorously, but then we come together and create a system where we work out our differences not with fists but with words. We work out our differences with civility and tolerance and respect and persuasion.

All of this starts with the First Amendment. The five freedoms of the First Amendment—religion, speech, press, assembly, and protest—define who we are as a people and what we believe in common. And guess what. You can't separate these five. These five freedoms are all in the same amendment for a reason—because if one of them falls, they all fall. They stand or fall together, and you are a hypocrite if you pat yourself on the back for defending one of these five freedoms and then the next day, when another one is unpopular, say: Well, we don't need that one; we can throw it overboard. The five freedoms are interconnected and are interdependent, and they are all in that same amendment, the First Amendment, for a reason.

These are the rights of conscience that belong together, and they cannot be taken or policed by government. That means that if a Texas politician pandering for a sound bite decides to make a boldfaced threat against Muslims and Jews and Christians—all Americans from every faith and every walk of life—we have an obligation to come together and defend our freedoms, so we should do that.

That is what I am on the floor here today to do. I am introducing a simple resolution today that will give every Member of the Congress—the House and Senate—the opportunity to tell our constituents whether we still believe in the First Amendment. It is an opportunity to show the American people that bigotry against religion in the name of partisan politics is not permitted in our system of government. This isn't a Republican or a Democratic premise; this is an American idea, that we condemn politicians who say they are going to police other people's religious beliefs. Congress doesn't target or punish organizations that are exercising constitutionally protected rights.

This really shouldn't be complicated. Government doesn't rifle through your pastor's or your rabbi's sermon notes. Government doesn't tell your clerics what they can or can't say. Government doesn't tell your religious leaders how they will perform their services. Government doesn't tell you where or when you will worship. Government doesn't teach our kids how they are to pray. Government doesn't lecture you on Heaven and Hell. Government's job is not to define true and false religion. That is something much closer to the center of the frame, the golden apple. The silver frame is the humble job we have to do in public life, which is to maintain a framework for ordered liberty so that Americans, in their neighborhoods and over dinner tables, can try to persuade each other how to worship and what to believe by arguments, not by fists and not by the police.

Government doesn't get to do any of that in this country because we recognize that government is not God. Americans reject the divine right of Kings, and we reject the infallibility of politics.

Government doesn't try to make an example of your church or your synagogue or your mosque because some politician decided your views were out of favor. Your religious organization doesn't get taxed differently because a politician running for office decides to disagree with one of your beliefs. Whatever faith you are from in America, whatever party you are in, we believe in America that all 225 million of us are created equal, and we believe that whether your faith is traditional or progressive, it is yours, and it is between you and your religious community and your God. It is not the domain of politicians.

Government can't force you out of the public square because of the faith you hold—at least that is what we have always believed in the past. It is what we believed for more than 200 years. We are not perfect, of course. We have fallen short of that idealism time and again. That doesn't mean the ideas of the American founding in the First Amendment are wrong; it means that our ideals need to be strived for yet again and reaffirmed.

I want to give every Member of Congress the opportunity in the coming weeks to do just that. The resolution I am introducing today ought to get a vote so House and Senate Members can be on record for our constituents about whether we affirm the First Amendment and in particular the free exercise of religion and the free assembly clause. I am going to read it for everyone's benefit. It is pretty short. This is the resolution being submitted:

Whereas the settlement of the 13 colonies was driven in part by those seeking refuge from government-sponsored religious persecution;

Whereas the Framers of the Constitution of the United States recognized the centrality of freedom of conscience to the establishment of the United States, enshrining in the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States that ''Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances'';

Whereas churches, synagogues, mosques, and other religious organizations have played a central and invaluable role in life in the United States; and

Whereas Congress has recognized the importance of religious institutions by enacting a variety of legal protections for those institutions, including exemption from income taxes: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That—

(1) the protections of freedom of conscience enshrined in the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States remain central to the experiment of the United States in republican self-government under the Constitution of the United States;

(2) government should not be in the business of dictating what ''correct'' religious beliefs are; and

(3) any effort by the government to condition the receipt of the protections of the Constitution of the United States and the laws of the United States, including an exemption from taxation, on the public policy positions of an organization is an affront to the spirit and letter of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

I don't care what some nitwit said on CNN last week to satisfy his fringy base and try to get a sound bite in a Presidential debate. The American people ought to know that this body stands for the historic First Amendment. That is what we all took an oath to uphold and to defend, and that is what we ought to vote to affirm again. Let's do it.

S.J. RES. 58

Whereas the settlement of the 13 colonies was driven in part by those seeking refuge from government-sponsored religious persecution;

Whereas the Framers of the Constitution of the United States recognized the centrality of freedom of conscience to the establishment of the United States, enshrining in the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States that ''Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances'';

Whereas churches, synagogues, mosques, and other religious organizations have played a central and invaluable role in life in the United States; and

Whereas Congress has recognized the importance of religious institutions by enacting a variety of legal protections for those institutions, including exemption from income taxes: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That—

(1) the protections of freedom of conscience enshrined in the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States remain central to the experiment of the United States in republican self-government under the Constitution of the United States;

(2) government should not be in the business of dictating what ''correct'' religious beliefs are; and

(3) any effort by the government to condition the receipt of the protections of the Constitution of the United States and the laws of the United States, including an exemption from taxation, on the public policy positions of an organization is an affront to the spirit and letter of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 358—DESIGNATING THE WEEK BEGINNING OCTOBER 20, 2019, AS ''NATIONAL CHARACTER COUNTS WEEK''

Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. ENZI, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. LANKFORD, and Ms. WARREN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 358

Whereas the well-being of the United States requires that the young people of the United States become an involved, caring citizenry of good character;

Whereas the character education of children has become more urgent, as violence by and against youth increasingly threatens the physical and psychological well-being of the people of the United States;

Whereas, more than ever, children need strong and constructive guidance from their families and their communities, including schools, youth organizations, religious institutions, and civic groups;

Whereas the character of a nation is only as strong as the character of its individual citizens;

Whereas the public good is advanced when young people are taught the importance of good character and the positive effects that good character can have in personal relationships, in school, and in the workplace;

Whereas scholars and educators agree that people do not automatically develop good character and that, therefore, conscientious efforts must be made by institutions and individuals that influence youth to help young people develop the essential traits and characteristics that comprise good character;

Whereas, although character development is, first and foremost, an obligation of families, the efforts of faith communities, schools, and youth, civic, and human service organizations also play an important role in fostering and promoting good character;

Whereas Congress encourages students, teachers, parents, youth, and community leaders to recognize the importance of character education in preparing young people to play a role in determining the future of the United States;

Whereas effective character education is based on core ethical values, which form the foundation of a democratic society;

Whereas examples of character are trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, citizenship, and honesty;

Whereas elements of character transcend cultural, religious, and socioeconomic differences;

Whereas the character and conduct of youth reflect the character and conduct of society, and, therefore, every adult has the responsibility to teach and model ethical values and every social institution has the responsibility to promote the development of good character;

Whereas Congress encourages individuals and organizations, especially those that have an interest in the education and training of the young people of the United States, to adopt the elements of character as intrinsic to the well-being of individuals, communities, and society;

Whereas many schools in the United States recognize the need, and have taken steps, to integrate the values of their communities into teaching activities; and

Whereas the establishment of ''National Character Counts Week'', during which individuals, families, schools, youth organizations, religious institutions, civic groups, and other organizations focus on character education, is of great benefit to the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the week beginning October 20, 2019, as ''National Character Counts Week''; and

(2) calls upon the people of the United States and interested groups—

(A) to embrace the elements of character identified by local schools and communities, such as trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship; and

(B) to observe the week with appropriate ceremonies, programs, and activities.

SENATE RESOLUTION 359—AUTHORIZING THE USE OF THE ATRIUM IN THE PHILIP A. HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING FOR THE NATIONAL PRESCRIPTION DRUG TAKE BACK DAY, A SEMIANNUAL EVENT FOR THE DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION

Mr. SCHUMER (for Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. BLUNT)) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 359

Resolved,

SECTION 1. USE OF THE ATRIUM IN THE HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING FOR TAKE BACK DAY.

(a) AUTHORIZATION.—The atrium in the Philip A. Hart Senate Office Building is authorized to be used on October 23, 2019, for the National Prescription Drug Take Back Day, a semiannual event of the Drug Enforcement Administration.

(b) PREPARATIONS.—Physical preparations for the conduct of the event described in subsection (a) shall be carried out in accordance with such conditions as may be prescribed by the Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper of the Senate.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 945. Mr. GRAHAM submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2511, to amend title 40, United States Code, to provide the Marshal of the Supreme Court of the United States and Supreme Court Police with the authority to protect the Chief Justice of the United States, any Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, and other individuals in any location, and for other purposes; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 945. Mr. GRAHAM submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2511, to amend title 40, United States Code, to provide the Marshal of the Supreme Court of the United States and Supreme Court Police with the authority to protect the Chief Justice of the United States, any Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, and other individuals in any location, and for other purposes; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary; as follows:

On page 2, strike lines 1 through 4 and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Reauthorizing Security for Supreme Court Justices Act''.

SEC. 2. UNITED STATES SUPREME COURT BUILDING AND GROUNDS POLICING AUTHORITY.

Section 6121 of title 40, United States code, is amended—

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I have 8 requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, October 16, 2019, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

The Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, October 16, 2019, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, October 16, 2019, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, October 16, 2019, at 2 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, October 16, 2019, at 3 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Indian Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, October 16, 2019, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, October 16, 2019, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on the following nominations: Barbara Lagoa and Robert J. Luck, both of

Florida, both to be a United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit, Sylvia Carreno-Coll, to be United States District Judge for the District of Puerto Rico, John M. Gallagher, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, and Sherri A. Lydon, to be United States District Judge for the District of South Carolina.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

The Special Committee on Aging is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, October 16, 2019, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a closed briefing.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following leader remarks on Thursday, October 17, the Committee on Environment and Public Works be discharged from further consideration of S.J. Res. 53. I further ask unanimous consent that if a motion to proceed is made and agreed to, the time until noon be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees, on the joint resolution, and that upon the use or yielding back of that time, the bill be read a third time and the Senate vote on passage of S.J. Res. 53.

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

RELATING TO A NATIONAL EMERGENCY DECLARED BY THE PRESIDENT ON FEBRUARY 15, 2019—VETO

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, is the veto message with respect to S.J. Res. 54 at the desk?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. It is.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the veto message on S.J. Res. 54 be considered as having been read, that it be printed in the RECORD, and spread in full upon the Journal.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The veto message is ordered to be printed in the RECORD as follows:

To the Senate of the United States:

I am returning herewith without my approval S.J. Res. 54, a joint resolution that would terminate the national emergency I declared in Proclamation 9844 of February 15, 2019, pursuant to the National Emergencies Act, regarding the ongoing crisis on our southern border. I am doing so for the same reasons I returned an identical resolution, H.J. Res. 46, to the House of Representatives without my approval on March 15, 2019.

Proclamation 9844 has helped the Federal Government address the national emergency on our southern border. It has empowered my Administration's Government-wide strategy to counter large-scale unlawful migration and to respond to corresponding humanitarian challenges through focused application of every Constitutional and statutory authority at our disposal. It has also facilitated the military's ongoing construction of virtually insurmountable physical barriers along hundreds of miles of our southern border.

The southern border, however, continues to be a major entry point for criminals, gang members, and illicit narcotics to come into our country. As explained in Proclamation 9844, in my veto message regarding H.J. Res. 46, and in congressional testimony from multiple Administration officials, the ongoing crisis at the southern border threatens core national security interests. In addition, security challenges at the southern border exacerbate an ongoing humanitarian crisis that threatens the well-being of vulnerable populations, including women and children.

In short, the situation on our southern border remains a national emergency, and our Armed Forces are still needed to help confront it.

Like H.J. Res. 46, S.J. Res. 54 would undermine the Government's ability to address this continuing national emergency. It would, among other things, impair the Government's capacity to secure the Nation's southern borders against unlawful entry and to curb the trafficking and smuggling that fuels the present humanitarian crisis.

S.J. Res. 54 is also inconsistent with other recent congressional actions. For example, the Congress, in an overwhelmingly bipartisan manner, has provided emergency resources to address the crisis at the southern border. Additionally, the Congress has approved a budget framework that expressly preserves the emergency authorities my Administration is using to address the crisis.

Proclamation 9844 was neither a new nor novel application of executive authority. Rather, it is the sixtieth Presidential invocation of the National Emergencies Act of 1976. It relies upon the same statutory authority used by both of the previous two Presidents to undertake more than 18 different military construction projects from 2001 through 2013. And it has withstood judicial challenge in the Supreme Court.

Earlier this year, I vetoed H.J. Res. 46 because it was a dangerous resolution that would undermine United States sovereignty and threaten the lives and safety of countless Americans. It was, therefore, my duty to return it to the House of Representatives without my approval. It is similarly my duty, in order to protect the safety and security of our Nation, to return S.J. Res. 54 to the Senate without my approval.

DONALD J. TRUMP.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *October 15, 2019.*

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 1:45 p.m. tomorrow, the Senate vote on passage of S.J. Res. 54, notwithstanding the objections of the President to the contrary.

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

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME—S.J. RES. 58 AND H.J. RES. 77

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I understand there are two bills at the desk, and I ask for their first reading en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the titles of the bills for the first time en bloc.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S.J. Res. 58) expressing support for freedom of conscience.

A resolution (H.J. Res. 77) opposing the decision to end certain United States efforts to prevent Turkish military operations against Syrian Kurdish forces in Northeast Syria.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I now ask for a second reading, and I object to my own request, all en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bills will receive a second reading on the next legislative day.

NATIONAL CHARACTER COUNTS WEEK

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 358, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 358) designating the week beginning October 20, 2019, as ''National Character Counts Week.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to proceeding to the measure?

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 358) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

NATIONAL POLYCYSTIC KIDNEY DISEASE AWARENESS DAY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration and the Senate now proceed to S. Res. 356.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 356) designating September 4, 2019, as ''National Polycystic Kidney Disease Awareness Day'', and raising

awareness and understanding of polycystic kidney disease.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to proceeding to the measure?

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 356) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of September 26, 2019, under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

NATIONAL URBAN WILDLIFE REFUGE DAY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration and the Senate now proceed to S. Res. 324.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 324) designating September 29, 2019, as ''National Urban Wildlife Refuge Day''.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to proceeding to the measure?

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 324) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of September 24, 2019, under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

AUTHORIZING THE USE OF THE ATRIUM IN THE PHILIP A. HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING FOR THE NATIONAL PRESCRIPTION DRUG TAKE BACK DAY, A SEMIANNUAL EVENT FOR THE DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 359 submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 359) authorizing the use of the atrium in the Philip A. Hart Senate Office Building for the National Prescription Drug Take Back Day, a semiannual event for the Drug Enforcement Administration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to proceeding to the measure?

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 359) was agreed to.

(The resolution is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2019

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10:00 a.m., Thursday, October 17; 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.

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

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the impeachment inquiry currently under way in the House of Representatives. The House impeachment inquiry is a solemn and serious matter. It concerns the official conduct of the President of the United States, and it implicates matters of grave importance: our national security, the rule of law, and the very foundations of our Constitution.

We all—Democrats and Republicans alike—have a duty to defend our democracy, so when we are confronted with evidence that President Donald Trump abused his power and violated his oath of office by seeking foreign interference in our elections and then sought to cover it up, we have a constitutional obligation to investigate.

The evidence we have already seen validates Speaker PELOSI's decision to open an impeachment inquiry and reinforces the need for this inquiry to continue unimpeded. Indeed, Donald Trump himself has already confirmed key evidence.

Just look at what we know so far. We know that Donald Trump asked a foreign power, Ukraine, to investigate his political opponent. The President both admitted it on live television and then released a transcript showing that it had happened just as a whistleblower alleged that it did. That is not in dispute.

We also know that Donald Trump then doubled down, subsequently admitting on camera that he wants foreign governments like Ukraine and China to investigate his political opponents. That is not in dispute.

So instead of focusing on the Latin phrase ''quid pro quo,'' the President should be saying, ''mea culpa''—my fault, but he is not. And with each passing day, additional evidence of serious wrongdoing at the highest levels of our government has surfaced, evidence that Donald Trump has subjugated the Nation's interest to his personal and political interest and evidence that plainly warrants further investigation.

For example, we learned that prior to his phone call with Ukrainian President Zelensky, Donald Trump blocked almost $400 million in military and security aid to Ukraine. Moreover, as the White House's own partial transcript of the conversation reflects, Donald Trump conditioned this aid on the Ukrainian President's willingness to conduct a political investigation, telling him: ''I would like you to do this as a favor though.''

Donald Trump's quid pro quo linking U.S. military and security aid to a politically motivated investigation makes his admitted solicitation of foreign interference in our elections that much worse. It is an abuse of power and betrayal of Trump's oath to the Constitution and promise to the American people.

We have also learned that White House officials moved the transcript of the phone call between President Trump and President Zelensky from its typical electronic storage system to a separate system intended to handle classified information of an especially sensitive nature. In other words, there appears to have been an effort to cover up Donald Trump's wrongdoing.

We are also witnessing extraordinary attacks by Donald Trump on the whistleblower who brought the matter to light.

Donald Trump's attacks on this individual are so serious and so harmful that they may rise to the level of witness tampering and obstruction of justice. They send a chilling message to others who may have information and are contemplating coming forward.

It should go without saying that whistleblowers play an important role

in our democracy, especially when it comes to whistleblowers in the intelligence community. They should be praised and not demonized or threatened.

Most recently, we have learned that the President allowed his personal attorney, Rudy Giuliani, to conduct a shadow foreign policy outside of proper State Department channels—a foreign policy that serves personal interests and the President's personal political interests, but not the interests of the United States or the American people.

We have learned that two individuals connected to Giuliani have been indicted on charges of violating Federal campaign finance laws stemming from hidden foreign campaign donations. We have learned that a career diplomat with an unblemished record was recalled from Ukraine because she honored her oath to the Constitution, but Trump viewed her as an impediment to his foreign policy agenda.

These are just some of the things we have learned in the past few days.

So what must we do? The answer is simple. We must investigate and get all the facts, Donald Trump's unprecedented and unjustified refusal to cooperate notwithstanding. The torrent of revelations of serious misconduct relating to foreign interference in our elections only underscores the need for the House investigation to continue unimpeded.

The Founding Fathers were very concerned about foreign interference in America's democracy. They knew that foreign involvement in our politics and elections posed a threat to our sovereignty as a new nation.

In 1787, John Adams wrote: ''As often as elections happen, the danger of foreign influence recurs.'' In 1788, Alexander Hamilton warned us that foreign powers trying to gain influence in our politics would be ''the most deadly adversaries of Republican government.''

The threat of foreign interference in our elections is as serious today as it was more than 200 years ago. We must do all that we can to defend against it, and that includes an impeachment inquiry into the conduct of the President when he admits to soliciting that very interference.

The House of Representatives is going to begin a process. If the House of Representatives ultimately approves articles of impeachment against Donald Trump, the Senate will hold a trial and our Members will serve as jurors.

As a member of the Senate and a potential juror, I will take my job as seriously as any I have ever had in this institution, and I hope my Republican colleagues will do so as well. The American people deserve nothing less.

Leader MCCONNELL and my Republican colleagues must uphold their oaths to the Constitution, put country over party, and conduct a fair trial. Anything short of that would be a dereliction of duty.

No one should prejudge the case. Indeed, that is precisely the advice that Leader MCCONNELL gave during the 1998 impeachment proceedings when he stated: ''As a potential juror, if it's serious enough to warrant a potential impeachment proceeding, I don't think I ought to prejudge the case.''

We have a constitutional duty to investigate President Trump's attempts to orchestrate foreign interference in our elections, the usage of his office to support his personal political goals, and how he sought to cover up that effort. Nothing less than our national security, the rule of law, and our constitutional order are at stake.

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 morning.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 7:11 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, October 17, 2019, at 10 a.m.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate October 16, 2019:

THE JUDICIARY

DAVID JOHN NOVAK, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA.

RACHEL P. KOVNER, OF NEW YORK, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK.

FRANK WILLIAM VOLK, OF WEST VIRGINIA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF WEST VIRGINIA.

CHARLES R. ESKRIDGE III, OF TEXAS, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

BARBARA MCCONNELL BARRETT, OF ARIZONA, TO BE SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE.